

To: All Students; Subject: Summer Flames

ASHLIE CANIPE

The human ability to take advantage of an opportunity to hit below the belt is often exhibited publicly on televised wrestling channels, in presidential debates. However, this summer I became most appalled at the cheap shots my own peers took at each other, which could be viewed by all Science and Math students through school-issued email accounts. As soon as one all-student email was sent, it seemed that one or more responses accompanied it—responses that were not always accolades or even tactful criticisms. An easy solution to keeping out of the

strings of emails and responses to them is to delete all of the emails sent to all students that are from students, choosing not to read them and therefore having no complaints. I kept reading them, for the same reason that you might turn to page 9A in the newspaper to read a continuation of an article from the day's headline. While I was amazed at the cruelties slung fiercely through cyberspace for the humiliation of one person in front of the entire student body, I could not

stop myself from reading further.

These summer emails have been a personal attack on everyone at this school and everyone who has ever been a student here. Why would a group of talented and resourceful intellectuals choose to battle in such a way—through name-calling, insults, and character attacks which can be neither proved nor disproved, and are therefore not subject for response? These students would not ordi-

narily show such hatred. Through email and mass mailings, the victims of these vicious emails are depersonalized. The sort of bashing evidenced this summer in all-student emails could make anyone feel that their assertion of their own opinion or advice is deficient. What sort of institution would our school be without the free sharing of ideas and viewpoints, knowing that each individual's differs?

I am aware that this is not the first summer that flaming emails have heated up students' summer vacation, and do not expect that this summer was the conclusion. Those of us who are seniors this year will set the tone next June. Just

as some seniors graced this summer with advice for our senior year and memories of their own, we all can share with each other in a civil manner. With the positive turn that the string of sharing titles of favorite books brought about, as well as the more reader-friendly emails that were sprinkled throughout our two months of summer vacation, the tradition and tone of summer all-student emails for next year has the potential to become one upon which students can happily reflect.

"What sort of institution would our school be without the free sharing of ideas, knowing that each individual's differs?"

Heading Towards a Trimester

KRISTOPH KLEINER

As most students know, NCSSM will follow a trimester schedule for the 2004-2005 school year. Recently, the administration and the curriculum task force committee decided the final academic schedule for next year. We, the juniors, will have our NCSSM career split between the two schedule systems. Splitting our year into three parts lends certain advantages to next year's schedule; for example, classes geared toward preparing students for the AP exam will be

taught in the last semester. Those who do not want to take the exam will not have to participate in the AP only portions.

Asking around, I heard a variety of opinions about the trimester schedule. Here are a few of the student responses:



Galen Andrew: "We will not have enough time to do our homework and the classes will not have enough time to cover the material."

Janie Qu: "I am against it because the semester system

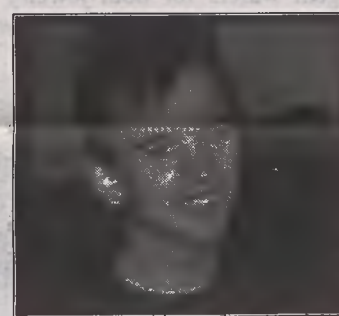


we have now it working fine and I don't see any reason to change."

Colin Lavery: "It's good because will have more free time since the classes won't be year long."

Aden VanNoppen: "It could be good because it will cut down the workload and will allow us to take more

classes."



Nick Knapp: "I have heard that all the schools that switch to the trimester go back after a couple of years."

It seems that there are conflicting opinions concerning the move to the trimester. I personally think we will have to try this new schedule to evaluate the pros and cons. Whatever your opinion, the trimester will be implemented next year, so be ready.

Do you have an opinion on the shift towards a trimester schedule? Let us know! Email your opinion to: buckwalterr@ncssm.edu

"Justice" from Page 3

society. How so many can separate homophobia from any other obviously baseless bigotry is completely beyond me.

The prejudice that may have been put to work in this case is present at all levels. Most victims of anti-lesbian/gay violence, more than 80%, never report the incidents due to the fear of being "outed." The hostile climate in this country concerning alternative lifestyles makes gay youth four times as likely as their straight peers to commit suicide.

When you see someone dressed in drag, what do you think about them? What do you assume about the way they live, who they are? How many times do you hear the word "fag" every day? How many times do you hear the word "gay" in place of "bad," "undesirable," "wrong," "annoying" in a sentence? Teachers, how do you deal with openly gay students in your

"An estimated 40% of woman on death row had an implication of lesbianism used against them, whether the charge was true or not."

classrooms, and what kind of example do you set about how they should be treated, how appropriate or inappropriate their behavior

(and who they are), if differing from the norm is?

Was justice served in this case? I do not know, but I think that justice is never truly served when societal prejudice



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is unfairly applied to any person. Even with the hope generated over recent Supreme Court rulings on sodomy and discussion on gay marriage in Canada and elsewhere, an awareness of the generally

overwhelming climate of homophobia in most of the US is still present. When reading about this case, I was reminded of a portion of Michael

Bronski's "The Liberation of Pleasure": "The fight to gain equal rights for homosexuals is a vital one that will not only make U.S. democracy more just, but will help fulfill the idealistic dream of America as a land of freedom for everyone... Just as the repeal of Jim Crow laws and the enactment of civil rights legislation did not eradicate racism, the repeal of anti-gay laws and the passing of

equal protection and nondiscrimination legislation for homosexuals will not bring about freedom for gay people. Changing or enacting a law will not change heterosexuals' hearts and minds or speak to their deepest fears."

We can only hope that our legal system is not being used to proliferate a new sense of prejudice and intolerance in our country, and we cannot pretend to live in a free and open society when ten percent or more of our population must live in fear of prejudice both from private interactions and from the legal system that is supposed to protect them.