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Rocker not being judged fairly by media

John Rocker may well be the most famous player in baseball at the moment. However, it is not for his ability to throw the ball 100 miles per hour. It is certainly not because of his demeanor on the mound, which makes a fit thrown by a three-year old seem sedate. It is because of his comments in an article in Sports Illustrated, which proved to the nation that he is a complete moron.



MARK PASSWATERS

In this article, Rocker sounded off on issues including the people of New York, African-Americans, immigrants, and teammates, such as Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine. He will not be receiving love letters from any of them in the near future. In fact, his comments were about as disgusting and inflammatory as any that have been made in the past...oh, two months.

However, because these comments were made to Sports Illustrated and gleefully bandied about by other media organizations, Rocker is public enemy number one. Groups such as the Rainbow Coalition have demanded that Rocker be "fired" from the Braves for his insensitivity. The coalition's founder, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, has said that Rocker should apologize to the people of New York City.

After you, Jesse. After all, you just love "Hymietown," don't you?

For a little elaboration, Jackson used this phrase to describe Gotham while running for President in the '80s. Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.

Taken further, this means the media had better put down those boulders they are throwing at Rocker, because the media are just as guilty for helping cultivate racism in America.

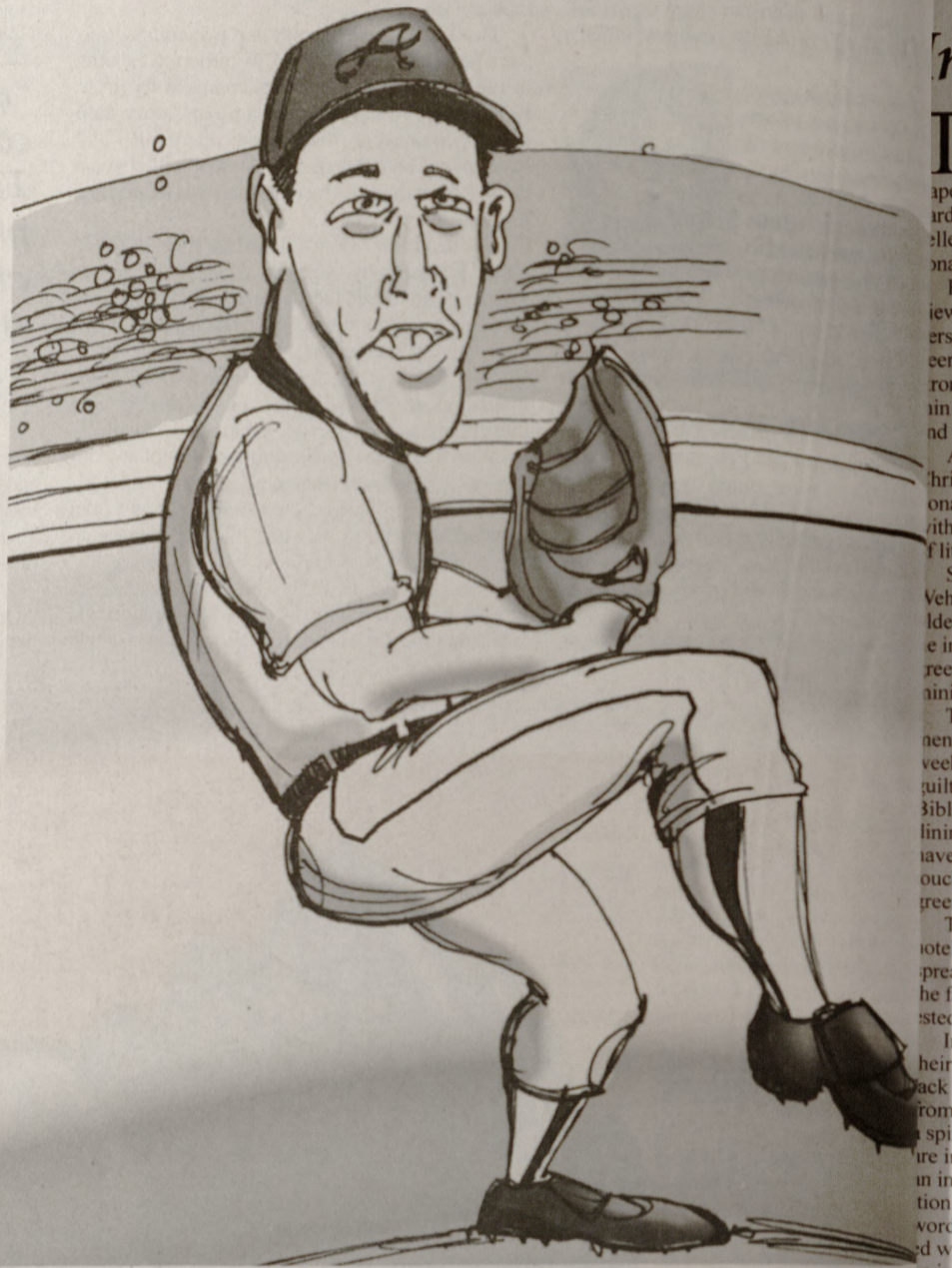
Rocker, and any white person idiotic enough to think the way he does, should be criticized. But there are two sides to every coin.

Racism is not only white on black. If the media go out of their way to report only certain cases of racial disdain, they are not improving the situation. They are only making the situation worse.

Barry Bonds was easily the best player in Major League Baseball in the 1990's. In terms of personality, a bigger jerk could not be found in the Brazos Valley. Bonds has repeatedly made comments bashing white teammates like Robby Thompson and Matt Williams, as well as Jews. This is especially disturbing considering that his ex-wife, Sun, is white. His father, Bobby Bonds, repeatedly asserted that Cal Ripken Jr. was allowed to play in 2,632 consecutive games because he was white and protected by white managers.

The father of tennis phenom Venus and Serena Williams has also made racial comments about white people, including calling one player on the tour a "white turkey." Earl Woods, father of Tiger Woods, has also maintained that he and his son have been held back by the racist Professional Golf Association (PGA). The fact that Tiger is by far the most popular player on the tour and receives more publicity than any other golfer from the PGA offices was not mentioned.

Former Green Bay Packer Reggie White bashed nearly every race under the sun in a speech to the Wisconsin state legislature and was lampooned for about a week. Recently, the Rainbow Coalition has called



JEFF SMITH

Green Bay general manager Ron Wolf a racist for firing Ray Rhodes, an African American, and his whole coaching staff. Was he a racist when he hired them?

If a man cannot win more than half of his games with All-Universe quarterback Brett Favre and talent like Antonio Freeman, Dorsey Levens and LeRoy Butler, he deserves to be fired. The Packers had more talent than Detroit and Dallas, yet they did not make the playoffs. It does not matter if he is white, black or orange, he should be fired.

Racism of any sort is a disgusting form of ignorance. It does not matter who spouts hate, they should be condemned. Yet, for some reason, the media seem intent on focusing on the white idiot instead of every

idiot. In doing so, the media are not providing a solution to racism, they are helping to increase it. Focusing solely on people such as Rocker creates the illusion that white people are racist and deserving of scorn. The media should be focusing on individual racists to show how much more can be done.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stated that people should "be judged not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." The media are intent on helping this dream be fulfilled. They must recognize the problem, or it is not help, it is a hindrance.

Mark Passwaters is an electrical engineer.



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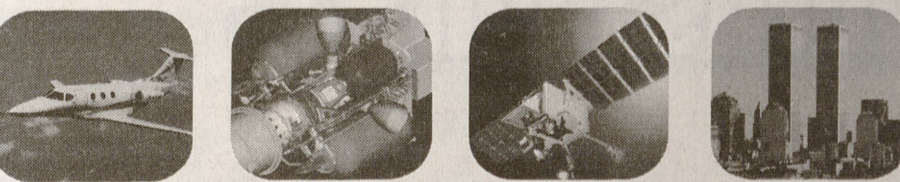
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