

## Affirmative Action: The Next Wedge Issue

The Democrats are trapped. For years they have been the great patrons of affirmative action, and have expanded it vastly through administrative orders.

It does not matter today that the language of the 1964 civil rights legislation that is the basis for affirmative action explicitly declared such discrimination to be illegal. It does not matter that none other than Hubert Humphrey stated that he would eat his hat if the legislation led to

quotas. It has taken many years for the anti-quota cauldron to start boiling, but boiling it is. Most people simply do not think it fair that an

applicant for a job or for university admission should be preferred simply because of skin color. Most people consider that indefensible.

The New York Times has been getting a bit shrill of late, but when I read a recent lead editorial on the subject of affirmative action, I nearly dropped my breakfast coffee in my lap. The Feb. 28 editorial screams against all attempts to get rid of the quota monster.

You know the Times is really excited when it begins reflexively using religious words to convey a negative meaning. Thus it says the attack on quotas has become a crusade. Crusades are supposed to be bad, you see. The attack on quotas is also a "miraculous backlash machine." Miracles, you understand, are not something nice folks go in for.

There are many collectors' items in the Times editorial, but the following is one of my favorites: "The attack on affirmative action depends on exaggerating every inconvenience suffered by a white

Guest  
Commentary

JEFFREY  
HART

worker or student into a massive insult against egalitarian principle."

The word "inconvenience" there is beautiful. If you don't get the job or promotion you deserve, that's an "inconvenience." If your academic record merits admission to Harvard or Stanford, and you fail to get in because of a quota, that's "inconvenient."

According to the editorial, quota opponents argue that "it is intolerable for a white male anywhere in America to

taste one drop of the discrimination that over the decades has been gulped in gallons by blacks and women." One drop, huh? Ask the applicant rejected

by Harvard or Stanford.

The Times does see the storm that is coming, and knows that the waves are high and the wind rising. It points out that in last year's congressional elections, 62 percent of white males voted for Republicans.

It also notes that the affirmative action issue is particularly volatile throughout the South and in California. The issue could well make a Democratic presidential victory "virtually impossible," the Times says.

The editorial wraps up by bashing GOP strategist Bill Kristol.

"Mr. Kristol likes to say that affirmative action has been poisonous for race relations in America," the editorial says. "There is poison in the air these days, but not the one he imagines."

Pow, bam, kazow. If you criticize poisonous quotas, you are a racist.

What ghastly writing, this editorial. What utter indecency at the Times.

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*"Mr. Kristol likes to say that affirmative action has been poisonous for race relations in America. There is poison in the air these days, but not the one he imagines."*

—New York Times Editorial

## Why Can't People Apologize Anymore?

It seems like every week on TV or in the news someone is getting in trouble for saying something stupid. Last week it was New York senator Alfonse D'Amato who made fun of Judge Ito by mocking him with a Japanese accent. In the end, D'Amato made a bigger fool of himself when he semi-apologized for his offensive mockery by issuing a public statement saying "if" he had offended anyone he was very sorry.

If? Is there any question? Any person of Asian descent should have been incensed with his behavior. Joking of that nature is best left behind close doors if you're a public servant. Only time will tell exactly how much of a sense of humor his constituents have in the next election. I'm sure he's hoping they will be long on humor and short on memory.

This is just another story in a long line of offensive jokes that are followed by an almost equally inept apology. Add to the list shock-jock Howard Stern (who is rude on a daily basis) but was particularly offensive when he talked about the slain Latina singer Selena who was recently and tragically murdered. On the air, Stern described how he wanted to "do her" even though she was dead, because she still had a "hot" body. After much criticism, Stern finally issued an lame apology over the air in Spanish,

Visions  
SHIFON  
FOSTER

which was a total joke. The Latin community was expectedly outraged by his statements and made a public outcry for people to boycott his sponsors. I can only hope they are successful in getting his fowl mouth off the air.

Another person who should be barred from giving public opinions is Newt Gingrich's mother for saying her son thought Hillary Clinton was a bitch. Her mother should have her: if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all. It's obvious where Gingrich gets his big mouth from.

These people are not the first to open mouth and insert foot. People do this everyday and don't have to be famous to be a jerk. But everyone should know and understand that some words just can't be taken back. Through the ignorant and often ruthless actions of some, others can be deeply effected and hurt.

It's a mystery. Why is it so hard for people to admit when they are wrong? Do they think it's a sign of weakness? Why isn't it the other way around, admitting a mistake takes a lot of courage and plain ol' guts. But the apology has to come from the heart in order for it to truly mean something. Even a moron can spot a fake apology a mile away. Remember when Janet Reno admitted she was responsible for the Waco fiasco and also gave the public a glossed-over apolo-

gy? Everyone mocked her, because they knew she wasn't directly responsible for the incidents. She was just covering her butt because the real culprits wouldn't come forward. I admire her for taking the stance but it only added fuel to the fire.

Perhaps that's reason why nobody says they are sorry anymore is because they're afraid that the injured party will take further offense and not believe them. Whatever the reason, the usual result is further miscommunication and resentment. For example, David Kanaan, a Rebel Yell opinion columnist, wrote an article a couple weeks ago discussing NAFTA and its effects on Mexico. He didn't mean to insult anyone, he was just misunderstood in his convictions and was simply looking at Mexico from an outsiders point of view.

And now I have to add my name to the list above. I have also been guilty of acting harshly toward people as well. But, unlike some, I am willing to make a real apology. An apology from the heart.

—Shifon Foster is  
an opinion columnist  
at The Rebel Yell.

### The Rebel Yell

The column you love to hate, "Straight from the Gully," returns here next week.

### Letters to the Editor

#### Hart Column Raises Interesting Questions

To the Editor,

The guest commentary by Jeffrey Hart published March 23, titled "Is the Threat of Death Making Sex Appealing?" was mailed to me this week by my lover who attends UNLV. He and I read the piece and were both dismayed when we found ourselves starting to nod our heads in agreement, like many of your readers must have as well.

It was craftily written to lead the reader on the path of least resistance to an almost subliminal deduction that homosexuality is in fact a "suitable object of scorn." Never does Hart outright say that being gay is immoral or wrong, he simply draws from the opinion of gay journalist, Michael Warner, who wrote a piece for the Village Voice about the apparent appeal that unsafe sex has to gay men.

Warner's conclusion that "Abjection continues to be our dirty secret," becomes Hart's weapon. He gives the word a poignant definition to think about: "Abjection means...being low, of being a suitable object of scorn."

Next, Hart asks if homosexuals (through Warner's eyes) "in their desire are seeking some external acting-out of a feeling of abjection?" In their desire...meaning, maybe, that their desire is derived from abjection? Very crafty journalism indeed, but not true.

All along he has taken a very reasonable approach in his manipulation of what Warner had written. His conclusion? That the problem, if all is true, lies deeper than any educational programs, condom distribution or grade-school books can fix. That the problem is the "abjection."

Brilliant. I agree; however, it is not the abjection of the gay community, but the overall feeling of "unworthiness" permeating throughout society on the whole.

Unsafe sex is appealing to many people, both gay and straight. It is like being a kid and smoking that first cigarette, except this time it involves adults (usually), and proportionally, it involves a much greater risk—death.

Unsafe sex is the practice, or one of the practices, of those that feel unworthy and,

therefore, rebellious. Unsafe, random sex is an activity that is prevalent among those that do not maintain a high self esteem, those that are lacking self-love.

Yes, many gay men are susceptible to this because they are raised in a society where an open expression of what they feel (by natural law) within them is taboo. In many areas of the country, gay kids grow up without positive role models. They grow up, like their straight friends, seeing homosexuality as an unsatisfying lifestyle through the eyes of their guardians, media and columnists like Jeffrey Hart. Typically, many gay journalists don't get to express their satisfaction with their relationships because they are always so busy defending them.

The love I feel for my boyfriend is not as Hart describes the desire of a homosexual: "an external acting-out of a feeling of abjection."

All those who know my lover and I know how extremely positive the both of us are and how sincere our feelings are for each other. We have decided to postpone that "desire" (sex) until the time that we can look each other in the eyes and know it is out of love, not simply desire. There is no "abjection", nor is there an overall feeling of "abatement" within the community that we associate with. It is not a gay community, but a positive community where people put aside their analytical craftiness and just accept. My best regards to Mr. Hart in hope he will one day do the same.

Brian N. Hutchinson  
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## The Rebel Yell

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### Student Senate Meeting Schedule

The Rebel Yell encourages all students to attend UNLV's Student Senate meetings.

UNLV

Monday, April 24,  
6:30 p.m. MSU 201

Monday, May 1,  
6:30 p.m. MSU 201