

Shales

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certainly no case of, quote, 'getting a black to fill the position.' Johnathan is an eminently qualified person."

Networks can move very quickly when they perceive a threat. The very next day, after the meeting with Jackson, was Rodgers' last on the "Morning News." His credit was held on the screen for an extra few seconds as a farewell.

That evening he was on his way to Chicago with Derrough. Meetings with local leaders had already been scheduled.

Will the appointment of Rodgers help quiet the anger in Chicago?

Obviously it won't solve all the station's problems at once. But Walter Perkins, a spokesman for Operation PUSH in Chicago, says, "We see the naming of Mr. Rodgers as a step in the right direction."

Now, Perkins says, he would like to see WBBM move its weekly public-affairs program, "Common Ground," which deals with black issues, to a slightly better time slot than 2 o'clock on a Sunday morning, where he once found it.

WBBM's gain is, of course, another devastating blow to the low-rated "CBS Morning News," which under Rodgers was just starting to show some vigor.

Rodgers was enormously liked and respected by the staff. One associate moaned, "Here we were enjoying all the bad publicity about 'Good Morning, America,' and now we have to go shoot ourselves in the foot."

ABC's "GMA" recently lost ratings dominance to NBC's "Today" show. ABC insiders say that, despite official denials, ABC will soon move "GMA" from the entertainment division, which now produces it, to the news division, as a step toward remodeling the faltering show.

The morning wars go on. But in Chicago, at least, there is a hopeful, if transitory, calm.

One moral of the story is this: You can get a television station to clean up its act, but you are probably going to need an awfully huge broom to do it.

Jacob

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The lesson here is that hard work has a payoff. When we tell ghetto kids to study or work hard, we are often met with disbelief because their daily experience teaches them that whatever you do, your horizons will be limited.

But the lucky 52 from P.S. 121 were given what middle-class kids have: the security of having the opportunity to go on to college.

With their expectations changed, so were their motivations and, finally, their performance.

This suggests that a nationwide program that makes college admission available to qualified economically disadvantaged students could spark a massive improvement in students' educational performance, especially if accompanied by social services and personal attention to keep the youngsters motivated and out of trouble.

By drawing the right conclusions from this remarkable story, we can make going to college as normal for disadvantaged kids as it is for affluent ones.



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