

Human Relations Day fails to enlighten

By Jenny Ballen
Reporter

Human Relations Day. Every year the sophomores and freshmen filter into classrooms with fifteen other disinterested kids. And to what avail? The idea is a good one: to make students more culturally aware and accepting of one another, but does it really work? From what I've seen in the past two years, the answer is no.

Every student dreads Human Relations Day. The fact is, it's boring. We schlep from the auditorium to our rooms where we meet our spunky facilitator. Then, we discuss Grimsley's racial relations and possible solutions to all of our problems. Well, that's the way it's supposed to happen. Most of the time we just sit around and doodle or drool while our facilitator tries to squeeze some kind of opinion out of us.

Of course, not all underclassmen are apathetic and unresponsive. Some of the people were downright opinionated. The lucky facilitators who were assigned these outspoken kiddos probably had a good session where most of the people eventually got involved. Still, the effects of this three hour exercise (or should I say ordeal?) have yet to be seen. During the break, we were back in our old cliques, sipping our sodas gleefully. Not 30 seconds before, we denounced the voluntary segregation to which we subject ourselves; now we lounge around the hallway, back with our old groups of people.

It's just not that easy to integrate people. How many Grimsley students do you know that would "say hello to someone new everyday" or "start eating lunch with a new group of people"? Maybe a hopeful handful, but not many. Cultural awareness at Grimsley is not going to occur after "more Human Relations Days" or even after "getting rid of all the

teachers, especially Mr./Mrs. (least favorite teacher here)." Integration and open-mindedness have to come gradually. You can't shove cultural awareness down the throats of a dozen slouching bodies and expect them to come away from the session renewed and ready for desegregation.

We students here at Grimsley already know the situation on campus. Everyday we see a majority of white students eating outside and as almost entirely black group eating in the cafeteria. This happens not because we are close-minded and ignorant, but because it's what we're used to and it's where our friends are.

At lunchtime after Human Relations, we all met our friends at our usual place and sat down to have our lunches where we always do. It was no different from any other day: whites outside and blacks in the cafeteria. Campus looked the same as it always did on every other day.

Music has lost its soul

By Cesar Alvarez
Reporter

Music has always been a staple for civilized society. Any civilization, ancient or modern, is often characterized by its music. Music is the voice of the people and their lives. So why is today's popular music so bad?

Over the years popular music has constantly changed in terms of musical technicalities and overall presentation. But ever since musicians have been identified more by what they look like than by the quality of their music the taste of the public has taken a swift turn.

I was watching a no-name awards show on VH-1 the other day and my screen was graced with the presence of some random bluesy-rock playing white guy. This illustrious musician played a song with a melody composed primarily of three notes and one basic blues chord. He sang a few lyrics, played a gutsy electric guitar solo, and ended with a smile. The severe mediocrity of this song would not have bothered me one bit under normal circumstances. However, I noticed that thousands of people were jumping out of their seats and screaming and clapping for this guy, as if he had wowed them with his passionate rendition of "Three-Note One-Chord Blues." Doesn't it bother anyone that without 500 watt amps and distortion the majority of popular music is nothing more than simplistic and silly?

In pre-Elvis America all of the famous musicians were famous because so many people loved their music. Once rock and roll came into the scene music turned in to something that could be visually manipulated. The good looking, flashy exciting musician would

always win out over the virtuoso. TV and mass media have visualized our society and brought everything into new light. Under this new light, however, good music is not recognized.

Music doesn't evoke passion any more. Today's music rarely makes any sort of political, meaningful, or even entertaining statement. It is all about money and fame.

I don't have too much criticism for Mr. Blues Man on VH-1, because he is making a much better living than I am. It's the fact that the American public finds so much value in such shallow and two dimensional music that irks me. Music has the capabilities of saying so much more than that, but what makes it often times is standardized music that could just as easily have come out of a some other musician and sound relatively the same.

People enjoy a certain performer or type of music because it speaks to them and they understand it. Someone who loves classical music might get the same feeling from listening to Tchaikovsky as a punk rocker would get from The Offspring. The difference is that it takes more thought, emotion, and positive energy to understand Nutcracker Suite as opposed to Come out and Play. Much of today's music is extremely repetitive and alike in its structure. It seems to numb, rather than engage, the minds of its listeners.

I fail to comprehend why popular music has taken this dive in quality. Regardless, however, of what I understand, it is very frightening that successful musicians are no longer created by the musicians themselves, but by Hollywood and MTV. Too many people have stopped listening to the music and started to look at who's playing the music and what they are wearing.

Grimsley deserves more respect

By Lindsey Gulya
Staff Writer

Students here at Grimsley always whine and protest, saying that our school "sucks." Sure, Grimsley isn't perfect (in fact, some people suggest that we'd be better off in prison); but I think that when you consider the other options, Grimsley is the only decent school to attend.

My intention isn't to pick on all the other schools in our system or to pinpoint every little problem they have. I'm just going to say that there's a lot of differences between Grimsley and other schools.

Grimsley is the oldest high school in Greensboro and by far the largest. Students complain about Grimsley's immense size, saying it's impossible to get from one end of campus to the other in the five minutes we have between classes. Okay, I agree it's a pain, but if you think about it, we could be going to a school without a huge front lawn for students to relax and eat lunch on or woods to do hands-on nature studies in. If all our classrooms were in a few simple main buildings, we'd have over-crowded halls or, even worse, one-way halls where you get in trouble for walking in the wrong direction. That would definitely not be easier on us.

A major problem at some schools is violence. Okay, so we had some guy go down Service Drive with a shotgun and 15 rounds of ammo in the back of his truck. Nothing came of it; it's not like he even had the gun out. And we had a scary incident, over two years ago, that many of us still remember well. Although this weighs heavily on our record of violence, it is one incident.

We at Grimsley really don't have to worry about guns or other weapons. Most people I know feel pretty safe at Grimsley, students and faculty alike. It's not like we worry about having a gun pulled on us for bumping into someone in the hall or accidentally rear-ending their car. Don't laugh because at some schools you can actually get threatened for those stupid things or just because somebody thinks you looked at them wrong.

Nearly every day there is some kind of conflict in other schools, whether it be a fistfight just to see who's tougher, or a cat fight over a guy. Fights abound in certain schools to the point where there are at least 2 or 3 big fights a week, fights where everyone around stops to watch. It's seldom that we have serious fights here at Grimsley; I can count on one hand the number of times

a fight has been such a big deal that 50% of the school heard something about it.

The biggest problem I have with other schools is the social aspect of the school. At almost every school, there are different cliques and groups of people, even at Grimsley. But I have noticed that in some schools, people are judged only by what group they're in, the way they look, and the other people like them. There are the preps, the rednecks, the thugs, the alternative people, and the people who are just plain nerds. And in the mind of the students, there is nothing in between.

Grimsley, however, is not as socially binding or inhibiting as other schools. Our students don't all fit into one of the strictly regulated social groupings that other schools have. A lot of students at our school are just... well, themselves- individuals who don't imitate or fake something they're not. We are also a whole lot more open-minded and accepting of different people. Like me, many students here have friends that are from all walks of life and that are completely different from each other. We can call a lot of people friends even if they don't talk like we do, dress the way we do, hang out with the same people we hang out with, or enjoy the same activities.

It's easy to hate school- after all, it's inhibiting and oppressive. Classes are not fun and neither is learning. I'm sure everyone, even the teachers and administration, could think of about a thousand places they would rather be than school. But the fact is, we have to be here. It's required by our parents, not to mention the law. As horrible as school is, our school isn't all that bad when you compare it to all the others.

I recently saw a friend of mine who transferred out of Grimsley because of how much he had hated it. He had been at his new school for almost a year, so I was surprised when he told me he was coming back to Grimsley next year and had to ask why. His response? It was very similar to what my friends who have graduated from Grimsley have told me: "You never know how much you value something until it's gone."

OOPS!

The Speak Out on page 4 of the March 11 edition of the *High Life* said that the Guidance office asked Josh Johnson if he was aware of the drug policy. It was the Attendance Office, not Guidance, which posed the question.

High Life

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The *High Life* Staff welcomes comments in the form of letters to the editor from students, faculty, and the reading public. Letters may be turned in to the office. All letters must be signed. The staff reserves the right to reject any letter containing libelous statements, the right to edit for length and grammatical errors, and the right to ascertain the truthfulness of its content. The *High Life* is published eight times a year and is produced by the students of Grimsley High School, 801 Westover Terrace, Greensboro, NC 27408. The *High Life* functions as a medium for creative journalistic pursuits as well as a training instrument for aspiring journalists, artists, and writers. The *High Life* functions as a public forum for student expression.

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