

Generations

Calamity in Chattanooga and elsewhere

I keep wondering why people insist on using YouTube as a media outlet for their 15 minutes of fame, relaying good or bad news, and why they press the "send" button before they've had time to really analyze what comes out of their mouths. When it's gone, it's gone, no matter how quickly one tries to recall it back. Cyberspace gives no second chances.

Just ask Jared Hensley, the athletic director and assistant principal at Soddy-Daisy High School near Chattanooga. After he made and posted a video on YouTube on Sept. 26, in which he was being sarcastic, facetious or just plain stupid, he found himself in more hot water than if he had sat on an erupting geyser at Yellowstone.

Apparently, he had banned the wearing of athletic shorts by both boys and girls at the school and wanted to soothe any tension the ban might create, acknowledging that "the boys will be unhappy about it" but he had no choice and he had to make the rule.

He should have left his Wednesday morning video to students at that, but something possessed him to add, "Girls pretty much ruin everything."

Whoa, Nelly! Did I hear that assistant principal right?

It gets worse. In his program, "A Helping of Hensley," he added: "If you really want someone to blame, blame the girls, because they pretty much ruin everything. Ask Adam, look at Eve — you can really go back to the beginning of time. It'll be like that the rest of your life; keep your mouth shut, suck it up and follow the rules."

I guess he had a change of heart because he quickly took it down, but not before the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* caught wind and stuck it back up in case anyone missed it. Yes, Mr. Hensley, there is a world outside of Chattanooga, Tennessee.

His message prompted a

sharp backlash on social media, with users calling his comments unacceptable and misogynistic and asking followers to contact Hamilton County Schools to express their displeasure.



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Maria E. Vives-Rodriguez, whose Twitter bio says she is an "early childhood consultant" in Chattanooga, posted, "These sorts of misogynistic comments are inappropriate; you need to make this administrator be held accountable."

And then the Chattanooga-based @momforsocialjustice wasted no time, came together, and said on Twitter, "We will NOT stand for this language and sentiment from a school official here in Hamilton County."

So, later that afternoon, Hamilton County Superintendent Bryan Johnson announced that Hensley had been put on leave via a public statement: "We have reviewed the video content. We find the comments about young women in this video inexcusable, as the sentiments expressed do not align with the values of Hamilton County Schools. The situation is under investigation, and this employee has been placed on administrative leave effective immediately."

Well, thank you, Mr. Johnson, for taking the right kind of action against someone who should know better, but it leaves me wondering if there are more men out there who blame every wrong, penalty, rule and regulation that they don't like on us gals because Eve ate that darn apple.

It's disheartening for us gals to hear stuff like this because the last thing we want to do is take away the luxury of boys wearing athletic shorts in Hamilton County or any other county in any part of the world. We're still trying to find our place in the worlds of sports, moviedom,

politics, etc., and little by little, we're getting there, but it hasn't all been easy.

As far as moviedom, allegations keep coming out of the woodwork telling us that the movie stars we loved as kids (and adults) did unthinkable acts against women (and men) and although justice works slow, eventually the handcuffs go on and the perpetrators get carted off to the slammer no matter how many decades later.

And in politics, after a week of back-and-forth hearings on a VIP judge for the Supreme Court, maybe by the time this column comes out, we'll know for sure whether someone will play fair on the highest court in the land or whether us women will still need to be watching our backs to make sure that a law or two isn't passed on the sly that infringes on our inalienable rights and sets us back 40 to 50 years.

At least in January, women sent Larry Nasser to prison for between 40 and 175 years. Now that's a pretty big range, so I guess it depends on his good behavior. For those of you who forgot about him, he was once a world-renowned sports physician treating America's foremost Olympic gymnasts. He was convicted of sexually abusing more than 150 women and girls over the past two decades.

One woman spoke up, and then another, and then the dominoes came tumbling down on this true villain in the sports world.

Now, don't you think us gals and women have paid enough for a bite of an apple?

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