

Student Union Resolution  
April 29th, 2007

Whereas the spring issue of *Gravity Magazine* (Volume XVI Issue 2) contains several overtly racist, sexist, and generally offensive articles, statements, and images; and

Whereas these articles, statements, and images include:

- Generally stereotypical representations of Black Americans such as sub-human minstrels, drug users, criminals, delinquents, and a reference to the 3/5 Compromise stating that “BlackJerry” is only 3/5 the cost of a Blackberry which emphasizes the idea that he (or black men) are sub-human (“BlackJerry,” Page 21).
- The demonstration of intolerance for Arab students, the creation of an atmosphere of hate and violence that uses a conflict to stir up humor about an ethnic group, and an implication that all Arabs are inferior, are unintelligent, and are suicide bombers (“DEISRAEL,” Page 6).
- The egregious dehumanization and stereotyping of Asians (including specific usage of slander of an individual student in our community) (“Correspondence Exchange” Page 9).
- The equation of the dog/master dynamic to the heteronormative dynamic as if it were appropriate and true, and the undervaluing of the role of women’s agency in society by comparing women to the equivalent of dogs. For example: “Bad dog” = “Rape” (Compare and Contrast, Dogs vs. Sex Page 22); and

Whereas this issue of *Gravity Magazine* offends the community at large for targeting specific groups on campus including racial and ethnic minorities, women, and other historically disadvantaged and disenfranchised groups; and

Whereas this issue has caused a significant number of members of our community to feel “unsafe,” “powerless,” “unsupported,” “harassed,” and “threatened;” and

Whereas this issue of *Gravity Magazine* shows a complete disregard for Brandeis’s regrettable history of race-relations and bigotry in campus media including the WBRS Incident (2002), the Justice Incident (Dusty Baker, October 2003), the Lies Incident (2005), I Hate You Thugs (The Hoot, March 2006), and countless other experiences of individual students who have been victims of prejudice and hate in campus media and in one-on-one interactions with peers, faculty, and staff; and

Whereas all incidents of ignorance and disrespect affect all members of the community and actively misrepresent our community values and standards; and

Whereas this issue of *Gravity Magazine* is a violation of Rights and Responsibilities Section 2.1 (“...respect the integrity and personal rights of individuals. The University will not tolerate any behavior that intimidates, threatens, harasses, physically harms (ex: hitting, pushing, or physical altercations/violence of any kind - see also Section 6 on Harassment), invades personal privacy, or otherwise endangers the health, safety or welfare of any other person or oneself on or off

campus. Due to the seriousness of any integrity or personal rights accusations and accompanying issues that may impact the Brandeis community, any student involved in such an incident may be placed on campus restriction or interim suspension pending the outcome of any investigation or conduct process.”) and Section 2.6 (“avoid and refrain from discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, or genetic information (see also Section 6).”); and

Whereas this issue is representative of the undercurrent of ignorance, insensitivity and intolerance for difference on campus that is seldom addressed by the majority of the community; and

Whereas Brandeis University is a learning environment where students should think critically and challenge their beliefs,

Therefore be it resolved that the Brandeis University Undergraduate Student Union Government [Union] will take both short term and long term steps to mitigate cultural ignorance and insensitivities on our campus that are based in ignorance and/or deliberate discrimination; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Union will never support or tolerate the perpetuation of cultural ignorance or insensitive remarks in any campus publication, and will not fund any such publication; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Union will explore passing a bylaw to institutionalize standards and consequences for publications that are prejudice and hateful to a specific group or community; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Union demands a public apology issued by the editors of *Gravity Magazine* to the university for the offensive material published in their latest issue; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Union demands the resignation of all editors of *Gravity Magazine* and the authors of the offending pieces, and begin judicial investigation regarding violation of Section 2.1 and 2.6 of the Rights and Responsibilities.; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Union will consider de-chartering *Gravity Magazine* at the next Senate meeting; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Union will advocate for diversity training for Orientation Leaders, new students, campus publications, and other media; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Union will advocate for continued dialogue about cultural ignorance and insensitivity on campus by creating displays to help educate the student body about the horribly offensive comments and by exploring further options to continue this dialogue in the Fall; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Union is dedicated to working with the ICC and the Administration to ensure that all members of the Brandeis community become aware of the

problems that divide our community and to discuss different ways to take proactive steps to prevent and counter cultural ignorance and insensitivity in the future; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Administration should sponsor a community dialogue about this issue this semester. Students, faculty, and staff should participate in this forum; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Union encourages the Academy and the Division of Student Life to reach out to other divisions within the University to examine how current infrastructure may be utilized more efficiently to bring about more cultural diversity in the classroom; and,

Therefore be it further resolved that the Union work with the ICC and the Administration to institutionalize a means for education and awareness of these topics and issues of racism in the global community and in our own community at Brandeis so that the next generation of students will be a part of a campus community with a culture of tolerance and respect.

Shakiva Wade  
BBSO Co-President

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