

A community responds. . .

Due to an overwhelming community response to a sports column by Daniel Passner '06 that printed in the Oct. 21 issue of the Justice, the Editorial Board deemed it appropriate to print every last letter to the editor submitted this week.

No place for racial slurs in the Justice

I may be one of the first, but I will certainly not be the last to write to you concerning Dan Passner's article in the Oct. 21 edition of the Justice. I probably won't have much original material in this letter for you, but I am writing to ask for the dismissal of Dan Passner from the Justice. There is a difference between making an assault on someone's character (although not the most interesting sort of journalism) and using a hateful racial slur. There is no place for that type of hatred in the Justice, or anywhere on the Brandeis campus.

I came to Brandeis in large part to get away from the anti-Semitism I faced for much of my life, expecting a community tolerant to all different types of people. I have been pleasantly surprised by the tolerance shown to all groups of people on campus, until now. Passner will probably claim that he was quoting someone, and that makes it OK, but that is

“Could there be a more disgusting riddle scrawled on the face of the Justice?”

— Alex Goldstein '06

completely untrue. I know the Justice doesn't support Passner's racism and hatred, and I hope you will do the right thing, and inform Passner that he would be better off pursuing his journalistic hatred and racism elsewhere, possibly for the neo-Nazis.

I am also saddened by the oversight of the sports editor, who I think is Rob Siegel '04. I have enjoyed his work as a writer, but I hope that he also comes under review for allowing this disgusting piece to be published. Thanks for your time.

— Alex Hughes '06

Editor's Note: Since this letter was written, both columnist Dan Passner '06 and sports editor Rob Siegel '04 have resigned from the Justice.

Despite quotation, Passner to blame

Whatever the intention with his words, Dan Passner's article “Dusty Baker exposed” in the last issue concerning the Cub's manager is undoubtedly the most pathetic and disgusting piece of supposed “journalism” that I have ever read. I can excuse the use of tasteless imagery (“Dusty seems as smart as Jessica Simpson, and his breasts seem to sag more”) I can excuse the inaccuracies in his storytelling, but what I absolutely cannot excuse is the devolution of a criticism of Dusty Baker into a sickening racial slur. Though he attempts to relinquish any control over such a slur by pinning it on his acquaintance Joseph Shmulewitz '06, and tries to pass the buck by noting that he “cannot endorse it, but (he) finds it fitting,” the blatant racial undertones of his article fall squarely upon his shoulders.

“The only thing Baker has a Ph.D. in is something that starts with an N and rhymes with Tigger . . .”

Could there be a more disgusting riddle scrawled upon the face of the Justice? This article makes me embarrassed to be a Brandeis student, and only further breeds a cli-

mate of intolerance on this campus that seems to be building every day toward African-American and other minority students on campus. Whatever your intent, Mr. Passner, you cannot deny the fact that the readership of this paper extends beyond scope of the people who find your little quips to be humorous. I believe this breach of journalistic ethics to be inexcusable, and would ask that Dan Passner no longer is allowed to write for this newspaper.

— Alex Goldstein '06

Quotation crossed forbidden boundary

As an alumnus and former Justice columnist, I was highly outraged, offended, and embarrassed by the conclusion to “Dusty Baker Exposed” in your Oct. 21 edition. The Justice has a longstanding tradition of irreverence, rebelliousness, protest, skepticism toward authority and the airing of unpopular and controversial views. These are all generally healthy journalistic attributes, particularly for a campus newspaper. But this quotation from a Brandeis student (not the author) crossed a forbidden boundary into the ugly terrain of outright racism, demeaning Baker for the color of his skin. Worse yet, the author hid behind the quotation of another student, proclaiming with respect to the quote that, “I cannot endorse it, but I find it fitting.” There is nothing remotely “fitting” about this quote, which has no place in this newspaper and never should have been run. I urge the Justice to now do the only right thing: In your next edition, run a prominently placed and appropriately remorseful retraction and apology to the Brandeis community.

— Bruce Singal '70

‘I’m embarrassed by your ignorance.’

As a devoted Cubs fan, I find it necessary to respond to Dan Passner's article last week and to relate my anger over the misreporting and bashing of a well-respected man. I find your article entitled “Dusty Baker exposed” one of the most despicable pieces of writing I have ever read, and I hope that you never again write an article in our paper or in any paper. Your supposed examples of how Dusty Baker has made mistakes during the playoffs are incorrect, and if you had done your research correctly you would have discovered these inaccuracies. The Cubs acquired several players during the final weeks of the season in order to make their playoff push, and each one of these players contributed directly to the success of the Cubs. Whether you want to believe it or not, Dusty Baker's use of veterans was just what it took to get the Cubs five outs away from the World Series, and while you are entitled to your opinion, if you had looked at the statistics you would have realized this. While I do not feel it necessary to go through each player individually and prove you wrong for each of your mistakes, I find it more relevant to comment on the concluding comments of your article because as you say they are what “really” characterize Baker. When I first read your quote from Joseph Shmulewitz '06, I was left in a state of shock over how disrespectful and blatantly irresponsible you were to use such words. While they may not have been your direct vocabulary, as you choose to hide your beliefs behind others, I find their usage so immoral and hateful that I cannot even find the words to explain my own disappointment and anger. Dusty Baker is a legendary coach, a powerful individual, a man who brought respect and excitement back

to an organization that desperately needed his leadership and most importantly of all, a man proud of his heritage and his people. As a Cubs fan I feel it is my responsibility to tell you that we are the ones who judge our own success, we don't need some cynical “baseball fan” to pretend like he can criticize Dusty Baker, and I'm embarrassed for your ignorance that you believe you can share these words with an entire campus. I hope that you learn from your mistakes because this was a big one.

— Morgan Marcus '06

‘Bring to light a grave situation’

Living in a community such as the one fostered by all those who live, work and study here at Brandeis University is a truly wonderful experience. However, like all things, there exist flaws. As the entire campus is surely aware, a recent column article published in the Justice ended with a very powerful and potentially offensive quote. I by no means excuse the remark or its implications, but I do think it presents an opportunity to bring to light a grave situation on campus – the lack of tolerance brought on by the very obsession with being tolerant.

Having grown up with extremely diverse surroundings and participated in myriad cultural events as I continue to do now, I certainly realize the importance of unity and open-mindedness between peoples of all walks of life. Unfortunately, I have noticed that the Brandeis community seems to have an obsession with what we call “political correctness.” As a professor who shall remain nameless said in a class during the week of Oct. 20, “Americans seem to have a habit of lying to each other out of courtesy.” Again I want to emphasize I am not excusing the all but evil quote found in the Justice, but the reaction to it is what spurs this reflection.

The United States of America prides itself on tolerance, integration and finally that thing that seems to have been forgotten: free speech. Since becoming a member of the Brandeis community, I have noticed that people are constantly forced to stop mid-sentence, censor themselves, and then move on with their point. I would like to protest this ridiculousness as loudly as I can! People's sensitivities must certainly be given heed, but somewhere a line must be drawn. We are setting ourselves on a course where students and faculty alike are becoming more

“I thought this kind of blatant hatred was neither encouraged nor accepted here at Brandeis.”

— Gina Phearson (HS)

and more afraid to express their feelings and thoughts, which undermines the entirety of such an intellectual and acclaimed university. I beg each and every person on this campus from student to faculty member to staffer to ask himself this question: Is our total quest for tolerance not a grand digression back to Soviet-style totalitarian rule, where there is only one acceptable manner of expression and all others result in the crucifixion of the person who dares to say something different?

This is not an opinion piece advocating hatred or supporting hate speech. If anything, I would like to see more done about hateful incidents that occur on our campus. What this piece is about is provoking intellectual thought. I believe that every member of this campus needs to realize that to overcorrect is to do away with the freedoms and liberties that we are all so proud to have. It is to create an environment of fear and lack of expression, which is exactly what I see happening right here and now. Fellow members of the Brandeis community: Be sensitive, be tolerant, enjoy and immerse yourselves in the rich and educational environment of diversity that we are so lucky to share. But also, let's not make it so that we have to look over our shoulders every time we make a remark that isn't sweet-smelling and the color of rose petals.

— Jason Levine '07

Passner's column degrading to all

The article by Dan Passner entitled “Dusty Baker exposed” is degrading not only to minorities but to the structure of the Brandeis community as a whole. The quote from “noted civil rights activist Joseph Shmulewitz '06” was audacious and completely uncalled for. Quoting Shmulewitz was out of line, but then Passner had the impudence to add insult to injury by calling the slur “fitting.” Not only does he owe both Dusty Baker and the Brandeis community an apology, but he likewise has no place working with the Justice.

— Amber Gonzales '07

‘I am ashamed of this newspaper’

I am outraged by the final quote found in Dan Passner's article “Dusty Baker exposed.”

I understand the first amendment is operating here, but I thought this kind of blatant hatred was neither encouraged nor accepted here at Brandeis; it is clear to me from this quote that this is not the case. While Passner says he cannot endorse Shmulewitz's quote, I assume an attempt to absolve himself of his tacit agreement with Shmulewitz, he nevertheless includes the quote with no apparent regard for the message of intolerance and hatred it sends.

With education comes great responsibility, and it appears that there is a failure to educate and a lack of social responsibility operating here. I am ashamed of this newspaper and embarrassed for the legacy of Justice Louis Dembitz Brandeis.

— Gina Phearson (HS)

Institutions need to take a stand

I'm not certain who has demonstrated worse judgment, Dan Passner or the editorial board. While it is fairly commonplace for sports writers to encounter racial issues which challenge their discretion, that isn't the situation here. Passner wants to call Dusty stupid. The best he can come up with is to call him a nigger.

This article implies that synonyms for unintelligent can only be applied to Brandeis students not by the students, if Passner is an example. Equally remarkable is that the editorial board prefers to marginalize the black students on campus, rather than offer restraint.

There is no freedom of speech issue here. Passner could have used any number of expressions to convey his point about Dusty. The only

unique point made by his choice is what it says about him, and about the editorial board of the Justice.

— Brian Sinclair-James
Washington, D.C.

Freedom of speech not an issue here

I am writing concerning the article written by Dan Passner in the Oct. 21 issue of the Justice (you may want to consider changing the name of your newspaper). I am not only disturbed by the ignorance of the author of this article, I am truly saddened by your ignorance in publishing it. When my daughter called me last night to express her disappointment in the school's response to the students offended by the underlying racist message here, I thought “this can't be true . . . Brandeis has stood for so much more over the years.” Imagine my disdain when I read it for myself. How cowardly of Passner to attribute his own thoughts to a what? Civil Rights activist?? My response to my daughter: Time has shown us again and again that this disease of racism and the ignorance that keeps it alive will continue to strive until institutions take a stand against it. That does include you, Brandeis.

— Cassandra Cisse
Brandeis Parent

A former Justice editor responds

It seems that Brandeis is with you, even when you believe you are far away. Not yet six months out of the university, I hear of an uproar in response to words printed last week in a Justice sports column, and I cringe to recall past events that undoubtedly have resurfaced.

Anger, confusion and sadness are natural reactions to hurtful words that recall a terrible history. But, however justified initially, these reactions, fostered by an absence of constructive action and human compassion, too easily fester to create an even wider divide in the much-discussed “Brandeis community.” It is senseless, if not absurd, that in an effort to rebut hurtful language whose origin is to dehumanize others, some who claim to fight bigotry commit a similar sin. Too easily, a group of students deemed “responsible” for and iconic of a misdeed are branded with a “Scarlet R,” and some students and administrators fall neatly in line for lack of a more constructive, conciliatory response.

By yelling, by not listening and by refusing constructive conversation and basic forgiveness, another group of people – those quickly branded “racist” and “bigoted” – are easily dehumanized, labeled and demonized. They cease to be seen as individuals and are instead persecuted as members of a fictional bigoted regime that simply doesn't exist.

How is that Brandeis heralds itself as a liberal institution that values justice and truth? Indeed, the university maintains a peace-loving facade, but what lies beneath is elusive. Students rally against impending war and cry out against atrocities unseen. They invoke the causes of the great peacemakers like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi. But King himself said that forgiveness is not something one does on occasion, “it is a permanent attitude.”

And, Gandhi put it even better. “The weak can never forgive,” he said. “Forgiveness is an attribute of the strong.” So where is our strength? Where is our forgiveness?

The Justice staff members and editors are as human and unique as anyone else. Moreover, their experiences, trials and mistakes comprise a learning experience derived not

‘All editors will learn from this mistake’

merely from writing, editing and photography, but by acquiring life skills that cannot be found in a classroom. Every University activity, from athletics and the arts, to student government and campus media, is just that: a learning experience, wrought with skinned knees and thick calluses.

What the student body learns from this encounter should not be merely to yell to all who will listen and who will allow themselves to be intimidated. Those students who some are eager to publicly disparage, discredit and dehumanize are people all the same. The moment you forget that in the names of justice and equality, you become what you profess to despise – you become a person who thinks herself above another.

– *Michaela May '03*

Editor's Note: Michaela May served as editor-in-chief of the Justice from 2001 to 2002.

Difficult struggle requires thought

Like almost all of you I am dismayed and saddened by pain caused to our entire community, but most especially to our community of color, by the remarks quoted in the Justice that used probably the single most offensive term available in our culture to describe Dusty Baker, an African-American baseball coach. Perhaps what troubles me most is the realization that we live within a culture where people could say, repeat and/or review that last paragraph and not have an alarm go off about how hurtful and inappropriate those words were. These words not only affect individual students, staff and faculty but are also in opposition to the core values of the University.

I would like to express my commitment, and the commitment of the Department of Student Activities, to promoting anti-racism education on this campus. The Department of Student Activities oversees the New Student Orientation programs and will be evaluating our Orientation Leader training, the activities we provide during orientation periods, and will be developing a yearlong series of programs for first-year students that educate about the responsibilities of citizenship within our community.

Specifically, we will hold a full day of professionally provided training for Orientation Leaders to educate them about the challenges of living in a pluralistic community, provide them with the skills to talk across and live with difference, and prepare them to help new students achieve these goals as well. We have already invited residence staff to join us and would like to extend that invitation to Brandeis club and organization leaders including members of the campus media.

We are planning to link that training to a yearlong series of programs. We help students prepare for the academic and intellectual opportunities they will encounter at Brandeis; we believe it is just as important to prepare them for the social and community-building opportunities and to explore and celebrate the principles upon which the school was founded.

I believe in our community. I have faith that we can address this current issue and move on to tackle the bigger issues that make such incidents possible. But it won't be painless and it won't happen without struggle that touches every part of Brandeis. This struggle requires all of us to step forward and live up to the principles and values to which we all too often just pay lip service.

– *Alwina Bennett*
Assistant Dean of Student Life

We should help the community heal

In an article in last week's issue of the Justice, a sports columnist quoted another student as saying "the only thing Dusty Baker has a Ph.D. in begins with an N and rhymes with Tigger." This comment, and the fact that the Justice published it, reflects terrible judgment, utter incompetence and inexcusable insensitivity.

On Tuesday, the day the article came out, the Justice and the columnist were both inundated with com-

plaints. The campus erupted in an uproar and the following day tension pervaded the air. On Wednesday night the Intercultural Club Center held an emergency meeting, the first part of which was open to all students. Students called for heads to roll; some called for the resignation of the Justice's sports editor and editor-in-chief, while others went as far as calling for the dissolution of the Justice. Other students made blatantly bigoted comments, saying they "wish the whole school looked like the ICC room" and discussing the irony that "at Brandeis, which was founded to respond to oppression against Jews, white Jewish males are doing the oppressing."

The following night, the Justice hosted a forum to discuss their horrible mistake, their response to it

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and possible ways to remedy the harm the article had done. As the sports editor rose to speak, following an associate editor and editor-in-chief, four rows of students stood up and walked out. Comments on the "Thoughts" board described the members of the Justice and the Student Senate as rich, country club elites and said, "This is White Privilege."

Had the article said "the only thing Joseph Lieberman has a Ph.D. in starts with a K and rhymes with hike," I would have been furious. I may have been mad enough to make generalized comments about the responsible parties, even if I knew nothing else about them. I may have even been angry enough to walk out of a forum designed to heal and show that I would not listen.

But I would have been wrong. We should be upset, we should be offended, we should be hurt and we should be galvanized to fight racism. We should not, however, forget that any measures taken and any comments made must be aimed at helping our community repair itself.

– *Paul Kandel '06*

Dialogue will resolve disputes

Although it would be unjust to ignore the comments that were written by Dan Passner '06 (and expressed by Joseph Shmulewitz '06), I think it's important to realize that these comments relate to a bigger problem. Although we live in a world that has everyone striving to be politically correct, respect and acceptance are two things that are far from being reached in our community at Brandeis in the world as a whole. The largest way that this problem can be combated is through education and dialogue.

Unfortunately, Thursday's Open

Forum in the Shapiro Campus Center Atrium, originally having the goal of approaching that, never did. It was a night where people walked out in protest, accusations were shouted and people's frustrations were released; ultimately it failed in its goal as a night to create dialogue. And in that right, the night failed. I think at some time – and I really am not sure what time that is – we need to move past the incident that happened, stop accusing people and strive towards education and dialogue. I hope that time is very soon, because the issue discussed in Dan Passner's article is part of a mentality that should be eradicated as soon as possible at Brandeis University and our world as a whole.

– *Andrew Katz '06*

Column was an embarrassment

The Justice should be ashamed and embarrassed that such an article was published. It was a terribly racist article, and I cannot see how it could not have been edited out before its publication. The Justice needs to re-establish its editing policies and apologize for the horrible words of one racist "reporter."

– *Yonathan Litwok '07*

Bad moment for excellent paper

I don't agree with any ideology that may be possibly associated with the controversial quotation. It reveals to us that the editors could have done a better job at "censorship" and that the author of the piece could have exercised better judgment when using such quotes that could be misconstrued as racist. While I do believe that racism and bigotry should be condemned, it seems to me that the school and that the student body was out of line and that they cried wolf way too quickly. Given the context of the piece, it is fairly clear that Mr. Passner's intention was only to state his belief that Dusty Baker is an overrated coach, not to go on some racist diatribe. And after all, this is a university that prides itself on being open minded. Is it open-minded to shoot down a poorly expressed opinion piece and imply that its author is racist? That's a very damning label. Besides, he admitted to making an honest mistake and the editors are also entitled to making those same human mistakes. I am convinced that a more measured and thoughtful response to these blatant examples of human error would have been appropriate, rather than having the president send out campuswide e-mails. Now, we not only have a possibly offensive opinion piece, but a ruined reputation as well.

In the future, we as a community need to do two things. First, we need to avoid such dangerous mistakes. But also, we need to treat such situations in an intelligent manner and not mindlessly categorize an opinion as "racist."

– *Daniel Greener '06*

Racism out of line; so was reaction

Upon arriving on campus Saturday for what I thought would be a harmless Justice reunion, I learned that there was a sizable controversy relating to last week's issue. As a result, on a beautiful, warm Fall Fest/Parents Weekend afternoon, the multipurpose room in the student center was packed almost to capacity not only by current Justice staff and editors, alumni and parents, but also, most amazingly, by a large group of students with no affiliation whatsoever to the Justice (aside from being readers) – all to hear an alumna speak on the comparably not-so-exciting topic of ethics in journalism.

While I was impressed – nay, excited – that so many members of the community were interested in the Justice, I soon learned of their motives for attending the event. Clearly, emotions were still running high from the sports column that had run earlier in the week, and unfortunately, what was supposed to be a reacquainting of past Justice staffers and a pleasant discussion of

newsroom life post-Jayson Blair devolved into an ugly and redundant forum in which audience members not-so-subtly called for the removal of many members of the newspaper's editorial board and at least one member of the staff.

Let me say before I ramble on any further that I do not condone racism, nor do I think it has any place in the Justice – or any media, for that matter. Every reader of the column should have been offended by its final paragraph. But as I drove away from the campus that evening, read the entire column, stepped back and took some time to think about the situation, I felt I needed to add my voice to what is sure to be a sizable Forum section this week.

First, I wanted to say that context is important. The offending line was a direct quote from Joseph Shmulewitz '06, and not columnist Dan Passner's own words. It's also important to note that Passner said in the same paragraph that he did not endorse the quote. Granted, the quote shouldn't have run at all – the column could have ended just fine after the next to last paragraph, and besides the fact, it doesn't even make sense – but it didn't, and a fine column was ruined.

The point is they weren't Passner's own words so he shouldn't be held entirely accountable for them.

Second, and more importantly to me, is the idea that the editor-in-chief, sports editor, senior editor, columnist, and others should resign from the paper as a result of this column. I disagree with most of this. Since this was apparently not the first instance of Passner using offensive language in his column, even if it's not his own, I think it's only right that he lose his forum. But the other editors should stay.

It's all too easy to get swept up in the hysteria that erupts when inflammatory content appears in the Justice – I should know, having lived through the printing of an anti-Holocaust advertisement nearly 10 years ago, a precedent I heard mentioned a few times on Saturday. No doubt, if I know my alma mater well enough, and if Saturday's event was any indication, the entire board has taken more than their 40 lashes for the column and nearly everyone on

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– *Yonatan Litwok '07*

campus has aired their opinion. Here's one from off-campus.

The Justice is a STUDENT newspaper. That's an important fact that was missing from the vitriol in Saturday's forum and often gets overlooked where the Justice is concerned. Running the quote was a grievous error on the part of both the sports editor and the editor-in-chief – and that's exactly what it was, an error in judgment. It's still unclear to me who was asleep at the wheel and allowed these words to print in last week's issue. But this is not something that should lead to anyone's resignations or termination.

The editors will learn from this mistake. Members of the board heard a good number of suggestions from the speaker and other alumni on Saturday on how to prevent instances like this in the future. I'm sure other writers in this week's issue will provide their own constructive comments. Here in the real world, I've often heard the philosophy that you don't fire someone from a job after he or she has made a significant mistake (and admittedly, I've made a couple in my short journalism career). Instead, you ensure that whoever made the mistake will never do so again by educating him or her on why it was wrong and how to avoid it later on. I think that's

what will – and should – happen here.

In 1993, while I was not a member of the editorial board when the decision was made to print the anti-Holocaust advertisement in the Justice, no one resigned from the board as a result of the firestorm it created. Instead, we worked with the community over the course of the next semester, after the dust had settled and people had calmed down, to combat anti-Holocaust thought. Among other things, a series of forums were held and I believe the community was better off. So was the Justice, which rebounded with a number of important "scoops" and well-regarded coverage in the months following the ad's printing.

While I don't necessarily equate the printing of the ad and last week's column, I see their parallels, and I am confident that the same thing that happened in 1993-94 will be true this year. I hope that the members of the community who are most outraged by the column will work with the Justice – not against it, as a form of protest – to ensure better content in the future. And I hope that all those who write for the Justice will learn from last week's column and do their part to keep it the excellent paper I remember it being.

– *Martin Lieberman '96*

Editor's Note: Martin Lieberman sat on the Justice Editorial Board from 1994 to 1996.

Anger and hatred is destructive

Look around yourselves and tell me what you see. In the past week I have seen negligence and thoughtlessness, laziness and discrimination. There is no avoiding the gross oversight that was made by the Justice and its entire staff in printing the Dusty Baker article. However, what I have seen since the Justice last hit the press has left me more dismayed than I ever was by the pain caused by that one sports column.

I have seen Justice editors without homes, shunned by their suite mates. I have seen Brandeis senators without sleep, weary from an entire night of deliberation. Worst of all, I have seen not a campus working together to resolve the rift, but a campus racked with fighting and bickering. I don't see resolution now; I see a widening of differences, an increase in animosity. To work constructively together to make right what is wrong is one thing; to tear those down who made such an error is another.

What we are doing now as a community is not helping. It is flaunting, not reducing, the differences between races. We are fostering hatred and anger, not abolishing it. To live together in perfect harmony may be a utopian goal; however, to live together in peace is not. So I ask you Brandeis, what do you see?

– *Colin L. Sauder '04*

Dialogue not fostered properly

We are concerned that the Justice and BBSO are not cooperating together to come to an acceptable solution. The Justice acknowledges its guilt, but has not empowered those who have been alienated to voice their pain. This particular "Letters to the Editors" special feature is not enough, nor did the Thursday forum properly cover all sides, because BBSO's input into the construction of the forum was rejected. Since the Justice is the foremost avenue for mass communication at Brandeis, they should grant BBSO their requested front page presence. The onus is upon the Justice to compensate those they have injured and to rectify all their mistakes, especially their continued offenses after publication.

At the same time, it is our opinion that BBSO too hastily rejected public dialogue. We understand they may feel that their demands are being rejected outright. However, by not speedily publicizing their demands, they are further alienating themselves from the entire Brandeis community.

Frankly, both groups are having difficulty approaching the situation

'Words written...were abominable'

from the others' perspective because the lines of communication were improperly established and then severed. Both groups are treating this as an "us versus them" situation instead of a community-oriented issue. Additionally, there is a glaring absence of Administration at the forums to show their concern; private meetings with groups and simple emails to the community do not suffice. Jehuda, where are you? Brandeis has excellent programs in conflict resolution. Let's use them!

Both groups should meet together, with a mediator and a public audience, and come to the conclusion that they are both after the same ends: ending all racism and the institutions through which racism is perpetuated. Thank you for your consideration.

*Lee Tusman '04
Daniel Hantman '04*

Terrible error, but crisis mishandled

I'm writing to try and express my utter disbelief at the events of the past several days and my admiration at how you have handled this formidable situation which has snowballed far beyond reasonable proportion. Seated at the public forum you held on Thursday night, I was utterly dismayed – yet not at all surprised – at the thoughts voiced by the majority of the people who chose to interpret this dialogue as a public flogging of the Justice editorial board. While your entire board sat bravely in front of the masses of Brandeis students, who filled Shapiro atrium as well as the staircases and surrounding balconies, in full understanding of the gravity of their mistake and ready to make amends in any possible way, students filed one by one in front of the microphone to blame you for the racism and inequality they find in all of society today.

The evening began with wonderful forewarning of the tone of the rest of the dialogue; Brandeis Black Student Organization (BBSO) students, in a dramatic and fully futile gesture, stood and walked out while the very editor with whom they had the most to discuss took the microphone and began to speak. This walkout, while significant on paper or in theory, fully negated your obviously sincere efforts to do everything you can to explain how this error came about, apologize, and promise to prevent another mistake of such magnitude. It is shocking that BBSO chose this as the appropriate cause of action, considering that they are one of the most vocal groups on campus that promote dialogue as a means to understand and overcome misconception, a request which they obviously could not fulfill themselves.

The rest of the student body was left to "talk amongst itself," lacking the input of the group to which this comment was clearly most hurtful. So, we decided to take it upon ourselves to play Cowboys and Indians, re-enacting a battle that American society as a whole has struggled with for centuries. In Thursday's version, the Justice editors were given the privilege of embodying all fault for racism in society today, while the remainder of the student body took it upon themselves to disgorge their confusion, anger and frustration onto the handy "whipping boys." Vitriolic remarks poured forth demanding a rationalization from you and your board as to why the comment was printed, even though a thorough explanation of the editorial process was given at the start of the forum, and apologies were repeatedly and passionately put forth.

As far as we know, the Justice is in the process of doing everything a school newspaper possibly can in this situation. The offending writer stepped down, the sports editor was fired, an editorial decrying the editorial error will be published and additional dialogues on racism will be set up. President Reinharz, however, followed the BBSO's lead, and instead of mediating reconciliation and ameliorating an end to this terrible rift between a significant portion of the student body and the newspaper which is meant to represent all of Brandeis, sent angry, threatening e-mails and called for the removal of the editor-in-chief,

whose major fault was the fact that he simply was not superhuman. While he is responsible for the content of the Justice, and it was a terrible oversight on the part of his staff, the unreasonable expectation that he read every single article cannot be held as a standard which he violated, and thus must pay for with a resignation. It is not the fault of the current editors that they happen to be white, as one angry student pointed out; any Brandeis student, whether black, white, Korean, Chinese, Russian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist or anything else can write and edit for the Justice if they put in the time. It is clearly not your main point of commonality. You are a group of writers and editors who do

"I have seen not a campus working together to resolve the rift, but a campus racked with fighting and bickering. I don't see resolution now; I see a widening of differences, an increase of animosity."

– Colin L. Sauder '04

your jobs extremely well and with passion, not white Jewish folk who came to Brandeis, where they are the majority, in order to oppress others.

The Justice is not responsible for the percentage of minorities at Brandeis. The resignation or firing of the editor-in-chief, and the subsequent ceasing of publication of the Justice – as called for by members of the ICC – is an empty gesture that will satisfy only on the most superficial of levels. Nor are you responsible for the opinion of one writer, who indulged himself in quoting a bigoted, maliciously insensitive comment for the sake of a few laughs. We should not use the Justice as a loading dock for our racial guilt. I fully support the whole editorial board in its admirable efforts to maintain the paper's integrity and overcome this deeply unfortunate event.

– Sharon Lewin '05

Baker is not a terrible manager

In response to the "some of the great acquisitions Dusty Baker" made, particularly those of Lofton, Simon and Ramirez:

Randall Simon proceeded to score three runs, four RBIs, one HR and a .294 average. Kenny Lofton scored eight runs, two RBIs, one stolen base and batted .323. Aramis Ramirez crossed home four times, drove in seven runs, three home runs, all while nearly being the worst batter by average on the Cubs at .231 (stats of the NLCS from mlb.com). Ramirez's seven RBIs in the NLCS tie him for second most with teammate Alex Gonzalez, trailing only "Pudge" Rodriguez, who had ten. Of course these statistics only look better when compared to those of the other teams in the League Championship Series. Since the American League has a designated hitter (DH) those players' stats were better, and they would have started at first base anyway.

Lofton, Ramirez and Simon all had the highest average in their respective positions. On top of this, the Cubs trio scored more RBIs and runs than the other teams, including all four Yankees and tied the Yankees with four homeruns. Soriano has also set the record for strikeouts in the postseason, which must make Torre ecstatic knowing his leadoff man is so productive. Ramirez outhit the A.L. batting champion while the "sausage-slugging" Simon outperformed both Giambi and Lee while playing one less game than both of

them.

Had Trader Jack not done such an incredible job saving the Marlins' season, Baker would easily win N.L. Manager of the Year. Dusty Baker led the Cubs to a playoff birth, brink of the World Series and "exposed" himself as a great baseball manager.

– Dan Gauthier '04

Anger prevents the healing process

I am as appalled by the racist remarks made by Daniel Passner in last Tuesday's Justice as everyone else and truly believe that statements this offensive have no place in a school newspaper. Yet I think that in our reaction to this horrible incident we have reached a level that is becoming increasingly counterproductive. Instead of devoting our time and energy to dealing with the larger issue of racism that clearly is a huge problem at Brandeis, we are using our rage and vigor to attack rather than to mend. As the angry reactions progress, I find myself having less faith in my school. I once was proud of this campus, and confident in its ability to deal constructively with problems. Yet today, I am only dismayed and concerned that permanent damage will soon be done from which we will not recover for a long time.

The words printed in the Justice hurt many people, not just those at whom those awful statements were directed. As a result of the Justice's horrible oversight, those responsible resigned, and it was necessary for them to do so. Yet never once did I believe that this mistake made by our school newspaper, which was not malicious in nature, would result in the probable destruction of the Justice. The Justice is an excellent newspaper, but more importantly it is a necessary component of our university. For without a student newspaper, what forum do we have to express ourselves? How will we be informed about the events occurring in our own school? Granted, we can find out current events from local and state newspapers. But the news that affects us most directly will no longer be within our grasp.

The Justice staff consists of incredibly hard workers. I know because I live with an editor, and I am a member of the staff myself. I only joined the Justice this year, but ever since, I have been increasingly proud of my membership. Even after last week's incident, I am still proud. I sincerely believe that the Justice is not a racist publication. It is merely an organization that made a mistake. For this mistake, they have paid dearly. It is now time to move on, to forgive and to improve.

The malicious reaction to Dan Passner's remark is understandable, but I begin to lose my sympathy toward this cause when it is itself hurtful. In the aftermath of this original racism, counter-racism has been used as a response. Allegations that this statement was made in the Justice because the writer is Jewish or because the editor-in-chief is a Jew are no better than the comment which spurred this anger. Forcing people to resign from an organization to which they have devoted a great deal of their time is simply cruel and useless. I have seen many people hurt by this incident on the other side. I have seen editors cry, and I have seen a newspaper that I love slowly dissolve. Have we reached a point where we have no compassion? The members of the Justice, people who are not racist to begin with, have apologized time and time again. But no one hears their apologies, not even those who know that this mistake could have been made by anyone, even themselves.

It has become increasingly important for those disgusted with last week's incident to place blame when it would be more productive to work toward fighting this racism with togetherness. If the students who feel underrepresented on campus would agree to write for the Justice or work with the paper to increase their presence in its pages, we as a community could help combat the racist views which clearly exist in our school. If this angry reaction continues, nothing will be accomplished. Matters have gotten out of control and the sooner we are aware of this, the sooner we can begin to work for constructive solutions

instead of destructive ones.

Last Tuesday I was extremely upset. I was hurt that people in the school that I love could espouse such racist beliefs and feel such hatred in their hearts. Today, I am angry. I am embittered and resentful that this original hatred has spurred another hatred which is being used to destroy an organization that has already suffered enough. I see no reason to continue reacting in this manner. Over the past week, we have all expressed our disgust and it was necessary to do so. Now, it is imperative that we begin to move on. It is useless to wallow in fury. It is time to start working toward combating the larger issue at hand. Destroying the Justice will not destroy the racism that is responsible for this incident. In fact, it may only serve to increase it as the defenders of the Justice try to fight back. Before things get even more out of hand than they have, I urge those who care about Brandeis to disallow the further breaking down of the Justice and to work towards its restoration. Through this medium that exists as our own forum, we can try to create a better and more tolerant community for us all.

– Lisa Debin '06

Justice alumna speaks from abroad

For several reasons, it is extremely difficult for me to write this letter.

In a time of need, I am abroad in Italy far away from the campus, the people and the organization that I loved and cherished for four formative and essential years of my life. Also, as the daughter of two proud Brandeis alumni and a newly inducted alumna and 2003 Class Correspondent myself, I am deeply devoted to the University and everything it stands for. Sadly, the events of the past week regarding responses to an inappropriate sports column force me to cower in shame and weep for my alma mater.

Without a doubt, the words written in last week's Justice were abominable and inexcusable. In an appropriate manner, profuse apologies were made and necessary resignations accepted. Still, instead of forgiveness and healing, a war broke out among the Brandeis community. Threats, riots, insults and demands are relentlessly occurring every day. It sickens me to think that instead of coming together as a community to heal and grow, individuals are being alienated and hurt.

The Justice editorial board is comprised of living, breathing human beings, just like you and me. They spend hours upon hours working to deliver accurate news to the community, and mistakes have and will be made. I know because I

"Vitriolic remarks poured forth demanding a rationalization from you and your board as to why the comment was printed, even though a thorough explanation of the editorial process was given at the start of the forum, and apologies were repeatedly and passionately put forth."

– Dan Gauthier '03

was part of the board for my entire time at Brandeis and lived through the ups and downs of the organization.

It is terribly disgusting that emotional and physical abuse are being

"It is terribly disgusting that emotional and physical abuse are tolerated on this campus. It is appalling that resignations are snowballing and demands persisting."

– Caroline Litwack '03

tolerated on the Brandeis campus. It is appalling that resignations are snowballing and demands persisting. Also, press in the local papers demonstrate the extreme and unjustifiable repercussions upon the Justice.

Since 1949, the Justice has worked tirelessly to make Brandeis a better place and functions to inform and educate students, faculty and administration. It is a college newspaper with much significant history and human investment.

For the well-being of individuals and the community, the Justice cannot be dispensable.

– Caroline F. Litwack '03
Justice Associate Editor, 2001-2003

Have compassion and help educate

Every controversial situation means that someone has to make a hard decision. This is no less true on a college campus, where we are only starting to learn what is wrong, right, appropriate or too bigoted. The ruling to practically dissolve the Justice is the worst decision I have seen in response to the racist comment that was printed. Almost nobody on this campus, perhaps save the professors, administration and other staff, are truly experienced in the world. We are students – students learning the subjects taught in the classroom, as well as those taught by living along with our classmates.

There is no doubt that the author of the article as well as the sports editor have felt the repercussions of the decision that they made. Isn't there compassion enough on this campus to allow them to first attempt to prove that they have learned their lesson? How are they expected to learn what good, honest and non-bigoted journalism is without being given the chance to try to write? Brandeis should be a training ground for non-racists. But the most important people to train are those who may not naturally feel the difference between appropriate jokes and racist ones.

If a select group of perfectly pluralistic people are on the staff, of course there won't be any racist comments, but nobody will learn anything.

Nothing is gained by avoiding the bumps in the road. If a soccer team played the way the Justice is being treated, they would never be able to take a shot – as soon as the opposing defense or goalie came near, the forwards would back away. I am deeply troubled by a school where kicking the editors off of the newspaper staff is considered an acceptable solution.

I support the Justice. I support our largest campus publication, and I support the students trying to make it a publication worthy of the Brandeis seal. This incident should not provoke punishment, but rather bring to light the perfect opportunity for learning and growth within our student body.

– Veronica Peschansky '06