

# What's Wrong with Buchanan

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As the campaign for the 1996 Republican Presidential nomination winds down, polls show that the two most prominent candidates are Bob Dole, a senator from Kansas, and Pat Buchanan, a newspaper columnist. Were one to examine the views of each candidate, one would find that Dole's views are fairly mainstream. Buchanan, on the other hand, has some views that are very extreme and can possibly be considered (dare I say it?) Fascist.

Much like fascist leaders of the past, Buchanan stresses an ultranationalist position. To combat the supposed "illegal immigration problem," he proposes to not only build a 70-mile fence along the Mexican border, but also to *deploy troops within the United States*. Yes, part of Buchanan's anti-immigrant program

involves placing troops along the border, presumably to shoot anyone that attempts to come to the land of the supposed free.

Buchanan also takes a mildly anti-capitalist position which has for years convinced people that fascism is in fact the same as communism. He claims, as do many white supremacist groups and far-right militia organizations, that a New World Order is threatening to destroy the United States at the hand of the United Nations. "This New World Order," according to Buchanan, "is being constructed not for the benefit of American workers and their families but for the benefit of a corporate and financial elite that has no loyalty, except to the bottom line of a balance sheet."

Of course, this statement can hardly be disputed; but Buchanan's real intentions are in doubt. When Hitler and Mussolini came to power, they spewed many similar statements; however, once in power, they

proceeded to work very closely with the upper classes of their countries. Large companies were even given the right to "buy" Jewish slaves.

Among Buchanan's nationalist rhetoric is a call for a "cultural war." The definition of this phase is still unclear; however, if one looks at his support of enforced school prayer, opposition to affirmative action, and demand that only English be spoken in the United States, it is possible to come to a single conclusion: Buchanan wishes to eliminate all subcultures, and turn America into a white, Christian nation. Does this sound familiar?

In an interesting contradiction, Buchanan has called upon the US government to eradicate all affirmative action programs, which are used to help minorities get into the workplace, claiming that they are forms of racial and gender discrimination. However, recently

Buchanan stated that he would not have homosexuals in his campaign, and two advisers had to resign from Buchanan's campaign when the story came out that they had links to white supremacist groups and far-right militias.

Some people will undoubtedly argue that my views on Buchanan are rather harsh, that Buchanan is really "a true American," that he is "standing up for the workers," etc. This is, of course, the exact same rhetoric used by fascist leaders such as Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and Joseph McCarthy.

Being anti-capitalist and pro-worker is far from what fascism really is. Fascism is a society in which the rights of the individual are taken away in favor of the wishes of the majority. This is precisely what Buchanan proposes to do; wage a "cultural war" in which being a white Christian is "the" culture of the United States, and all others are oppressed.

# Get Your Laws Off My Body

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As of last Thursday the enforcement of the Communications Decency Act was suspended. A Federal Judge ruled that the term "indecent" was unconstitutionally vague and that it was not defined in the new law. The law was intended to prevent minors from obtaining pornographic images or material described "in terms of patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards, sexual or excretory activities or organs." So "patently offensive" is defined in the new law, but the term "indecent" is not.

So what's the problem? Instead of pornographic images and "patently offensive" material, certain information concerning abortion became illegal to discuss or provide through the Internet. But I guess some community found abortion "patently offensive". The fact that a certain community at a certain time can raise their voice and suggest a certain topic too offensive to exchange over a global information system is imperceptible. I don't want a single community deciding what deciding what information that I may or may not obtain. The global Internet was invented as a means of communicating information. Instead of passing constitutionally questionable laws, I would like to see the government working with the Internet companies encouraging them to provide optional blocking systems for personal use.

But the government has organized a judicial panel to review the constitutionality of this law. Even if they decide that "indecent" is too vague and therefore unconstitutional, it is still illegal to transmit "obscene" material, a term the Federal courts and the Supreme Court deem definable. If they decide that "indecent" is definable (which seems impossible) then free speech over the Internet won't exist anymore. If certain aspects of abortion become illegal, what's next? All pornography; cybersex; any type of gay, lesbian, or bisexual literature or images; how to make a bomb; certain artistic images because they'll be considered pornography; certain medical information concerning women's bodies because women's bodies are "indecent"—they get sick once a month with bleeding and cranky rages; certain types of discussions around the use of drugs and

alcohol; condoms and other birth control methods; and discussions of safer sex practices and AIDS prevention.

The availability of these topics on the Internet creates a great convenience for those people who don't want the embarrassment of confronting a person full of stares and questions. Information concerning abortion and other medical information pertaining to women's bodies, birth control, drugs, alcohol, safer sex practices, AIDS prevention, etc. available over the Internet is extremely valuable for all communities.

Supporters of the Communications Decency Act believe that it is necessary to protect minors, specifically children, from pornography and "indecent and filthy" material on the Internet. Plain and simple: They don't want kids to see or have knowledge about sex. Why not? Did some psychologist determine that a child seeing a naked body(s) or reading a story about people having sex would be detrimental to that child's sexuality? I'm sure it's something like that. Extreme tension still exists between those who want to educate children and adolescents sex education in school and those who believe it's up to the family to do the teaching. We can regulate the information in the classroom, but no one has control on what kids or anyone else picks up outside of the classroom. At least if we pursued sex education in the classroom, we would know what version of sex and sexuality these kids were learning. Hopefully, it would be informative and not judgmental.

Prohibitions on the Internet are not going to protect children. Children will find pornography whether it's on the Internet, in their own homes, or at a friend's house, or even on the play ground. Kids are going to experiment with their bodies and their friends bodies, because that's how innocent and not so innocent children learn. It's the same with adolescents and adults. Whether or not we feel guilty about it later, we enjoyed the pleasures of sharing our bodies and feeding our curiosity.

Knowledge is power, right?! Do we arm children with the knowledge of sex and everything that comes with it? If we don't aren't we responsible for what happens to them? Yes, we certainly are responsible. Just ask your pocketbook. Teaching abstinence and relying on the family to educate children and adolescents

obviously doesn't work. Let's try something else. If we don't, kids are going to keep on finding sexual material, talking about what they heard from some other kid, and experimenting with each others bodies without being able to protect themselves.

We need to change the way we view children and sexuality. Banning certain topics over the Internet to protect children is not the answer. I am tired of people hiding behind a child's body waving flags of decency. We tell kids sex is dirty or naughty for them, and the only time it is beautiful and decent is when it is shared between a married male and female. That philosophy doesn't work for all adults and certainly not for all children. For a child who has experienced some sexual contact (or what they think was sexual) with another child older or younger, or an adolescent or adult, that child could have feelings from extreme fear, shame, anger, to rage. These feelings would not occur if these types of interactions were not labeled sick, perverse, or inappropriate. Let me be perfectly clear. If a child and an adult found pleasure in experiencing each others bodies and their were no taboos, laws, or other prohibitions, that child would never experience those feelings of fear, shame, anger, etc. What that means to me is that these occurrences are not as detrimental to our individual Self as much as we desire them to be.

In our present world, of course, it is not permissible for some people to engage in a sexual relationship with a child. As a

matter of fact, it is illegal for an adolescent of a certain age to have a sexual relationship with another younger adolescent. In other words, an eighteen year old could be charged with statutory rape if he/she had intercourse with a seventeen year old. Usually, it will be a much older man in his twenties and older charged with statutory rape, or charges will be filed on an eighteen year old man who has sex with a man seventeen and younger. This age of consent needs to be lowered to at least fourteen. By that age, I will hazard to guess, most children know what sex is and are very curious about their body and their sexuality. What they might not know are facts about pregnancy and birth control, and what sexually transmitted diseases have to do with them.

All these laws that are supposed to be protecting children are doing more indirectly to harm them. School teachers are afraid to hug children. That is extremely unfortunate. Why has hugging become sexualized? What is next? Direct eye contact? These laws that are meant to "protect" deny us agency, personal autonomy. "Keep your laws off my body." I am sure that sounds familiar. It's a pro-choice declaration. I feel it goes much farther than abortion issues. Censorship denies us certain knowledge about ourselves. Knowledge is power. I disagree with those who say sometimes it is better not to know. Reality is painful. Not knowing is lethal.

