

## West High Controversy

By Zack Harding  
Arts & Life Editor

Last week West Henderson High School, in neighboring Henderson County, had a racial controversy flare up revolving around a student designed display. But was the controversy for the right reasons?

The display depicted the school's falcon mascot beheading a player from an opposing team that the school was going to play against later in the week. The player's body was grasped in the falcon's claws as blood trickled down the neck. The controversy began not for any of these reasons though, but because the player was depicted wearing a brown glove.

Some students at the school felt that the brown glove indicated skin tone and that the player was of African American heritage. They felt the beheading represented an act of racist violence, never mind that the character's head had white skin tone. Much brouhaha was stirred up, the display was taken down, and a town meeting was

planned to air out any lingering feelings.

Two thoughts come to mind: First, we as a society are letting racism become something even more terrible than it already is. We promote racism by letting it reach into places where it is non-existent. Such actions only serve to set us back in lessening racist behavior. Everyone is scared to death of being identified as racist, but they are so very ready to point their finger when opportunity comes along.

Secondly, why was this display jeered for its supposed racial theme rather than its blatantly violent one? With the media so gung-ho about violence in school, video games and music, why was this aspect overlooked? Sure, it's a judgment call that I am not in a position to make, but it seems like creative students could come up with a better way of promoting their team.

It seems that our priorities are quite polluted with media hounds that use fear as a baseline. Yes, I am a journalist, but I will try my hardest to never be like one of those. If the glove doesn't fit, you must acquit.

## Modern Oppression: Jena six

by Rhea Frederick  
Copy Editor

Conflict, black. Nooses, white. "Jena 6," black. Beating, white. Attempted murder, black. Suspension, white. Aggravated second-degree battery, *black*.

Does all of this commotion leave you wondering?

Last December, a conflict broke out between teenage boys of different skin colors, 3 white and 6 black. In Jena, Louisiana at a high school that nobody knew much about until now, 6 black students were enjoying their afternoon under a tree where 3 white students were enjoying their afternoon on the previous day. After seeing the black students under *their* tree, the white students decided it would be funny to hang 3 nooses in order to mark their territory. They didn't realize that one of the three of them would be brutally beaten and in the hospital with a concussion on the following day.

The black students were angered by the

white students' tree ornaments, and decided to show their emotion, physically. Now, one of them is in jail and being charged with attempted murder.

Well, what happened to the white guys that hung the nooses? They were given a 3 day, in-school suspension.

"It's hard to believe we can't look past race anymore," freshman Nina Willis commented after discussing the story of "Jena 6" with her. "I thought we were getting past that."

150 years after Lincoln's attempt of racial equality, and merely 50 years after Martin Luther King's heartfelt strategies, we still continue to divide ourselves into descendants of race. We are all one people.

This controversy is not only about the fact that there is racial discrimination going on in our high schools, but also that there continues to be racial discrimination in our court systems. According to the Chicago Suntimes, "The national average is that African Americans face serious discipline



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more than 3 times the rate of white students. African American students do not misbehave more than others, but face far more harsh discipline when they do misbehave."

Mychal Bell, the black student currently being charged with attempted murder, certainly did not bully another student for no reason. He was being harassed, therefore he took action.

Is it really fair that the students doing the harassing only got a 3 day in-school suspension, and the ones they harassed are in jail in response thereto? I don't think so.

It is the stories such as the Jena 6 that should make us look more directly at discrimination in the United States.

Is it still going on? Will it continue to last? And if so, for how long will this immature insanity continue?

Someone needs to put an end to it; all it takes is love.