

Disrespecting Jessica

The national media won't tell you, but in Miami right now, a man named John Couey is on trial for brutally killing a 9-year-old girl named Jessica Lunsford. Couey, a convicted sex offender, kidnapped Jessica out of her modest Florida home, brought her to a trailer, sexually abused her, and then buried her alive. When authorities found her body, she was clutching a stuffed dolphin.

Because of that heinous act, the state of Florida passed "Jessica's Law," which mandates that a first-time conviction for felony sexual battery on a child will result in a 25 years-to-life prison sentence. No plea bargain, no parole, no nutty judge dispensing light punishment. You do it once—you're gone.

In the past three years, 41 out of 50 states have passed a version of Jessica's Law, but there is still powerful opposition to it. Many trial lawyers object because they want the ability to plea bargain. Some judges dissent because their egos are bruised. They are taken out of the equation after a child predator is convicted. And many in the left-wing media object to Jessica's Law on the grounds that it is cruel and unusual punishment; these people want rehabilitation for violent sexual offenders who brutalize children.

Let's deal with the rehab situation first. In our system of justice, the punishment must fit the crime. If you rape or sexually brutalize a child, that child will never fully recover. For the rest of that person's life, the crime will be played out in a variety of ways. Thus, the punishment must be the forfeiture of freedom for much of the abuser's life. That's punishment fitting the crime.

The defense lawyers simply should be ashamed. Crimes against children are the worst crimes. There's no way lawyers should

be bartering the suffering of kids. Again, society has no obligation to rehab or to be lenient with sexual predators, especially when they brutalize children.

In the case of Jessica Lunsford, John Couey told police he did it. He wrote me a letter stating that he had help in brutalizing the child. Yet his three "roommates" were never charged by a cowardly district attorney named Brad King. And a judge threw out Couey's confession because of a Miranda violation.

I have no doubt the despicable Couey will be convicted in the Miami courtroom. But you won't hear much about it from the New York Times or the Washington Post or the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. That's because these papers continue to look away from the horror of child sexual abuse. It doesn't fit into their "restorative justice" philosophy, where the criminal as well as the victim must be "healed."

Finally, cowardly politicians in states like Vermont, Massachusetts, and Colorado, among others, have succeeded in blocking Jessica's Law. In the Colorado legislature, all six Democrats in the House Judiciary Committee voted against allowing Jessica's Law to come to the floor for a full vote. The same six Democrats voted against forcing sexual offenders to register online so that people would know who is addressing them on the Internet. The names of the Democrats in Colorado who voted against protecting children are Terrance Carroll, Mike Cerbo, Andy Kerr, Rosemary Marshall, Claire Levy, and Morgan Carroll. These individuals are misguided and their actions will lead to more children being brutalized.

Americans of all political persuasions must rise up and demand that their representatives protect the children. No plea bargaining on this one. You vote against Jessica's Law, you're hurting the kids.

It's the Christian Thing to Do

Imagine, if you will, a presidential candidate hiring David Duke to work the Internet for him or her. Mr. Duke, an avowed anti-black, anti-Jewish provocateur, spews out hate pretty much everywhere he goes. Recently, he showed up in Iran to deny the Holocaust.

Any American politician who associated with the likes of Duke would be finished immediately; there's no question about that.

Yet former Democratic vice presidential candidate John Edwards apparently felt comfortable hiring two anti-Christian bloggers named Amanda Marcotte and Melissa McEwan to work on his campaign. Both women have a far-left, bomb-throwing history that was vividly illustrated on their respective Internet sites.

But let's give Edwards the benefit of the doubt because he's a busy guy. Let's say he wasn't aware of the vitriol the ladies were spitting out, and this led to the hiring mistake.

Fair so far? Now comes the crusher. The Catholic League informed Edwards that Ms. Marcotte wrote a description of Mary, the mother of Jesus, having sex with the "Lord" on her website. It was a vile piece of business that can't even be printed in this newspaper.

And what did John Edwards do? He said he "disagreed" with Marcotte's words, but would not fire her or Ms. McEwan, who wrote on her blog that Christian believers were "mother-f-ers."

I couldn't believe it. So I had my TV producers call Edwards and ask his Chief of Staff what was going on. Neither Edwards nor anybody in his campaign would talk to us about the issue.

So I went on TV and told the country exactly what I have just told you. Within minutes of the broadcast, the Edwards campaign got rid of Marcotte. McEwan left the next day.

So how could John Edwards be so stupid? I asked that question to Jane Fleming, the President of the Young Democrats Association. Ms. Fleming replied that the bloggers didn't really do anything wrong, although she also "disagreed" with them. I then asked her if she would hire a person who said vile things about blacks. She said no. So why is it okay to say vile things about Christians?

Ms. Fleming had no answer to that question, but I do. In the far-left, Christian-bashing is totally acceptable and rarely are any consequences imposed. The only reason these two women are not working for John Edwards right now is that he didn't want to take the heat my program was giving him.

This entire shoddy episode has badly damaged Edwards, in my opinion, but it also points out that American culture, especially in the swampy blogosphere, is extremely tolerant of Christian-haters. Again, this could never have happened to any other religious or minority group.

To me, all bigotry is unacceptable in a just society. You can criticize any group on the issues, but using obscenity and sacrilege to demean perceived opponents should be condemned in no uncertain terms.

Even by John Edwards.

The Perils of Obama

Senator Barack Obama seems to be a nice guy; I won't say he's "articulate," because some African-Americans hear that word and take offense. In fact, I won't give the Senator any compliments other than the nice guy description, just to be on the safe side.

Is there any question that we are living in an age of hypersensitivity? Some of that, of course, is justified. When Senator Joe Biden described Obama as "clean," it was a verbal disaster—adjectival Armageddon. "Clean?" As opposed to what?

Some whites thought the reaction to Biden's remark was overblown, but consider this: If someone described me, an Irish-American, as a "sober thinker," surely most Irish folks would raise a collective eyebrow.

But when President Bush said Senator Obama was articulate, I'll confess to thinking he was giving the guy a genuine compliment. I mean, who knew some African-Americans would find the "a" word offensive? Many of us are still confused.

According to some columnists, if you label a black person "articulate," you are implying that other blacks are not. You are expressing surprise that an African-American can actually speak English well. And that's condescending, is it not?

Well, I guess it could be. But Mr. Bush's tone wasn't condescending at all. So I chalk this one up to mild paranoia and/or a victimization play.

Many of us know people of all races who are professional victims. They see slights everywhere. The world is against them, and if you live in the world, so are you. These people are tough to deal with. Anything you say to them can and will be used against you.

Few want to deal with this victim mentality and that's the danger in this "articulate" controversy. I know some white people who don't know what to say to black Americans, so they completely disengage. They don't want to offend, and they don't really understand the "rules," so they play it very cautious.

This is not a good thing for America. All responsible citizens should be trying to break down racial and religious barriers and work together. But, believe me, there is fear in the marketplace—fear along racial lines.

None of this, of course, is Barack Obama's fault, but he may suffer because of it. On January 17th, a Rasmussen poll had him tied among Democrats with Hillary Clinton in the presidential sweepstakes. Two weeks later, Obama was behind Hillary by 14 points in the same poll.

It is speculation, but all this word controversy stuff can't be helping Senator Obama. For any candidate to be elected to high office, there has to be a certain comfort level with the folks. I don't know about you, but the articulation thing wasn't comfortable for me.

The solution here is for honorable people to give other people the benefit of the doubt. Senator Biden made a mistake, but it was not born from malice. President Bush simply did nothing wrong. We have enough problems in this country without creating phantom annoyances. And that's about as articulate as I can be.

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Why They Dislike Hillary

A few days ago on television, I asked why Senator Hillary Clinton would put herself through two years of personal attacks in her quest to be President. Is it ambition, a thirst for power, or a belief that she can help Americans in unique ways?

There is no question that Mrs. Clinton will be viciously attacked in every way imaginable. The stuff thrown at her will be malicious and unrelenting, designed to humiliate her and break her spirit. I said I felt sorry for the Senator, just as I feel sympathy for what President Bush is now going through.

Well, the mail poured in. Some of the letters vilified me for being "soft" on Hillary Clinton. There was more than a little hate contained in those missives, and I'm curious about it. What is it about Senator Clinton that causes so much animosity?

Statistically, about half the country doesn't like Hillary Clinton. Both a Fox News poll and and ABC News/Washington Post poll say the same thing: 44% of Americans disapprove of Senator Clinton. That is a very strong negative for any politician, particularly one that wants to be President.

But, again, why? Why do so many folks despise this woman?

I put that question to my radio audience and the phone lines jammed up. From Alaska to Miami, the beefs rolled in. But in the end, they all fit into three separate categories.

First, many women don't like Hillary because they believe she made a deal with her husband. That is, she'd stand by him and ignore his infidelities in return for his help in her political life. The ladies who called me did not like that alleged deal at all.

Second, many men objected to her leftist ideology. They see the Senator as a big government, limousine liberal who lives large herself, but wants to impose high taxation on those who are achieving in America.

And finally, some of the callers see Hillary as a cold, calculating woman with a sense of entitlement. There was anger that she rarely sits for tough interviews and speaks in generalities about important subjects like the war on terror.

On one level, I understand all of those opinions but they don't rise, at least for me, to the hatred level. I reserve that territory for true villains like Saddam and Fidel Castro. But there is no question that hatred towards some American politicians like President Bush and Hillary Clinton is becoming an obsession for some people. An unhealthy obsession, in my opinion.

Much of this bitterness can be laid at the doorstep of an increasingly ideological and irresponsible mainstream media which reports rumor, propaganda, and outright slander on a regular basis. Talk radio also fuels resentments. So does the Internet and cable TV. Unfortunately, many people believe what they read and hear, especially if it fits their political disposition. Thus, it is easy to demonize people these days; it is easy to sell loathing.

This, of course, hurts America because many decent, brilliant people will not enter the brutal world of elective politics. For those who do, there will be pain. But to some, like Hillary Clinton, the sought-after gain is apparently worth it.