



Singer Jovanotti in Defence of the Italian Public School

M.D.M. (March 04, 2011)



Italian singer Jovanotti answers from the pages of newspaper l'Unità to Berlusconi's caustic comments on the Italian public school

When those unaffiliated with the political scene feel the need to comment on a political topic, something personally offensive must have occurred. Such was the case with singer [Jovanotti](#) [2] in regards to Berlusconi's remarks on the public school system.

Berlusconi isn't new to saying the wrong thing at the wrong time. From women, to President Obama, to homosexuals, to the conflict of interests, our Premier has found a way to comment in a questionable (though his supporters would say humorous) manner on many topics, and inevitably



offended many as a result.

Among those missing from the list is the Italian public school, at least it was until February 26. On this day, Berlusconi defended parents' right to send their children to private schools. Yes, if a family can afford a private school, this viewpoint is fine. Berlusconi faltered, however, when he turned his defense of private schools into an attack against public schools. He claimed that the teachers in public schools "enforce ideas and values to their students that diverge from those learned at home from their families." This viewpoint is not fair.

Reactions to Berlusconi's words have been practically instantaneous, both in Italy and abroad. Many Italian-American intellectuals in the USA took positions against this boutade. In Italy, however, the reactions to the Premier's words have been coming from multiple fronts: not only politicians and intellectuals, but also common people - see the many groups on facebook - and even artists.

Musician Lorenzo Cherubini (aka Jovanotti) is one of those who most strongly objected to the remarks about the public school.

Born in Rome in 1966, Jovanotti has been on the Italian music scene since the late 1980s. His music changed over the years, moving from a mix of hip hop and rap, to something closer to funk, folkloric and a more ethnic style. His lyrics have also seen an evolution, gradually becoming more permeated with social and political themes.

This commitment to social themes has never been found on the pages of magazines or newspapers. Probably, however, this time the singer couldn't help it, and from the pages of leftist newspaper [l'Unità](#) [3], he sent out a [heartfelt apology](#) [3] to the Italian educational system.

What is remarkable is that his editorial doesn't blindly defend the public high school or present it as a perfect reality. Jovanotti is conscious of its flaws and shortcomings. He does emphasize, however, that the public educational system, free and open to everybody, represents a conquest of society, "just like drinkable tap water. Everybody is free to buy bottled water, but no one should ever dare to poison the tap one." Furthermore, a Prime Minister should support and defend such a conquest, not attack it.

The singer remarks that his daughter is studying in a public school, not because it is the best possible option, but because it is a stimulating and healthy environment. The Italian public school, as Jovanotti believes, is a "theatre of wisdom and ignorance, and there is something to learn from ignorance, as well."

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[1] <http://test.casaitaliananyu.org/files/jovanotti61299271668jpg>

[2] <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jovanotti>

[3] <http://www.unita.it/scuola/l-editoriale-di-lorenzo-cherubini-1.274664>