

GLAAD, the Gay Mafia

☒ All problems in the gay community have apparently been solved, which allows the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) the time to turn its attention to the entertainment industry, taking the fair and open minded position that any person or company that does not see things its way is the enemy, and must be made to bend. (No pun intended.)

Every special interest group has tried to turn itself into muscle over the years. Jesse Jackson, Inc. was best at it for a long time, morphing the slightest missteps into press conferences, threats of boycotts, and eventually “donations” to the cause of ... um, whatever his cause was. Equality? Child support? Something like that. (No one ever explained how extortion money – sorry, donations – helped further the cause of equality. But furthering the cause of equality was never really the point, so everything worked out.) In any case, it never ceases to amaze the lengths people will go for equality, only to demand genuflection when they’re actually treated as equals; e.g., made fun of.

How it breaks down is, only white men, Catholics, and Jews can be fodder for any sort of criticism or comedic skewering. As we learned with Barack Obama in 2007 and 2008, any criticism of his lack of a record or tendency toward socialism was turned into accusations of racism, as though the idea of the intellectual equivalent of a smart high school sophomore as president weren’t legitimate cause for alarm. And as we are learning now, any mention of homosexuality that doesn’t sound at first blush like reverence is cause for alarm from organizations like GLAAD.

Last weekend in Adelaide, Australia, a professional wrestler called CM Punk got into a shouting match with a fan at ringside, and he did what wrestlers playing the bad guy are supposed to do: antagonize, name call, and make himself as hated as possible. This card was not televised, but another

patron at ringside caught the exchange in which Punk says to the fan, "Nice faux hawk, homo!" The video made its way to TMZ and the next thing you know, World Wrestling Entertainment felt compelled to explain to GLAAD that Punk's contract is up in two weeks and he won't be returning to the active roster. So, you know, how about not releasing the gay dogs this time? Wait – "this time"?

Twice this year, WWE on-air talent have made gay jokes (one on Twitter and one on television), the response being that GLAAD forced itself into the company's business, "forged a partnership" with WWE, and is rumored to be giving sensitivity training to its writers and other staff. And because it is a publicly traded company that wants to be a "good corporate citizen," WWE will fall in line, as Tracy Morgan fell in line, as Jennifer Aniston preemptively fell in line by justifying her in-character use of the word "faggot" in the movie *Horrible Bosses*.

GLAAD knows the difference between what Punk, Morgan, and Aniston did and actual hatred of gays. But it isn't smart or honest enough as an organization to appreciate the "crying wolf" effect of yelling "homophobia!" just to call attention to itself. Sooner or later it will become just another buzzword that makes people roll their eyes. (Remember when calling someone a racist meant something? Now it's like yelling "Freebird!" at a rock concert – sure you've said it, but who cares?) If it continually demands rapt attention be paid to inconsequential things, GLAAD runs the risk of alienating and boring people it will need when something important actually comes up.

Moreover, unfunny and uncreative people should keep their noses out of the entertainment business, because they have no concept of what goes into building and keeping an audience, let alone producing a product that earns an honest emotional reaction. Entertainers should be left to entertain, and outfits like GLAAD forced to earn a more honest living by fundraising on the backs of issues that matter, lest it run the risk of taking the tired, irrelevant look of the modern

Jesse Jackson, Inc.