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Hackney, Sheldon: Humanities Chairman Nomination Hearing (1993): News Article 53

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Buffaloed at Penn Update

Journal readers have been wondering what happened at the scheduled Monday "trial" of the student at the University of Pennsylvania who was to be called up on charges that he had uttered a "racist" slur—that is, "water buffalo"—at a group of sorority sisters. It now develops that the administration has postponed the hearing until fall. This means that the administration will allow freshman Eden Jacobowitz to twist in the wind and endure four or more months' anxiety until the university decides his fate. If found "guilty," he faces possible expulsion. According to the campus official in charge of scheduling the hearings, the crucial factor in the postponement to fall was the hope that the avalanche of publicity over this case would die down by then. When asked why the student should have the burden of anxiety hanging over him on these bizarre charges of racism, Penn President Sheldon Hackney informed us—at some length—that the university procedures were fair. He argued further that the sorority women making the charges "felt aggrieved" and that it was therefore necessary to take action. Stay tuned.