

## King of Pop is glorified after death



By Emily Cooper  
STAFF WRITER

Celebrities in the media are consuming far too much of our lives.

Case in point: Michael Jackson has now been gone for a little over two years, yet people are still talking about his death.

On June 25, 2009, both Michael Jackson and Farah Fawcett died, yet no one is still talking about the latter.

In the days immediately after Jackson's death, you could not escape the former entertainer.

Every other channel had some type of program involving Jackson. There were multiple biographies, newscasts and, of course, celebrity gossip shows buzzing about Jackson's death.

I was left wondering, how is it that people all of a sudden love Jackson so much? During

my childhood I recall people making fun of Jackson.

To see people mourn Jackson as though he was some great Messiah was just downright odd.

He is without a doubt an icon that has touched many lives. But has everyone forgotten the child molestation

Immediately after Jackson's death, his music sales skyrocketed. In the days following his death, "Billie Jean" and "Thriller" dominated the airwaves. As terrible as it sounds, Jackson's death may have been the best thing that had ever happened to his career. The media stopped

Greg Strassell, the senior vice president for programming at CBS Radio. "Then all of a sudden the audience wanted to hear his songs again. I think they had forgotten how great that music was."

Jackson was obviously a talented artist, as well as a tortured soul.

He had been a celebrity since the tender age of 10. Being in the spotlight for your entire adult life can understandably have negative repercussions. It would probably be easier to count how many child stars did not end up having a lawsuit with a family member, a drug addiction or a couple of mug shots.

It is great that people are finally giving him credit for his musical talent again. However, obsessing about him, releasing his CDs over and over again, and showing reruns of documentaries about his life is not going to bring him back.

There are far more important things that should be on the headlines of newspapers.

Frankly it is disgusting that the verdict of Jackson's doctor's trial was on the front page of a CNN newspaper. Jackson is dead, and honestly, people need to get over it.

**"I don't think radio stations had been playing his music in the last couple of years, due to his legal issues. Then all of a sudden the audience wanted to hear his songs again. I think they had forgotten how great that music was."**

**Greg Strassell, senior vice president for programming at CBS Radio**

accusations?

Why is it that once a celebrity dies, we put them on a pedestal, forgetting everything horrible they have done while simultaneously idolizing them for their accomplishments?

portraying him as an alleged child-molesting, washed-up, '80s pop star.

"I don't think radio stations had been playing his music in the last couple of years, due to his legal issues," said

## Andy Rooney leaves a unique legacy



By Renee Leach  
STAFF WRITER

If you have ever tuned into CBS's Sunday program "60 minutes," you will have most likely been subjected to well-researched, objective reporting on a myriad of topics. At least for about the first 57 minutes.

Since 1978, each show saved its final words for a segment entitled "A Few Minutes with Andy Rooney."

These small installments made Andy Rooney a household name.

This segment remained a regular part of the broadcast (with the exception of a few temporary removals) until Oct. 2. He continued writing on his own until his death on Nov. 4, at the age of 92, from surgical complications.

In the last minutes of the show, he could share his opinion about pretty much anything — modern art, recent events, even paper-weights. The variation suggested that no subject was safe from his commentary.

His segment was taped in his very own office. Rooney spoke directly to

the camera in front of a backdrop of the unstaged clutter of his workspace where he hunkered down to write, as if he had taken a break from composing to record, and would continue as soon as the camera stopped rolling.

It was in this unassuming setting that Rooney brought usually ignored topics to the table (in his case, a wooden desk, which he custom built and proudly choose to talk about once on the show).

These topics were generally relatable to the CBS network audience. His opinion on the matter, however, garnered different reactions. Whether his audience agreed or not, they were forced to become momentarily more aware of something that otherwise would be forgotten amid the lofty subjects of major news.

What exactly gave Rooney the unique credentials to rant so freely and have his rants broadcast so widely?

Despite his informal manner, he was a seasoned journalist.

He began his career writing for the WWII publication Stars and Stripes, and then moved on to penning the scripts for such well-established networks as CBS and PBS. After earning a reputation for himself, he spent his later years pursuing topics of personal interest.

He published books, such as "Common Nonsense," and created TV specials, one of which — "Mr. Rooney Goes to Washington" — even earned him the prestigious Peabody Award for

journalism in 1975.

Rooney also believed his commentary reflected the majority of America.

"The things I write and read on television are for average, everyday Americans, I mean, like myself, or so I think," Rooney once said.

But, inevitably, his statement did not resonate with all Americans.

He certainly was not always agreed with. But it was this very unapologetic style that kept him interesting amid a (sometimes painfully) objective world of news.

He criticized the media's fixation with being neutral, because, as he saw it, the audience will always be biased.

He once said, "People will generally accept facts as truth only if the facts agree with what they already believe."

His opinions were known to pack a shock factor, and sometimes that was their appeal. However, in many instances, his outspoken nature crossed the line rather than toed it. "60 Minutes" revoked his segment many times because of racist, sexist, and homophobic comments he said on and off the air, but the ratings always plummeted until his return. The public cast him in a negative light, yet could not get enough of "America's favorite curmudgeon," the unofficial title he garnered.

And for this exact genuine nature, America should commemorate the career of Andy Rooney.

### Staff Editorial

## Don't just promote diversity, practice it

Everyone promotes it, it's written all over the banners that line the main Founders pathway, and our website claims we have it in abundance. What is it? Diversity, of course.

Ask anyone walking to class what his or her story is, and it is certain one will hear a unique history. At the same time, for all the programs and events that organizations hold, does Guilford honestly listen to all the voices on campus?

Though we try to embrace diversity here at Guilford, it's often easy to leave some groups out of the conversation. Take, for example, the recent plan to make Guilford universally accessible through the Empathy, Equality and Access plan. It's more than just making Guilford a more welcoming place to all; it is an example of giving a group a place in discussions about diversity — a group that's often left out of such discussions. One thing that the EEA plan does is force us to consider differences in ability as a part of diversity.

Differences in ability aren't usually thought about when we talk about diversity. But it isn't just those with disabilities who seem to lose their voice: students who are non-white but not black, the non-religious, the politically conservative, and even those in the non-traditional student age group tend to be cast aside, perhaps even ignored.

As a whole, Guilford addresses each of those groups, but unequally. Departments showcase ethnic workshops and presentations, but the majority address the black-white color line. As for the non-religious students, there are rarely, if any, organizations that speak about atheism or simple humanism. Politically, it is generally acknowledged that most of Guilford aligns with the more moderate-liberal side, which effectively marginalizes more conservative perspectives.

Facing our superficial diversity forces us to ask: How do we reconcile what we promote externally with what we actually practice?

We can broaden the definition of diversity as an institution through our personal choices. Whether it's sitting with acquaintances instead of best friends, cheering a lacrosse game instead of football, or dancing at GenderBend instead of clubbing, we decide what diversity means. Talk about your beliefs — but also listen. We are Guilford, and we are diverse.

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