

Political Clichés That Deserve a Response

Since men do not get pregnant, no man should ever tell a woman what she can or cannot do with her body, and her right to an abortion. What if there was a national referendum with only women voting? And what if they voted to severely restrict or criminalize abortion? I would assume that based on this cliché, pro-choice women would accept the referendum without resistance, since only women passed it. Right? Wager anyone? Let's be honest here. Clearly, this cliché is meant to unite females in some mythical male-versus-female dispute. It is used for emotional effect, and is superfluous to the argument. Actually, most polls I have seen on abortion show that more men favor it than women do. Naturally, and naively, pro-choice women assume that these men are sensitive, compassionate, and respect women. The truth? Abortion is a lot cheaper than a paternity suit. Sorry guys, but since they haven't figured it out by now on their own, someone had to tell them.

War never solved anything. This cliché is foremost an indictment of our public school history classes. It is commonly seen on bumper stickers, generally next to those clever "COEXIST" stickers. By the way, I wish someone would do a study of those COEXIST people, and determine how many are divorced or are estranged to their own family members. They expect nations to get along when the average family can't get along. Bumper sticker clichés in general are pretty silly. A "Proud Reagan Democrat" sticker is soon replaced by a "Proud Clinton Republican" sticker. A few years later and it's, "Elect Bush – He'll Give Peace a Chance." That gets ripped off and replaced by "Elect Obama – He'll end the NSA and Patriot Act." That one gets the entire bumper removed. And let's not forget that wildly but only briefly popular, limited edition bumper sticker, "Elect Bill Clinton, He Loves Your Daughters More Than You Do." These political bumper sticker people are all over the place. But back to the cliché. War gave America its independence, ended slavery in the Confederate South, saved Europe from the Nazis, liberated the Pacific Rim from Japanese imperialism, emptied Nazi concentration camps, and kept the southern half of the Korean Peninsula in the light at night, just to name a few. War is horrible, with unspeakable suffering and atrocities. War does not always solve long-standing disputes. World War I only led to even greater suffering in World War II. However, clearly war has solved some human dilemmas.

I take full responsibility for that. Whenever something goes wrong, there is usually one conscientious individual that is willing to come forward and take the blame. Sometimes it is an elected official or

someone in high profile. Mostly, it is a scapegoat. In politics, "conscience" is another word for "sucker." Depending on the political party, either there will be calls for jail time or the media will mostly ignore it. The irony is that the person who takes full responsibility generally shifts the blame onto someone else in the subsequent weeks, months, and years. In addition, since there is seldom a price paid for the mistake, misquote, or misdeed, what good is assuming full responsibility anyway? In fact, if you are essentially a political unknown, taking responsibility will only raise your personal profile. Suddenly, you are touring college campuses making a nice little sum of money giving speeches to students whose most pressing political issue is who will pay for their rainbow-colored condoms. You might even get a book deal, a guest-host spot on some morning show, or a prime-time speech at a political convention. It's like standing and yelling, "I am Spartacus." Except, instead of being crucified you are given your own reality television show.

Any cliché that calls for greater tolerance. Tolerance is something we expect only others to practice. I do not recall any politician ever saying, "Sure, my opponent's beliefs or actions are intolerable, but we have to get along. After all, war never solved anything. So let's just all coexist or whatever the kids say these days." I have learned never to expect much tolerance from those who call the loudest for tolerance, because they will not tolerate even the slightest bit of intolerance. Got that? I wish they did, because I find those tolerance people to be intolerable.

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