

OPINIONS

Christianity vs. bigotry

by John Rossomando
Columnist

Why is it that one cannot in good conscience write or say what he feels even though it may offend someone? Especially if the writer or speaker is part of a group that many find offensive.

Everyday things are printed or said that many Christians are offended by. Yet if a Christian writes about his or her position, it is condemned as being bigoted or ignorant. In reality, he is stating what is to him the moral truth because to the true Christian, and not the Sunday Christian, the Bible is law.

It is not politically correct to state one's views about various moral issues, but it is politically correct to bash Christian values and morals? I always thought that America was a place where one can freely express his moral or religious views and not be condemned as ignorant or bigoted.

It is important to respect another's views and religion even if you disagree with what he is

saying. It is completely wrong to condemn what you do not understand.

Nothing Christians believe is made up. Why is it okay to bash Christians, but when someone states his fundamental moral opposition about something which the scripture states is a sin, it is ignorant?

Why is it perfectly acceptable to immerse a cross in a jar of urine and call it art, or to dismiss someone's religious beliefs as bigotry? A simple answer from an anti-Christian: your Bible is over 2000 years old and is therefore invalid.

Well Plato's Republic is 2500 years old and is required reading for political science majors and is still considered valid today.

It is just as shallow to dismiss Christians as ignorant because they express moral standards which are part of being a Christian. The next time you decide to denounce Christians, ask yourself, "Do I fully understand why Christians believe the way they do?" Unless you understand what you

are saying about Christianity, say nothing.

Although Christ commands Christians not to judge others, he also sets standards by which Christians are to live. Therefore, we cannot conform to what non-Christians feel is



right. We are told to be tolerant of others not like us, but why are we not told to have religious tolerance?

When I came onto campus, I saw signs saying to open your mind to certain groups and ideas, but not one reference to

Christians. Thank goodness for groups like Newman, IVCF, and for Behrend's graciousness of permitting Father Larry Richards to hold mass on Sunday nights.

To be a Christian is to be denounced by your peers as ignorant or as not knowing what you are saying. This campus has an attitude of hostility towards Christians and it is equally troublesome towards minorities and homosexuals.

Of course, if a Christian speaks his moral views, it is perfectly O.K. to dismiss him as being irrational.

The idea of religious tolerance, unfortunately, is politically incorrect. Certainly, if emphasis was placed on respect for a person's religious beliefs, we would not have this hostile atmosphere which practicing Christians face.

If IVCF or Newman were to hold a Christian festival or publicly celebrate a Christian holy day, it would cause an uproar, yet others can do it without objection.

Christians are under attack simply because we hold certain

beliefs sacred. I am not seeking converts to my faith, nor

pushing it on anyone. All I seek is to bring the issue of religious intolerance to light.

Since being Christian is intolerable, then 1.3 billion people are intolerable. Tolerance and respect go both ways for Christians and non-Christians. It must be earned and cannot be forced.

It is true many un-Christian things have been and are done in the name of Christianity, but this is not any reason to disrespect Christians. This may be the 1990s and hedonism is in, but Christians must never be silent. We also must respect others even if they are intolerant of us. For Jesus said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself and bless those who persecute you."

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The Collegian

Lights, Camera, Dave!!!!

by Dave Barry
Syndicated Columnist

The reason I agreed to be in an episode of a TV situation comedy was that the role was perfect for me. You want to choose your roles carefully, as an actor. You want to look for roles in which you can display the range, the depth, the infinitely subtle nuances of your acting talent.

"It's just one word," the director said. "You say, 'Howdy!'"

"I'll do it," I said. A role like that comes along once in a lifetime.

The TV show -- which might even still be on the air as you read this -- is called "Dave's World." It's loosely based on a book and some columns I wrote. I use the term "loosely" very loosely. There's no way they could just take my columns and turn them directly into a TV series; every episode would last four minutes, and end with all the major characters being killed by an exploding toilet. So they have professional writers supplying dramatic elements that are missing from my writing, such as plots, characters and jokes that do not involve the term "load mucus."

(Lest you think I have "sold out" as an artist, let me stress

that I have retained total creative control over the show, in the sense that, when they send me a check, I can legally spend it however I want.)

I worked hard on "Howdy," memorizing it in just days. Depending on the scene, I could deliver the line with various emotional subtexts, including happiness ("Howdy!"), sorrow ("Howdy!"), anger ("Howdy!"), and dental problems ("Hmpgh!").

Then, just before I flew to Los Angeles for the filming, the director called to tell me that they had changed my role. In my new role, I played a man in an appliance store who tries to buy the last air conditioner, but gets into a bidding war for it with characters who are based, loosely, on me and my wife, played by Harry Anderson and DeLane Matthews. (Harry Anderson plays me. Only taller.)

In my new role, I had to say 17 words, not ONE of which was "Howdy!" I was still memorizing my part when I got to the studio. It was swarming with people: camera people, light people, sound people, bagel people, cream cheese people, people whose sole function -- this is a coveted union job, passed down from father to son -- is to go

"SSHHH!" You, the actor, have to say your lines with all these people constantly staring at you, PLUS the director and the writers keep changing the script. The actors will do a scene, and the director will say, "OK, that was perfect, but this time, Bob, instead of saying, 'What's for dinner?' you say, 'Wait a



minute! Benzene is actually a hydrocarbon!" And say it with a Norwegian accent. Also, we think maybe your character should have no arms."

My lines didn't change much, but as we got ready to film my scene, I was increasingly nervous. I was supposed to walk up to the appliance salesman and say: "I need an air conditioner." I had gone over this many times, but as the

director said "Action!" my brain -- the brain is easily the least intelligent organ in the body -- lost my lines, and began frantically rummaging around for them in my memory banks. You could actually see my skull bulging with effort as I walked onto the set, in front of four TV cameras, a vast technical crew and a Live Studio Audience, with no real idea what I was going to say to the appliance salesman ("I need a howdy").

But somehow I remembered my lines. The director seemed satisfied with my performance, except for the last part, where Harry Anderson, outbidding me for the air conditioner, hands the salesman some takeout sushi and says, "We'll throw in some squid," and I become disgusted and say, "Yuppies." (If you recognize this dialogue, it's because it's very similar to the appliance-buying scene in "Hamlet.")

"That was perfect, Dave," said the director. (This is what directors say when they think it sucked). "But when you say 'yuppies,' make it smaller."

So we re-did the scene, and as we approached my last line, I was totally focused on doing a smaller "yuppies." Then I noticed that (a) the other actors weren't saying anything, and (b)

everybody in the studio was staring at me, waiting. I had clearly messed up, but I had no idea how. This was a time to think fast, to improvise, to come up with a clever line that would save the scene, so here's what I did: I fell down. (It's a nervous habit I have. Ask my wife.)

When I got up, I explained that I'd been waiting for Harry to say the squid line.

"They took that out," somebody said.

"They took out the SQUID?" I said. "The squid is GONE?"

It turned out that everybody else knew this, including probably the Live Studio Audience. So we had to do that part again, with my brain feverishly repeating "No squid! Smaller yuppies!" (This would be a good slogan for a restaurant.)

That time we got through it, and my television career came to an end, and I went back to being, loosely, a newspaper columnist. I have not, however, ruled out the possibility of starring in a spinoff. I am thinking of a dramatic action series about a hero who, each week, tries to buy an air conditioner. I have a great line for ending this column, but I can't remember what it is.