

# THE MUCKRAKER

## THE INDEPENDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL STUDENTS' NEWSPAPER



### THE MUCKRAKER

#### Speaks

Many people have come up to us and asked us why we are so dedicated to THE MUCKRAKER. Teachers ask us why we are so willing to sacrifice our last year in school for a stupid school newspaper. Other people have asked us if we even have lives, since we spend an estimated 19.73 hours per issue on THE MUCKRAKER. Well, the truth of the matter is, we do have lives. You see, the school really pays us 50 DM an hour and sponsors Hula girls and a whirlpool in the MUCKRAKER office when no-one is looking. And that's not even mentioning the company car... but shhhh! - don't tell anybody. Our positions are glorious ones: We get glass splinters in our feet (issue one). We get to drive around Berlin at break-neck speeds all night, looking for a printer (issue two). We get to eat eight soggy, cold doners, in succession (issue three). We get to work on laying out the Muckraker until four in the morning, take a nap, then go to school (issue four.) And you wouldn't believe the people we had to talk to and the things we had to do to get the condoms for issue five... The strawberry-flavored-with-glow-in-the-dark-lemon-whipped-cream flavored ones we kept for ourselves. We experimented with different sizes, until we hit upon the right one for issue ("THE MINI-MUCKRAKER") six. Issue seven is a collectors' item. Why? Because most of them are still in our office. Issue eight was a milestone, because it was the first issue we started working on two days before the deadline. By issue nine, however, we were back to our old last-minute routine, but it turned out pretty cool, being the first one to actually be printed on an actual printing machine instead of photocopied. None of this would have been possible without our fabulous staff. From a group of four we have expanded to an ensemble of twenty journalists and photographers, with all the cool little extras like a web-page and an advise columnist (first projected to be named "Dear Dietrich.") If we have suffered it is fair to say that the staff has suffered with us: for every night we stayed awake we made sure one of them did too, writing some last-minute article. We've promised so many heroes of the week that even if we had another ten years we couldn't fill them all (that's why you don't see anymore of them.) THE MUCKRAKER is still a new organization, with many more anniversaries ahead of it (like the eleventh issue anniversary) in which we can continue to glorify ourselves. After all, it would be a shame not to abuse the privilege of having your own sauna, whirlpool, hula girls...oh yeah, and not to mention a newspaper.

-The Editors

## JFK Basketball Teams Rock in Berlin Championships!

BY HAUWA NDAGI, AUBREY CHIARETTE AND MIKOLAJ BEKASIAK

The Boys in Blue, the JFK Boy's WKII team, has wood), they receive a week long trip to a Nike defended their title as Berlin Champions. With the basketball summer camp in the USA.

undying support of a fan block made up of teachers, families, and school-mates they emerged undefeated from the Berlin Final Four tournament on March 20-21, winning all their games. Their toughest competition came from the Ebert Schule which lost with eight points as opposed to the 39 and 42 point losses of the Romain Rolland and Martin Bubber Schulen. As the best in Berlin, they got outfitted in Nike uniforms and move on to the German finals, held in May, where they will compete with 15 of the best teams in Germany as well as meet famous NBA players. Should they also prove themselves German Champions (knock on



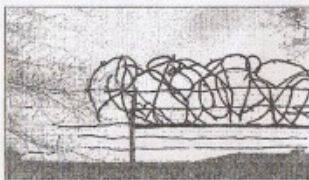
The Boys in Blue, now the Men in Nike Photo: Ingrid Schäfer

The JFK WKII team also took part in the tournament and won two of the three games in their division. The first victory was over Schadow with a score of 30-27, in which they rallied from a 10 point deficit in the second half, and then over Droste with a score of 43-33. They had a 28-41 loss to Hesse. Since both Schadow and JFK won the same amount of games, each team's scores from the entire tournament were tallied up, and JFK ended up in third place. Congratulations to all the teams that played, and thanks to all fans for their support.

## ED: JFK to Install Barbwire Around School Gate

BY ADAM NAGORSKI

Just when you thought the ED could go no further in cutting students' rights, they will now be cutting students' bodies. Individual meetings of all the Schulkonferenzen in Zehlendorf were called following the incident at the Leistow Schule, where police found guns and hard drugs. Instead of a Schulkonferenz, our school has an "Educational Directorate," which wields more power than a usual Schulkonferenz. The ED flexed its power more than anybody, even the administration, could ever imagine. As of next school year, not only will



JFK's New Look? Photo: Adam Nagorski

ninth and tenth graders not be allowed off campus but they will also be kept in by barbwire that will be installed on top of our school's gates. The ED has not yet officially announced the decision but THE MUCKRAKER has learned that the reasons stated for installing the barbwire were to "improve school security" and to make it possible to keep ninth and tenth graders on school grounds. This way, there need only be one teacher standing by the front gate, checking to see that only those allowed to are leaving campus. The issue of how to enforce the decision to revoke the ninth and tenth graders off-campus privileges was not resolved when the decision was made. "Too many students would be climbing over the fences to get off campus" said one official, speaking on condition of anonymity. He continued to defend the decision by explaining that although the new, white building has a high-tech security and alarm system, the older buildings do not. The installation of barbwire would be much cheaper than expanding the alarm system, he reasoned, and can be installed quickly, over the summer vacation.

Though the ED's justifications may seem plausible, there is a larger concern to be confronted, besides keeping the ninth, tenth graders and the blue building "safe." Students have always complained that schools are like prison camps but now the discrepancy between exaggeration and reality will blur. Though some schools, such as US Embassy schools in high-risk areas, have long ago made the move to erect barbwire fences, Zehlendorf hardly seems to be such an area. The only terrorists here are the invading "Blumen 2000's" and bakeries. More importantly, though, will be the impact on the school's atmosphere. Gray, terrified faces will parade the hallways. JFKs will be known as "Jail For Kids." And undoubtedly, there will be a huge influx in visits to the nurses office. ED decisions cannot be reversed for another six-months after they were made, but if JFK's students will make another organized effort to counter the ED, the decision might be postponed, as was the one concerning the ninth and tenth graders. This way, we can buy time to convince the Directorate of other, more reasonable measures. The success of such an effort cannot be assured though, judging by previous ED reactions. Yes, our school is doomed. But it's also April Fool's Day! So cheer up, the ED would never be so inconsiderate... Please do not tell anybody else that this entire article was just a joke, so that you can watch their shocked expressions.

## New Locker Numbers to Be Picked Up

BY CLAUDIA GUSKE

As EVERYBODY should have noticed by now - there are fifty brand-new lockers on the blue building's ground floor still waiting to be used. After the SC's financial advisory committee gave its approval, Frau Mahnkopf ordered numbers for their two weeks ago. So there's really no reason why all these beautiful blue lockers should gather dust any longer - except that somebody needs to get the numbers. They cost 75 DM and can be picked up at "Schilder Betreuung", Potsdamer Str. 100 in Schöneberg. Any student willing to go there can get the money from Frau Goedicke in room B 203. Frau Mahnkopf will distribute the lockers according to two priorities: There are 20 to 30 students who are officially listed as having no lockers; these students will of course be first in line for one of the new ones. Secondly, students who are at the moment sharing one of the small "3 piece"-lockers with another student will be favored. As Frau Mahnkopf said, she will have to check carefully how many students really have no lockers; she imagines, for example, that there are some students who might have been given a locker a few years ago and simply forgot about it. Anybody else interested in one of the lockers should talk to Frau Mahnkopf. So once again - if you are one of those poor, lockerless people, you really can change your dreadful situation. Show some initiative, pick up the numbers, and give the lockers a purpose!

## Spirit Week is Coming!

Mon, 4<sup>th</sup> May: Sports day; Tues: Hospital day; Wed: Underwear-outside day; Thurs: Movie! Celebrity day; Fri: Opposite sex day

### Main attractions include:

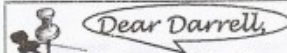
Airbands every day during the twenty-min break; Teacher/Student games: Monday at 16:00 (Hokey), and Thursday at 15:00 (Soccer) in the Gym; On Thursday the S.C. will be happy to sell you 100% BSE-free, "finger-lickin'-good" burgers, 6<sup>th</sup> hour for a meager 4.-DM (4.50 w/ Cheese); "Finale" on Friday, starting after school with Streetball tournament, BIQ (18.00), and Dance (19:30) in Blue Building.

If you have questions talk to Sam Harmon.



### THE MUCKRAKER STAFF 1997-1998

Top Row: Adam Nagorski, Seth Hapner, Mikolaj Bekasiak (founder, editors) Second Row FROM LEFT: Thilo Tost (Director of Photography), Jeremy Yoder (columnist), Vanessa von Heydebreck (photographer), Anja Costas (journalist), Philip Groß (photographer) Third Row FROM LEFT: Hauwa Ndagi (journalist), Corina Gehrmann (journalist), Ingrid Schäfer (journalist), Claudia Guske (journalist), Zuzana Wisniewski (journalist), Verity Olsky (photographer) Fourth Row: Aubrey Chiarette (journalist), Alex McWilliam (MUCKRAKER ONLINE coordinator, journalist) Nor Petrosyan: Amanda Dostar (columnist), Taylor Aldridge (journalist), Andrea Kapfke (journalist), Petra Hansler (photographer)



## Dear Darrell

To all the "Confused" "Unsure" "Love-struck" readers of Dear Darrell,

Judging from the letters I receive, it seems like an epidemic of secret crushes has broken out and no one really knows what to do about it. The letters all seem to be variations on the "x" loves "y" but can't tell "y" because "x" is too shy and doesn't want anyone else to find out! *These are so much as it pains me to use the word MUCKRAKER for a job usually given to teenie magazines, the MUCKRAKER is still your student newspaper and I shall give you a piece of dating advice: As obvious as it may seem, there is only one thing to do... talk! Even if you think you'll die, talking to the object of your affection won't kill you. If you've been secretly swooning over this person for months, chances are he or she has no clue what's up. They might not even know you exist. The best thing to do is to catch the person when they're not in a huge group (no stalking, please) and spontaneously start talking with him/her. Subjects people usually relate to are: how horrible school is, how horrible their teachers are, how horrible the weather is. (Maybe you could think of something more positive and really make an impact!) One word of caution... a spontaneous conversation the first time you talk to this person DOES NOT include confessions of your undying love for this person or tacky pick-up lines. When faced with something like that, most people will simply say "huh?" and walk away. However, if you already know the person and are in a relatively close relationship with him/her, then confessions are usually best if that person hasn't made any moves. Get your feelings out in the open and then proceed from there. If they return your feelings, then you get to live happily ever after. If they don't, then it's their loss and the only thing you can do is to go on with your life and keep yourself busy until the next victim. I mean, love interest, comes along.*

In honor of this MUCKRAKER anniversary issue, here are the Top 5 Dumbest Letters for Darrell...

5. Hi, my name is girl x. On Saturday I was at this party and this really good looking hunk came over to me. After half a bottle tequila we both went to the bedroom of the parents of the guy who did the party and he (beeped me from behind without a condom. He said that he would call me but I haven't seen him since the party. I really want to see him again. Girl x.

4. I have this major problem. I went to the movies last week with my closest girlfriends and my boyfriend was going to a party with some of his friends. I came home early because I had a fight with one of my friends, and when I got home, I found my boyfriend's jacket on the hook. I walked quietly to my mom's bedroom, and found her and my boyfriend in bed together. I ran away and I'm afraid to face my mom or my boyfriend. Please help...Desperate.

3. I am in love with my teacher. I love his cigarette breath! He's so sexy! I love him! But please this is serious. Answer quick! Since I'm a smoker too our French Kiss would be adorable! Please help! ...Smoker girl!

2. Help! I think I'm turning into a sexist pig. Every time I see a girl I am tempted to hurl insults at her simply because she has two x chromosomes. It is unfair, guys get insulted for only having one x chromosome, why shouldn't girls? I think we should have equal discrimination, but that idea isn't politically correct. How can I brainwash myself into thinking more mainstream?

1. My goldfish is convinced that aliens are coming to take him away. Every night I lie awake listening to it cry for mercy from the evil extraterrestrial creatures. His screams are making me mad, how can I comfort goldie? He's my only friend!

## JFK Alumni Act Up

BY ADAM NAGORSKI

In March the guestbook at the JFK Alumni Website was shut down due to a "lack of maturity among [its] valued 'guests'". An alumni was told that his or her "abusive comments against other guestbook members" warranted a shutdown of the page. The JFK School Alumni Website is not funded by the JFK school, with the exception of a Parent Council page. The page features a chatroom, a photo tour of JFK, JFK links, and an e-mail directory containing 460 addresses of JFK alumni from all over the world. All JFKers are urged to sign on to the site after their graduation. The address is <http://members.aol.com/jfkschule>

## A Letter From Alex Kirsch-Clayton



This is Alex, who was kicked out of school and arrested a couple months ago. It took me a while to finally get up the nerve to write anything, but while I was in jail, I got a couple editions of the "Muckraker" and I just wanted to give a heartfelt apology to every teacher and student who I somehow hurt while I was living my life of crime. I realize now that my stupidity did affect a lot of people, so now I'm apologizing. But I also wanted to say something else. Although my life at JFK was a relatively short one, I still found out many things about the "secret" lives of JFK students. I know the administration would like to believe that because they got a drug-dealer out of school, the drug problems will go away. I just wanted to say that I started dealing because I say that so many diverse groups of people smoked marijuana. It wasn't like I popped in one day and got everyone hooked, on the contrary, the vast amount of smokers showed me a way that I could make some money to pay back my ever growing debts to another certain JFK student. But hopefully these two who have been plotting how to conquer JFK from the day I met them hopefully will go to jail for a long time. Unfortunately, I might have to join them. So that's my letter. Once again, I'm sorry.

Alex Kirsch-Clayton

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## ISTA-performance

BY CORINA GOHRMANN

On March 20 and 21 culturalaholics were able to enjoy another proof of the variety and quality of the cultural events JFK offers. This year's ISTA-group presented the program they will be performing at the ISTA (International School's Theater Association) festival that takes place in Nice this week. At the festival they will watch other students' productions, attend workshops about different aspects of drama, theater and performing and, of course, enjoy a week of Southern France. Since the international school of Nice is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, the

festival theme is "A Birthday Celebration". The piece which the cast created on this topic was a comical presentation about old friends remembering their best birthdays together and was called "The Lunar Years". Furthermore the 9 girls presented a piece from Leo Masters' "A Spoon River Anthology" about the inhabitants of a grave yard which ensemble member Melissa McClung directed. The third piece of the evening, an excerpt from Sartre's *No Exit*, was performed by three students of Mrs. Custer's drama class. The solo was only half-full on opening night but was much more filled on the second performance. Altogether, all the actors fully deserved the applause.

## French Absurdity

BY ADAM NAGORSKI

Last week, JFKers left the new Aula with a changed view on life. Train stations became dreams, tumors became homicidal maniacs and war fields became picnic grounds. Yes, their minds were twisted into absurdity, thanks to the French Drama group's presentation of "Theatre de l'Absurde." Three short plays were presented, all under the direction of Madame Wendt. The first was *Le Guichet* by Jean Tardieu. Agnieszka Wierocholska portrayed a man working at a train information office confronted with a client (Miss Protich) almost as absurd as himself. The staging included a fabulous scene with huge, waving drapes, mysterious lighting and music composed by Warner Poland (Dr. Poland's son.) The second scene was *La Legion* by Eugène Ionesco: Jonas Renz played a professor giving a lesson to a young student (Rebecca Pöhl.) Despite warnings from a headstrong maid (Anna Schily) the student had her lesson, which turned out to be the last one she would ever have. Growing frustrated

with the student for not describing a knife in different languages, the professor uses the blade to kill her. It is then exposed that this is the fourth such incident. The last scene was Fernando Arrabal's *Pique-nique en Campagne*. Zepo (Sebastian Schmidt) was a lonely young soldier who passed away time by knitting on the battlefield. He hesitantly allows his parents (Katharina Heidrich and Maria Sinnecker) to pay him a visit and proceeds to picnic and listen to music with them. After a brief air strike (avoided, of course, with an umbrella), an enemy suddenly enters the scene (Anke Schaffartzik.) The intruder is quickly tied up by Zepo until Zepo finds that the prisoner is friendly and not unlike himself. The entire group begins dancing, decided that no war should be fought. Their dance was brought to a quick halt, though, when the actors were mowed down by machine guns.

The French Drama group gave an excellent show and will take it Paris later this year. The audience, including those people who couldn't speak a word of French, was most impressed with a well performed (and somewhat sickening) evening.

## Teacher Feature: Herb Blount

BY TAYLOR ALDRIDGE

Mr. Blount is the high school guidance counselor

Q: Were you ever made fun of in school because of your name?

A: "My middle name is Calvin. I changed it from Herbert to Herb, and once I changed it, it was fine.

Q: What were your high school days like?

A: A unique experience in 10th grade, my first day was spent with the 101st Airborne division protecting the decision of Brown v. Board of Education. They (the 101st) camped out of the school to ensure peace. There was trouble all year long until they closed it my Junior year. Then my Senior year went well. They (the Southerners) had accepted the decision.

Q: Did you enjoy high school and what in particular?

A: Absolutely to the ax! Eating hot dogs, hamburgers, and shakes at our great cafeteria, and dancing on the local T.V. were some of the funniest. Also deer hunting... that's spelled D-E-E-R.

Q: Are you involved with anyone at the current time, if so who is she?

A: Yes I am. She is a fantastic young woman that lives in Lübeck.

Q: How old are you?

A: 55

Q: What do you enjoy most and least about your job?

A: Most is the freedom, beyond that is meeting people on a 1 to 1 basis and helping them make decisions. Least Landeschulamt because they give so much trouble getting our group established.

Q: A lot of people are very thankful for your recommendations, but in all honesty have you ever "over enhanced" anyone in your recommendation?

A: I try to address the potential of a person. If I can't... I tell the person to look else where.

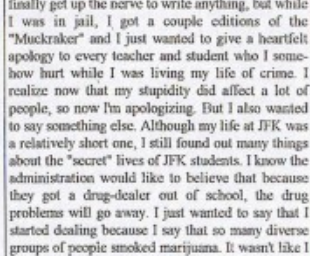


Photo: Thilo Tost



## THE MUCKRAKER Comedy Korner!

## From the Book of Jeremy: Save the Cynic!

BY JEREMY YODER

Calls for sacrifice are often met with indifference in school as well as in the real world. Communism collapsed because it's workers lacked any interest in fighting the imperialistic capitalist West. Just as Marxist-Leninist theory failed to motivate workers to fulfill production quotas for "HONK IF WE SHOULD NUKK THE YANKES" bumper stickers, promises of "YOU'RE TOMORROW'S LEADERS-NOW-GO-SAVE-THE-WORLD" fail to motivate students.

Does anybody deep down in their hearts truly want to save the world? Take a close look at the place—it's repulsive, nauseating, appalling garbage heap spinning in space. Exhaust pipes spew toxins into the atmosphere, "ethnic cleansing" erupts in the Balkans, "neo-Black Deaths" like AIDS kill off the population and Michael Jackson just won't go away. So does any body really want to save this putrid, retching planet of ours?

But what if somebody—like me—saved the world? Let's say that I wrote a decisive column in THE MUCKRAKER that changed the course of human events forever. Imagine that I became "Tomorrow's Leader" and made the world a better place! In about two thousand years, a statue of me is placed in "The Museum of Universal Heroes." One day, two aliens from Gralphiis X visit the museum and pause by my statue:

FIRST ALIEN: "Say what an interesting statue! What does the inscription say, Rgudfgd?"

SECOND ALIEN: "Hold on, Tzrdpsa, it's in human... SAVIOR OF THE WORLD."

FIRST ALIEN: "Great Umpt! He saved that wretched planet? The compost pile of the galaxy?"

SECOND ALIEN: (Violently shudders with fury) Tzrdpsa! Let's goit on that likeness of banann scms! (Purple spit hits the marble cheek.)

Who wants to have purple alien saliva running down their statue in two thousand years? Not I. So there'll be no world saving from me, thank you very much. Let aliens spit on Michael Jackson's statue for all I care.

So what does JFK have to do with saving the world? School, society's enforcer, discreetly emphasizes the "save the world" theology. The old, blaring, inspirational speeches have been regulated to graduation and visiting dignitaries, and covert methods, by emphasizing personal growth, have taken its place. School teaches us that to "find ourselves" we must accept responsibility, shape our values, understand how the world operates and stand fast to our beliefs against the antagonisms of the masses. This technique, in effect, grooms us to save the world. The curriculum hopes to create strong people whose mentality causes them to take positive leadership roles thereby, saving the world from the politically incorrect bad guys. So eventually we'll have a planet with tolerant people and biodegradable food wrapping. Sounds braving, doesn't it?

I've tried to advocate an extremely complex state of mind. Cynical indifference is so overwhelmingly complicated. But it's much more pragmatic than idealism. Look where Communism, with all its ideology, ended up—to save yourself you need to develop total indifference. Start by fighting the school at their own game: don't learn and refuse to dream—demand lots of money instead.



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