

In these notes I identify the participants at the encounter by sex (male=M / female= F) while assuming that all are students (S). Brother Jed is identified as BJ. While taking these notes I tried to capture things such as weather, time of day, etc, that may have an affect on the encounter.

Note: these notes are not chronological or flow in any consequential pattern. Because I am writing and posting these notes after turning in my final project, some of the dialogues and quotes have been shortened, as they are written out entirely in the final paper.

Tuesday 9/26 – around 3pm:

Large crowd formed on quad between Hovey and Cook halls

Nice day: sunny, light breeze, temp in 70s

Brother Jed sitting on chair by tree- bottle of water, briefcase w/ Bush/Cheney sticker
-stands up quickly to speak/yell at students

BJ confronted by Jewish MS:

MS-“I’m Jewish, am I going to hell?” “I don’t believe Jesus is the Messiah, am I going to hell?”

BJ-“Well, then yes.”

Guys behind BJ, about 20ft. playing Frisbee-

BJ seemingly unaffected

Frisbee lands near BJ’s chair

BJ sees it but doesn’t acknowledge

Many conversations in crowd- some not having to do with subject at hand

FS-“I want my hair to look...”

Some students talking on cell phones- some about BJ.

Many students yelling questions/comments from crowd:

MS-“Would Jesus give the best blowjob”

-crowd “ooh” MS-“That was a little low.”

Lots of laughing from crowd- many sarcastic remarks.

BJ contested by MS-“Define Christian!”

BJ starts to answer, “...one who is Christ-like...”

MS interrupts-“Exactly! Christ-like! Christ would rebuke sinners then commend them! You’re not commending anybody, you’re just condemning them!”

FS-“I don’t think you’re being very Christ-like...” recites bible verse 1 Peter 3:15-16

FS-“What is the most important commandment?”

BJ-“1st” -recites commandment

BJ jokes about masturbation- many laughs from crowd

BJ-“...lesbos like to lick ‘em out...”

BJ tells stories –“when I was in college...”

FS addresses crowd-“You criticize him for preaching anger and hate, but you are doing it to him, why can’t you find another way to do it?”

4pm- lots of small bugs flying around. Really annoys me- some students complain but don’t leave.

I start asking students questions:

MS-“Just a comedy thing, I’d like to see an actual debate/discussion; 90% of these people aren’t even taking this seriously. Last year he had supporters with signs...”

BJ starts to tell a story about a student in Iowa...crowd gets quiet to hear the story.

BJ takes questions from crowd in turn—many people raising their hands to speak...wait patiently for their turn.

FS-He’s not using very convincing methods. I don’t agree with a goddamn word he says. He’s constantly contradicting himself. He’s hypocritical. He’s just sacrificing himself. Single minded. He’s brainwashed. It’s kind of entertaining. I saw him last year-I got really upset. This year I’m trying to not get so upset.

Me-“Have you ever seen anybody from any other religion speak on quad.”

FS-“No. Christianity is the only fighting religion. I don’t see other religions beating themselves into other people.

FS criticizes the way BJ goes about preaching: aggressive
“My relationship with Jesus is peaceful.”

Many people have walked away for some time but have then returned.

Argument about bible text and meaning: Black MS picking afro yelling “I look like Jesus!” Refers to description of Jesus in bible: MS-“...thick, dark, wiry hair and skin of burnt bronze...”

Students seem to listen more closely to other students reading from the bible or expressing their beliefs than to BJ.

MS-Catholic-has seen BJ 3 times-“More harm than good”-“Cheap laugh”-“There’s no real dialogue”-“The other students seem sensible”

30-40 year old man walking through crowd talking to students-publisher-Christian-Claims to not be affiliated w/BJ-mentions suspicion of conspiracy-"Some organization is sending him around to instigate...people walk away talking about it"

Cross-crowd dialogues about subject at hand-

Homosexual Male Student 1(HMS1)-"Respect that he comes out to utilize freedom of speech"-

HMS2-"He seems incredibly misguided"(referring to BJ)-Talks about passage from Leviticus, "Wearing blended fibers is a sin, you will go to hell"-points to my shirt-"like this, according to the bible it's a sin that you're wearing this"

HMS1-"I know some queens that might agree with that"

Me-"Have you ever seen a representative of any other religion speak on the quad like this?"

HMS1-"No, never, only Christian."

HMS2-"I'm not surprised, Illinois is very Christian."

Both HMS claim to be agnostic-say they feel "generally comfortable at ISU"-HMS2-"There isn't a large homosexual population at ISU, but there is a good representation."-refers to "PRIDE"-a registered student organization (RSO) at ISU.

MS holding bible speaking with another student-"He's full of himself!"- "Cheap laugh"
Same MS frantically calls people on his cell phone-quickly pacing back and forth-excited voice-tells friend with bible to look up various bible verses.

Students raise hands to speak-wait patiently with hands raised when they have specific questions-

Conversation moves to Iraq-BJ very excited, raises voice, physically aggressive-moving around quickly-Two students argue about war-

MS1- veteran-recently returned from Iraq-confronts MS2 who says war is based on lies-space between two students becomes smaller and smaller as the argument continues-voices get louder.

BJ-"why didn't you got war..." asking MS2

MS1-"why didn't you go to war?" asking BJ

BJ-"Because I was like him...do you want everybody to think you are a coward or a homo..." directed toward MS2

MS2-“I am a homo!” –crowd cheers

BJ-“The truth comes out! The truth comes out!” –moves around excitedly, waving arms.
-Many laughs from the crowd

FS-“This isn’t the Christianity I believe in.”

I approach MS(1) in argument about war:
“How do you feel about all of this?”

MS-“Enraged...I’m an assistant pastor at a church here in town...he’s preaching false doctrines...he’s not making any sense...he’s only making the students laugh”

MS-“I’m still waiting for a Muslim to show up to this campus to shove his religion down my throat.”- directing statement more toward crowd than to BJ

FS-“What are your motives?”

FS-“Who’s paying you?”

MS-“I can appreciate him standing up here and talking but I don’t agree with what he is saying...not much stuff like this happens here (ISU)...if you go to SIU stuff like this happens all the time...”

MS-“I have a 3.51 GPA and I still smoke a lot of pot!”

BJ-“Well this isn’t Harvard, this is ISU!”

Have not seen any professors, or anyone who looks like a professor, stop to listen or watch, so I ask a MS if he has seen any:

MS-“I did see a professor stop a while ago, look, roll his eyes, and walk away.

MS-“What are you trying to accomplish?” BJ either didn’t hear him or ignored him-BJ passes out cards and books from his briefcase-many students took them-BJ later says that he is here to preach the gospel.

Group of about six or seven students join hands in a circle-looks like their praying.

FS-Hindu-questioned who allows him to be here-says he’s “very radical”-has not seen anybody from other religion speak on quad-“it is interesting to see a different point of view”-done with classes-wants to find point of BJ’s ministry-I ask her how this makes her feel about Christianity... “Doesn’t change my opinion. Some things just can’t be pushed on people.”-doesn’t think BJ is doing anything wrong-feels a little uncomfortable at ISU.

MS-(guy from war argument)-approached me to give reason for such a “big crowd”-
“Have you ever been to a big city and seen those poor people on street corners
preaching?... this is the same thing, except students never see it here so they flock to it.”
-maybe implying the lack of diversity at ISU?

I approach prayer group to ask what they were doing—prayed 1 at a time out
loud—“Thank Lord for (BJ)...allow peoples’ hearts to be filled with love...support
biblical truth...to give us the boldness to make actions or words that Lord asks us to
do...people to hear the truth he tells and block the hate and lies from their
ears.”—students later invite me to their ministry.—I ask them what their reaction would
be if someone from another religion spoke on the quad... FS-“Wouldn’t oppose it. I
would listen, learn the background of the religion so I can show the difference in what
religions call truth and use them to make Christianity look better.”