

◆ The Houston Roundball Review ◆

© Copyright 2004, The Houston Roundball Review, All Rights Reserved.

February 2004

February 3, 2004

BASKETBALL FOR THOUGHT by Kris Gardner, e-mail: KGardner@TheHRR.com

Steve and Janet...



must put my 2 cents in the discussion regarding Houston

Rockets' guard **Steve Francis** and **Janet Jackson** (a.k.a. Miss Jackson, if you're nasty—wow that's old!). If you have no idea what I'm referring to, let me give you the 4-1-1.

Sunday, February 1, turned out to be a huge day in news: nationally and locally. During the halftime Super Bowl entertainment, Janet was finishing her routine when J.T., **Justin Timberlake**, grabbed Janet's top; pulled off the right side; and exposed Janet's breast. Janet's reaction is still up for debate. Was she shocked and surprised? Or was she acting? I don't care either way. The public's reaction to the "exposure" is what I'm discussing.

People were outraged! Parents were appalled! NFL Commissioner **Paul Tagliabue** was furious! Executives from CBS, MTV, and parent company Viacom were upset, disappointed, shocked, embarrassed, etc.! Why?

First of all, I completely understand the reaction from parents whose children witnessed the split-second glimpse of Janet's breast.

Kids should not have seen it. However, should kids have had to view numerous commercials about men's



performers in Janet's act who were dancing topless displaying their bare chests nipples included for much more time than the blink of

People were outraged! Parents were appalled!

erectile dysfunction during the stoppages of games?

Since it's inception, MTV has done some out of the ordinary and risqué things (remember Madonna's "Like a Virgin" performance at the first MTV Music Awards? or the early editions of MTV's Spring Break shows?) Now, MTV is airing shows like "The Osbournes" and "Jackass". Why on earth would the NFL be surprised by MTV's latest stunt? Honestly, I don't believe the league is surprised. I believe they're just attempting to save face with the public.

The ultimate hypocrisy comes from many sides of this story. I've heard no one mention embarrassment or disgust in the many male

an eye Janet's breast was flashed across the television screen.

Janet and Timberlake should save their apologies; and not insult the public with lies stating the incident was merely a "regrettable accident". "I'm sorry if I offended anyone." Bull. Simply be honest; and, tell the world what you did. Stop passing the buck and accept responsibility for your actions. Which leads me to Steve Francis?

Steve missed the Houston Rockets' game in Phoenix against the Suns because he was suspended one game? Why was Steve suspended? Quite simply because Steve did not fly with the team to Phoenix. He stayed in Houston to

watch the Super Bowl. Say what?!

Rockets' head coach **Jeff Van Gundy** told the media he talked with Steve on the phone (keep in mind Steve was at the Super Bowl at the time). According to Jeff, Steve told him he did not want to miss this "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity"; so, Jeff told Steve if he is not going to accompany the team to Phoenix, he will be suspended for one game. Well, Steve stayed in Houston. Jeff suspended Steve.

The funny thing is Steve's PR company released a statement stating Steve missed the plane in order to tend to an "urgent family matter"; but, he will join his teammates Tuesday when they return from Phoenix. Who's telling the truth?

I like Steve; and, I like Jeff; however, until further information is released, I'm going to believe JVG which makes me say, "Steve, my man, what the hell were you thinking?" Don't you believe Cuttino, Cato, and the rest of your teammates wanted to watch the game instead of making the trip? Come on, Steve, be a leader instead of a follower. However, what's done is done. Admit you made a mistake instead of having your company release a (seemingly) lame excuse.

Steve and Janet: accept responsibility for your actions instead of hiding from them.