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The Crux

February 2002

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My response to Mr. Myers' controversial hobby of molesting children? I'm going to break up with him, and had I known he was a child molester, I never would have gone out with him in the first place. And to all the people who signed that letter to him with the bit about "we support you no matter what?" Ha ha. (I can see how being on the cross country team might make Nick and Jason think that all students experience frequent urges to expose their nipples, but this is hardly the case.)

I don't know who I'm madder at: Gus Sayer, or the previous victims who declined to press charges. Whether or not they still thought that Uncle Stephen was a saint, it would have been nice if it had occurred to them that maybe "high school principal" and "pedophile" weren't the best two jobs for him to be working simultaneously.

As for Gus Sayer, he should either have told The Department of Social Services as soon as he received the mother's complaint, or he shouldn't have been quite so wrong. Speaking of the incompetence of the Amherst school system, I'm going to dabble in the topic of race relations.

Black people have an unfair advantage over the other non-white races in Amherst: they have a well-respected representative (who in Amherst has been transformed into a meaningless mascot). The closest thing that Latin American people have to Martin Luther King, Jr. is the Taco Bell Chihuahua. White American society needs a brilliant spokesperson for a race to appear before it will start to think about not making life a living hell for the members of that race. It's unsurprising that Dr. King has been unmatched (in America) in his heroism: he was one in a billion. This is not to say that white society has totally abandoned its goal of creating misery for black people, but blacks have a head start on the other non-whites. For example, the only thing I learned about Cambodia in elementary school is that you can buy a hand grenade there for \$1.50.

Amherst is all about celebrating diversity, but what diversity are they referring to? The only diversity that has any relevance in day to day life is this: white people have peach or pink colored skin and big eyes and thin lips, east Asian people have tan skin and squinty eyes and thinner lips, and black people have dark brown skin and big eyes and big lips. That's it. The Amherst school system constantly tries to

Oppression is when one group says to another "we hate you because you look funny, and we're going to kill you because it's economically advantageous to us."

The reason that I am talking about all this is something that happened in my math class a couple of weeks ago. People were talking about the fights that have been breaking out in school recently. and one by one, the students in my class began to talk about how it was the Puerto Rican kids' fault. Not specific kids, just The Puerto Ricans. One student pointed out that most of them aren't from Puerto Rico, and I realized that to much of my math class, "Puerto Rican" meant "Light Brown."

It was surreal. I'm positive that the nature of the discussion would have been very different had there been a single Latin American student in my class. Things began to escalate, and I thought of the words "Puerto Rican Problem." I leaned over to my friend, and said in a German accent: "I seenk I haf a solution to zis problem." The conversation I was witnessing was more informative than any of the readings for Holocaust.

One student said that he thought the real problem was how some of the kids in the main hall try to act like they're in a ghetto, which means that they are acting scary. Dark skinned kids and light skinned kids are being forced into roles by each other. The actions of the dark skinned kids who are scared are much more tangible than the actions of the light skinned kids who are scared. At our school, when dark skinned kids feel defensive, it often manifests itself in the form of anger. Rap, baggy clothes, scowling. All of this is scary, which is of course the point. But it's not as scary as white kids.

I'm white, of course. I assume that you could tell by the way I avoided offering insight as to what it's like to be non-white. I'm saying this because I don't want anyone to think that I'm speaking out of order: I'm still speaking as a white. And as a white, even I find it chilling to see crowds of white kids with smug little expressions that say "the whole country is on my side, and this is what allows me to relax around dark people."

When we act on our fears, we ruin everything for everyone. It's understandable, of course: how many bees have to sting you before you start being afraid of bees? The problem is that

close cultural gaps between white and non-white students by dragging everyone to Cambodian New Year celebrations, making everyone read books about slavery, and forcing everyone to listen to African music. White kids don't need to know what African music sounds like, or what day Cambodians celebrate the new year, or what slavery was like. Kids with light tan skin need to know what it's like to be a kid with brown skin walking into a convenience store. Oppression doesn't happen because white people don't know what day Kwanzaa is.

these aren't bugs, and it messes with society to live defensively around people because they look different. We should stop. Actually, scratch everything I've said before this paragraph (except the stuff about Uncle Stephen, that's so goddamn funny). As good-natured as my suggestions are, if anyone listens to them (which I now hope to God they won't) it's going to make for a boring last trimester. Let's see who would've won if we'd been allowed to put on the play... the Sharks, or the Jets?

Three Important Things To Think About

1. Uncle Stephen
2. Uncle Jason
3. Uncle Nick