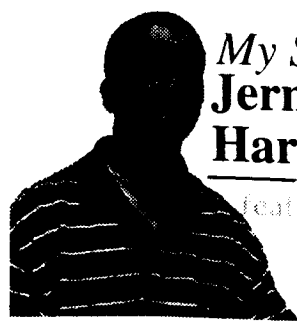


The Reverend Jackson moves on



My Society
Jermaine
Hardy

Hardy is co-editor

Much has recently been made of the Reverend Jesse Jackson and his extramarital affair with a staff member of his Rainbow Push organization, which resulted in birth of an illegitimate child. As Jackson has admitted to his adulterous act and claims full responsibility for his actions, he has made himself the target of those who want to slander his name and his moral, as well as political standing. Jackson may indeed forever have this scandal trail him, and it will be a challenge for him to recover his positive image, but this is a challenge that has been faced head on by Jackson.

After a four-day break from the media spotlight, which Jackson called a time for "introspection and reflection, healing and kneeling," the Reverend returned to public life on January 22, to address a formal luncheon of ministers of the cloth. Being compared to fellow Democrat Bill Clinton for his infidelity, much light has been shed on the theory that Jackson must have been having his extramarital affair during the same time that he counseled Clinton in the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

However, the significant difference in the two cases is that Jackson immediately assumed full responsibility for his actions, confessing before his church and family. "After 38 years and five children later, Jackie we're still here. I love you so much...Life is not a not a straight line in the road. (There are) curves and valleys but through it all we're still here," stated Jackson in the pulpit of the Salem Baptist Church in Chicago, Illinois. That he is still here is the major point that Jackson makes as he ventures right back into the business of civil rights after his brief healing period. Also addressing his church, Jackson states that he is back to fight for civil rights because of the many challenges that face the nation, such as fair voting, affirmative action and blacks in business.

Despite the controversy, the incident has only slightly affected the Reverend Jesse Jackson's positive national image, as he remains in a moral fight for racial and economic justice. He has recently made moves to pressure big businesses like Ameritech, AT&T and TCI to steer them toward minority entrepreneurs. Doug Whitley, ex president of Ameritech in Illinois, comments that Jackson's efforts made the "big corporation of white guys aware of the need to reach out to minority partners." Also, Jackson is currently lobbying Viacom to sell its UPN T.V. network to a minority businessman. Along with Whitley, others have supported Reverend Jackson, such as his pastor Reverend James, who contends that, "America could not afford to have Jackson on the civil rights sidelines." Others who add to the outpouring of support of Jackson in his difficult time include actor Martin Sheen, who at this year's Golden Globe Awards stated, "to Jesse in Chicago, you're still our hero and we need you now more than ever."

Whether or not we want to criticize Jackson's actions, we can all see that he is not letting the controversy stifle him. He is moving on and working at preserving a positive national image. Whenever a leader faces such a crisis as Jackson has, the best way to handle it is to face your predicament and move on. It has often been said that Bill Clinton's biggest mistake, for example, was hiding the truth for so long. If Clinton would have faced the fire during the Lewinsky scandal and told the truth from the beginning, he too may have recovered a great deal of his positive image.

The debate of whether Jackson should be forever discredited for his actions is one thing, but the way he handles himself and his image from this point on should be focused on. In this is where most of America's judgment of him will lay. We can all make mistakes but can we stand strong, learn from them and move on? This is the true test. In Jesse Jackson's case he can still contribute a great deal to the black and white community. And from the looks of the way he is handling the situation thus far, Jesse Jackson will continue to make great contributions.

Hardy's column appears every three weeks



Tell us what you think!

Send a letter to the Editor!
Send all letters to:
behrcoll2@aol.com

'The Hot Debate of The Week' Bush has big...bombs?

Should President Bush have ordered the bombing of Iraq?

Bombs away! In the recent attacks on Iraq we struck their Integrated Air Defense System as retaliation for locking their radar on our aircraft patrolling the no-fly zone. Some would say that we shouldn't be bombing Iraq, but why not? Since the Gulf War they haven't followed the rules set up by the United Nations. They continue to create biological weapons and disregard the no-fly. Saddam is asking to get bombed back to the Stone Age. If Iraq locks their anti-aircraft weapons on our planes, then why shouldn't we interpret that as an attack. After all we are just defending ourselves. We are only targeting military radar installations. This eliminates the problem of our planes being targeted by Iraqi radar.

Why do we need to be the world police force and butt into other countries business? If we don't who will? Like it or not, we are a world power and with that power comes the responsibility to use it. The U.S. is what stands between tyranny and freedom for all. We have the opportunity to help the oppressed and innocent from the greedy little hands of Saddam Hussan and any one else that might want to take over the world. We have the obligation to keep our eyes on anyone that might get out of hand and the duty to bomb them if they do.

Every week, two editors from the staff will debate a topic that is hot. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to email suggestions for the hot topic. Send ideas to behrcoll2@aol.com

So Bush whipped out the firepower last week. And it's about time, he's been in office all of ten minutes. But seriously, did he actually have to bomb Iraq? What good came of it? Did it once again show off how big and bad the United States is? Bombing of foreign countries doesn't really accomplish anything does it? What came of this particular bombing? Nothing, except the wounding of innocent civilians that is.

Let's think about if the situations were reversed for a minute. The United States is no longer THE super power of the world, Iraq is. They have a new president who is eager to either a.) make approval ratings go up for himself or b.) get the spotlight off their ex-president's pardoning scandals. So what do they decide to do? That's right, bomb another country for no apparent reason. Does this situation seem fair?

Even if by some miracle, the intended target of the bomb actually gets hit, there is always the risk of civilians getting harmed. Iraqi television broadcast images later that day of children who had been injured in the bombing. Even if these pictures were fabricated, the risk remains. Again, reverse the situation. There are plenty of people that live around military installations here in the United States that could be hurt in bombings.

So until there is actually a war (Desert Storm Part Two, starring President Bush-again), then keep the bombings in check. There is no need to flaunt your power, everyone already knows it's there.

The education bug bites again



Chew on This
Rob Wynne

Last week as I sat in Bruno's eating my beef noodle soup and meat lovers pizza, I began to read the front page of the Erie paper that someone left on the table. "Erie school faces takeover from state or local government." I thought to myself, "Hmmm...here it is, let's see what easily solved dilemma the government and school districts have completely twisted into some kind of rocket science problem." I laugh very hard when I read these kinds of articles about schools, because school administrators and government officials sometimes just don't have a clue. Before you think "what a cocky kid he is" to yourself, let me explain a few things.

Erie school district will face a take over from the state and/or local government if its students perform poorly on upcoming state assessment tests. Power will be taken away from the current school directors.

Takeovers have already occurred in York, Philadelphia, and Harrisburg! Harrisburg, for cryin' out loud! Our state capital's school district was a mess? Not something I would brag about. It's all about these tests, these stinkin' standardized tests that determine how much funding a school and/or district will receive.

Not too long ago, I was in high school taking these drooling long exams. For those of you who are not familiar, here's the procedure for administering the state assessment tests.

1. Two weeks before the test, teachers in each school are prompted by their "higher-ups" to cram five years worth of review into a few worksheets and lessons in class. Apparently, the education that the student has received thus far is inadequate.
2. When students ask teachers about these tests and why they have to take them, teachers will reply, "I can't answer that right now, just please look carefully at the review worksheets." Probably the teacher has no clue what these tests are for or they're the kind of person that thinks they know something special that you don't.
3. It really wasn't the case in the past, but now students from special education groups and vo-tech are being drafted into study sessions to...hold on...you're going to love this...TO ACTUALLY LEARN SOMETHING! Who would have thought?

It's as if these programs fail to meet the basic educational requirements required by the state; now teachers are holding last-minute cram sessions in school. Teachers in high school always advised AGAINST last minute cramming - didn't they? 4. Since the tests do not affect a student's graduation status or report card, very few kids take the exams seriously and write answers like "Yo mama," for replies to essay questions. And since the students really don't know what these tests are for (to determine performance and funding allotment), they could once again not care less (See no. 2).

In essence, the purpose of the test is defeated. Kids don't take it seriously, and there is little or no communication between the administration and the student body. The administrations cram to try and get a good grade. The purpose of the test, however, is to see how much (or little) of an education the students in a particular area receive. The ones who must take the punishment are the local school administrators. But that's what you get for cramming.

If the state really wants to help improve student performance, they should address the cause of the problem, not just a symptom. First, more money should be spent to hire quality teachers who know their subject area, not just the ones who can coach a varsity sport. Second, pop quizzes

from the state should be given to random schools. I bet there would be more focus on maintaining a consistent and strong curriculum that stresses fundamentals of different subject areas. I don't know what all of this "how am I going to use this in my life/hands-on garbage is all about." Students must first master fundamentals. College professors don't get a Ph.D. without first acquiring a bachelor's, right?

Moreover, adequate textbooks, not antiquated, should be a priority. I couldn't get any money back from my copyright 2000 government book last semester because it was outdated already. What about the 5-7 year old government texts that my girlfriend is using in high school right now? Even worse, my brother doesn't even have a textbook for his history class - all of the students get photocopied pages of "relevant material."

Hahahaha...I'm still laughing. Such simple solutions for what has been made into a very complicated issue. I'm not saying that I have all of the answers here, but I'm willing to bet that you agree with at least a few of the points I have argued. Good luck to the Erie School District...I hope the students and administrators are studying their quantum physics really hard to answer all of the pre-algebra questions on the state exams...

Wynne's column appears every three weeks.

Calling all campers...



Coffee Talk
Kristin Rodgers

How many people out there are ready for Spring Break 2001? I'm ready, but I'm not sure if one week away will calm my nerves down from this school. I mean how many of you out there have like five gazillion exams, papers, presentations, and quizzes before we actually kick the doors down and wrestle ourselves out of here? Why do professors feel the need to give so many assignments before break? I know, I can understand that our minds will be fried from UV rays when we return, but come on; it makes me never want to come back! So this week I have devoted myself to wasting time and whining about school, yet again.

What I find impeccably tasteful is that professors make assignments up on purpose, and they just so happen to be due the week before we go on break. I have come up with some really great ideas why this is. The first and obvious answer is this: they want you to come to class. I mean hey, who wants to jet out of here a day early anyway? The second

is that they have no life. That's right, every professor cannot wait for break to start correcting a zillion papers and exams. Oh boy, now when I become a professor that's exactly what I had in mind! The third is professors love humor. Can you only imagine the paper that will be written by a student next Thursday night who is leaving for Cancun the very next day? That paper will obviously go down in history as the most comical reference anyone can throw out.

Okay, you hate me already. Immediately you assume I pray for this work to be due after break. Wrong. What I dislike very much is the idea of so much work, all concentrated at one time in the semester. I realize our minds may not be working for a few days after we return, but we will do work the rest of the semester, despite popular belief. The time after break is when students start to realize they need to get working!

Let me drift back to the Drama Club members I mentioned in my previous column before I have professors assigning more work due to this article. So I wonder where and what the Drama Club will be doing for Spring Break. I have also come up with wonderful ideas for this as well. The first and foremost idea that popped into my mind was camping. Yes, yes, the ol' trout camp queen lives on again. You all know

what I mean, even if you never called this "sport" trout camp, you still went and partied in the woods for several days and drank lots of beer. You can smile and giggle, but you all know there was a trout camp queen, mainly because she was the only girl who would go. Regardless, this girl touched all your hearts, I'm sure of it. Wow, can you only imagine the fun? Who wouldn't want to sleep in a camper that reeks of beer and stale air? I imagine that most people are not camping, but it does fit a fine portrait that we can all paint in our heads, say around the beginning of April right?

I imagine most students, who are actually leaving Pennsylvania, are probably heading out in the sun somewhere, which is why I have some advice to give. First and probably the most important thing is to remember to never leave your friends. If you are in Mexico City and get lost in the bars, I pity you very much. God only knows who or where you will end up. Secondly, never ever pose naked for anyone. I'm being serious this time "hoochy" girls! Just about a month ago, I was looking up Spring Break travel plans on the Internet, and guess what I found? Yes, many Penn State students on a web page completely naked. I guess being naked in front of many people who you don't know is fun, but it isn't exactly what I would want

the entire world to see, let alone my parents! Good gracious, Santa Claus wouldn't come next year, I know that! Third, I'm wondering how you would handle your car breaking down. Let us all pray that this does not happen, but sometimes life sucks. Make the most of this event and go camping at a rest stop. How fun would that be? Goodness, never forget to take pictures at any cost!

I am very sure that students just want to have a good old crazy time this upcoming break, but don't forget your manners. When some greasy guy buys you a beer at a bar, remember to thank him, he's just being nice, he could care less that you are on a table in front of him naked. Okay, now I'm in huge trouble because all of you out there are saying, "oh gross," but you know that if within five minutes I found a group of Penn Staters on the net, this could happen to you! Don't shame our school!

In my next article I will be able to live happily again knowing all my work was completed before break. Therefore, my next article may be a bit more interesting and lively. I shall review next time what it was like to hear over and over again what it was the Drama Club did for kicks this Spring Break. Get ready!

Rodgers' column appears every three weeks.