

Everyone knows that gossip flies on campus

by **Jamie Michaels**
Opinion Editor

As much as our professors encourage us to find multiple sources and accurately document them to promote the validity of our arguments, that sentiment seldom leaves the walls of the classroom.

So while little credence is given to a single claim that, for instance, Henry VIII was a homosexual ballet dancer who ran around in women's clothing, the slightest hint that Jane and John are dating, or that Sally got wasted on Tuesday night and puked in Sarah's car is treated as indisputable truth.

Nor does it stop there. Suddenly Jane is pregnant with John's brother Jimmy's child and Sally was arrested and had to go to the ER for alcohol poisoning.

This is nothing new; everyone knows that gossip flies. I must note here that I am certainly not above reproach in the matter.

And the problem lies not so much in the spreading of news (though frankly it is often none of our business), but in the misunderstanding of situations or events, and moreover in the editorializing of our comments. When we add our personal emotions, mannerisms, accents, and tones of voice to our stories, we invoke in our audiences feelings which they may or may not have had for themselves had they been present.

So we create for ourselves pockets of like-mindedness, paying no mind to whether that support is authentic or not. Thus a clique is born.

The difficult thing here is that often groups are turned against one another who have no intrinsic qualms with each other. People take vehement stands for causes whose supporting evidence is weak at best. And most often, people make fools of themselves and their peers.

And so I say to you, Brevard College, check your facts. Ask yourself, as God did of Jonah, "Do you do right to be angry?" If you find that you do, by all means voice it.

But if not, think twice about whose ear is on the other end of your whisper.

Got an opinion?

Send your letters to *The Clarion* at
clarion@brevard.edu

We meet Mondays at 7:30 p.m. in MG 138

Males deserve to cheer

by **Aaron Hall**
Staff Writer

Last week, I walked out into the lobby of my residence hall and saw a huge banner proclaiming, "Cheerleader Tryouts! Open to any female!"

At first I furrowed my brow and thought, "Wow... That's kind of weird. Why wouldn't they leave it open to guys? I don't think I've ever even seen a college with an all-girl cheerleading team, public or private." As I thought about it more, I began to grow angry. "What is going on here?" I thought.

So as I spoke to my fellow students about this alleged discrimination, someone brought it to my attention that the athletic director, Tom Collins, had made the decision. Curious as to the truth behind the matter, I sent Collins an e-mail asking, "Why did you decide to have the cheerleading team be exclusively female?"

"Based on my experience," his e-mail replied. "At Campbell we found it difficult to establish a consistent coed team with a limited student base. The problem is generally not finding one or two guys who will cheer, but a consistent team of six to eight qualified male cheerleaders that will make a 2-3 year commitment to building the program. We recruited a competitive all girl squad and formed a solid pep band as the foundation for our spirit program. The strategy worked well and in my professional opinion, I believe it is the best path for us to choose here at Brevard."

As I read his reply, I had to nod to myself and say, "I can respect that argument." Mr. Collins didn't make the decision for an all-female cheerleading team because he felt cheerleading is for girls only, but rather because his experience has shown him that it just doesn't work at small schools; it wouldn't receive the support that it needs.

Now, I can respect anyone's decision to do or not do something based on their experience. To me, experience is the most solid foundation on which a person can make a choice. But that doesn't mean that I have to agree with it.

I am of the belief that if someone has the skill, desire, and commitment to do something, whatever that something may be, then they should have every right to do it.

If a guy can get out there and get the crowd all riled up, cheering for the team, who are any of us to deny him that opportunity? If a girl can get out on the football field and knock a player to the ground with her tackles or make a fifty yard pass, again: who are we to deny her that opportunity?

I'm not saying that males should be put on the cheerleading team so that we can be "p.c." That upsets me just as much as discrimination. "Oh, well...we needed our company to be a little more politically correct, so this person got the job instead of you." That is exactly the same as discrimination; you're just discriminating in one person's favor instead of another.

A person's abilities, desire, and commitment to do the task are the only things that should be considered when deciding if they should or should not be allowed to do the task. I think that tryouts should've been open to everyone— and if only a couple of guys show up, then so be it.

If the guys aren't willing to make the commitment necessary to build the team, then clearly they should not be allowed on the team. That can be said of any team in anything, guys and girls alike of any background.

If they are willing to commit, then work with them to build a team; perhaps they will inspire others to join. That teams are not allowed to compete because they only have a couple of males, is an issue that needs to be addressed.