

## Political correctness stifles change

J. Bryant Roberts  
Staff Writer

As we celebrate the accomplishments of women this month, we need to recognize the price many have paid in order to make this celebration possible.

From the suffrage movement of the 1800's to present day struggles in Afghanistan and Iraq, women have paid a price for taking a stand that verged away from mainstream opinion.

Joan of Arc was burned at the stake almost 600 years ago for the crime of rallying the French people in a time of war. Earlier this year, a female member of the transitional government in Iraq was murdered by those who represent the current political correctness of that nation.

This ever-present form of tyranny affects the way we think and act. What will people say if we step out, and take a stand for what we feel is right, but is not in accordance with the existing political norm? Who can justly decide what is normal anyhow?

Political correctness is a cultural phenomenon. Some of our friends and family are heavy enforcers of political correctness. As children, we submit to political correctness at home and in school. This is a good thing. But as adults, we can cast aside bonds of obedience and think for ourselves. Political incorrectness sometimes brings consequences. But these consequences should never be as severe as those endured by Joan of Arc.

Rich rewards also are to be had. Unfortunately,



www.informationliberationfront.net/faq.html

**Censorship can be a form of tyranny.**

those rewards are not always bestowed upon the politically incorrect individual. There are other benefactors. Perhaps the least politically correct, but most correct and influential man of the latter half of the 20th century was the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. — a man of whom I stand in total awe. King paid for his stand against the norm with his own life. He also ignited a movement that promises to finally abolish the disgrace of slavery from the geopolitical landscape of America because the Civil War did not free slaves, nor

did the Emancipation Proclamation. The opposite of slavery is freedom, which comes as a process, not an isolated act. Economic slavery in America still oppresses many blacks and others. King's willingness to step out of the warm, fuzzy atmosphere of political correctness ignited this process. Today, all Americans reap the rewards of his sacrifice.

Few will ever reach those pinnacles of greatness. Smaller rewards exist for smaller contributions to the betterment of mankind. Sometimes it just feels good to take an unpopular stand — stir the pot and see what floats to the top.

Start a dialog on some issue by prodding people to take a stand and speak out. This is how we grow and improve in a free society. If you suffer the slings and arrows of your effort, so be it. Hopefully, you will not pay the price required of King and Joan of Arc.

A university campus is a great place to stir because political incorrectness is usually tolerated and rewarded more often than in the general community.

Movie star turned producer-director, Mel Gibson, is the latest high profile recipient of the aforementioned slings and arrows. By taking a controversial stand, Gibson has started a dialog that will benefit us all as we consider the way in which past cultures have sometimes treated great, though controversial individuals.

Political correctness is a proper restraint in a civilized society. But, if blindly adhered to, it can stifle positive change. So go ahead and get on your soapbox. Stir the pot. It just might feel good.

## Is abstinence education enough?

Christina Tilton  
Features Editor

Virginity pledge programs and abstinence training doesn't seem to be enough for today's youth. With the recent middle school and high school oral sex situations, parents are asking themselves what can be done to prevent this happening in the future.

Sadly, these oral incidents probably happen more than adults know. The two incidents recently reported, which occurred in local Pensacola schools, involve only the students who have been caught.

The first incident happened in a middle school bathroom and involved five boys and two girls. It first began as two couples engaged in the act, but three other boys came into the restroom and decided to join in. The girls, afraid of what the boys would do to them, gave them oral sex as well, according to the Pensacola News Journal.



Courtesy of www.ftmeade.army.mil

**Teaching children about practicing safe sex instead of abstinence could protect them better.**

One of the boys did not even know the name of the girl who performed oral sex on him. But don't worry parents. Workman Middle School will more harshly enforce the issuing of hall passes and bathroom checks. That should stop the sex, at least in the bathrooms, or at least at the times of the bathroom checks.

The second incident involved two boys and one girl during a movie in a high school classroom being supervised by a substitute teacher. Maybe in this case, in place of hall passes, students should just watch movies with the lights on or with little nightlight lamps on all the desks. That would make sure everyone is sitting upright without their head in someone else's lap. That will teach them not to have sex (in a dark classroom, at least).

When I was in high school, we were taught of the evils of sex by the born-again virgins who had children out of wedlock, had contracted sexually-transmitted diseases or had just felt bad about having sex before marriage. They told us about how miserable they were while they were sexually active and how they were now happy and carefree after deciding to be abstinent. They never discussed the specifics of safe sex, pregnancy or STD prevention. Abstinence scare tactics were supposed to be enough. But abstinence education is not enough.

President George W. Bush promotes abstinence education, and his 2003 budget increases funding for these programs from \$40 million in 2002 to \$73 million in 2003, according to whitehouse.gov.

But these programs refuse to teach about contraception and safe sex and seem to be a waste of money, because many minors do not wait until marriage to have sex. Some don't even wait until the first date.

Waiting until marriage was a rare thing when I was in high school, and people were sleeping with their boyfriends after dating them only a week, if they even dated the people they slept with. I knew one girl who kept a planner and wrote the different names of the different guys she had slept with each day of the month. Maybe that was her solution to safe sex, "Note to self: remember who and when." I guess the abstinence education didn't work for her, but safe sex education could have helped her better understand what she was doing and help her to prevent STD's and pregnancy.

Not all high school students do what that girl was doing. But a lot of high school students, especially girls, are brought up fantasizing about meeting that special boy who is going to date them throughout high school and will sooner or later marry them, make them housewives and mommies, and buy them pretty things. So they want to make these boys, whom they think they are in love with, happy and make them want to be with them forever. These girls know that their peers are having sex, and believe they need to keep up with the competition and catch this man before the girl with the planner gets a hold of him.

Schools and parents should stop trying to teach children to party with their pants on and waiting for the password. Instead, they should try to teach them to understand sex, the importance of it and why they should wait. If they find that person they love and just can't wait, they should be taught how to take the appropriate steps in protecting themselves from unwanted pregnancy and STD's. Otherwise, they are just going to learn it from television, popular culture, their friends, or worse — in a bathroom during their third period biology class.

## Job situation not bad for everyone

Jeff Weaver  
Contributing Writer

For those of you who noticed a new name appearing on The Voyager Commentary page (specifically mine) I have a confession to make. I don't really exist. If that surprises you, imagine how I felt. I have to tell you it was not easy news to hear, but it turns out that I do not really exist at all. It was a realization that I came to slowly.

It all started when I was reading a report that said our economy was in the tank and that no one could find work. Having just been hired for a job I was puzzled by this, if available jobs that paid well did not exist, and I had just been hired for an available job that paid well, what did that mean in terms of my existence? Assuming that the media would not so erroneously report on my very being, I figured the mistake must have been on my end. Perhaps I did not really get hired.

I nervously arrived for my first day, not quite sure if I was supposed to be there or not. Upon my arrival, however, I was greeted heartily by my new employer and put straight to work. My next theory was that I must have been mistaken about the "paid well" part, and that I must be making minimum wage at best. Probably less. You could only imagine my shock when my first paycheck arrived.

After some quick calculation, I figured my pay to be above minimum wage. Fearing that I had been tricked by "fuzzy math," I took my pay stub to several mathematics majors for verification, but was told that my initial calculations had been accurate, and that I was making above minimum wage. I became quite distraught. All the evidence I could gather pointed to the conclusion that I simply did not exist. It was a very depressing afternoon filled with M&M's and Eddy's vanilla. Looking for solace, I turned to the Commentary page of The Voyager, but instead I found only more depressing news. Every job in America was being sent overseas. Not only did my new career not really exist, but it's about to be moved to India.

Now for the reality check.

The article that ran in the Feb. 25 edition of The Voyager might sit well as a good story around a liber-

al campfire, but beyond folklore, it has no practical applications. So for the sake of sanity, let's take a look at the facts. Since the article in question did nothing to substantiate any claims, I'll save you the trouble I had fact checking that article by sourcing mine. All numbers, unless otherwise noted, can be obtained from the United States of America Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics. (www.bls.gov.) Feel free to check them all out. Let's start with the unemployment figures for the current country. About 8.3 million people are unemployed as of January 2004 — approximately 5.6 percent. This is consistent with the average unemployment rate of the country over the last 10 years (5.4 percent).

Now, I'm no math expert, but a .2 percent increase over the current 10 year average does not seem like panic time to me. And here's the big shocker, unemployment actually went up in the period of time after September 11th. Believe it or not, the massive airline layoffs and the hundreds of thousands of jobs that were cut made a significant impact on the unemployment figures.

More surprising than this fact was that people who have spent 20 years gaining expertise at building airplane wings are not able to transfer that knowledge to other areas of the economy in a timely manner. You would think that the office administrative/ clerical field (the nation's most populous job classification, accounting for 17.8 percent of all employment) would be looking for people who know how to build a Boeing 747 on a daily basis.

After all, I'm sure most current secretaries do not have such a skill and what if a manager really needs to fly out on business today? What about the "recently announced" 6,000 jobs Sprint is sending overseas? A Lexis Nexis search of the last six months found that the company has announced only that it is outsourcing a few call centers to IBM, another American company.

The most extreme estimate of job loss I could find was several hundred quoted from a Sprint executive. Now it's time to be serious. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 74 percent of Americans with college degrees are employed full-time.

This statistic does not include those who are self-employed. Education is now, as it always has been, the

best way to guarantee employment. The majority of jobs that are being sent overseas are call center positions.

So if your career plans include cold calling people about the benefits of switching their long distance or handling complaints for JC Penny, you should get to India while the getting is good. While we have lost a good number of manufacturing jobs in this country, those jobs account for only 20.6 percent of the total employment in our country (if you include production, construction and transport. Production alone is only 8.4 percent of our total employment). And for good measure, the majority of production jobs pay barely above minimum wage. The truth is that the jobs we are losing to overseas are not the upper management, sales and other high paying positions that Americans want.

Perhaps what I find most insulting about this entire line of argumentation is the underlying concept that Americans are inept, and that jobs are a zero sum game.

The idea that there are only a certain number of jobs and when they all go overseas, "that's it, they're gone" they're gone is ridiculous.

I haven't heard anyone complain that the horse shoeing industry has fallen apart. Ever since we invented the car, the horse shoeing industry has been reduced to utter insignificance.

Why do we not hear any outrage about the loss of horse shoeing jobs? Because the people of our country adapted and learned how to create new work. This liberal condescension that insinuates that the people of this country have no ability to adapt and that once our jobs are gone, they're gone and we'll never have any more is absurd and insulting.

But hey, what do I know? I don't even exist, remember? Good thing for me, I suppose. If I did, I'd be bothered by the inaccuracies and fact twisting in that Feb. 25 article.

I'd be upset at the unsubstantiated allegations leveled at my government. And I'd be very insulted by the insinuation that the American people are inept and incapable of finding or creating work. But as a gainfully employed American and a college conservative, I'm not really here. Heck, I wonder if you even really read this.

## Letters to the Editor

J. Bryant Roberts had some pretty discouraging words for our graduates. (Watching Jobs Go Overseas) but I say he should look at some real, current numbers before he cries that "the sky is falling!"

From a high of 6.3 percent in June 2003, the unemployment rate has dipped to 5.6 percent, lower than the average unemployment rate of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Even with all of those jobs going overseas!

The gross domestic product — the figure for the total output economy — grew at an 8.2 percent rate in the third quarter of 2003, and at a 4 percent rate in the fourth quarter. It is forecast to grow at a 4.5 percent rate in 2004. As economist J. Edward Carter writes:

"For the third consecutive year, the U.S. economy is poised to grow faster than most other industrialized economies." This includes France and Germany.

During George W. Bush's first three years in office, productivity has been increasing at a 4.1 percent annual rate, the best start to any presidential term in roughly 50 years.

Since the trough of October 2002, the stock market's value has increased by more than \$4 trillion.

Again, according to economist J. Edward Carter's calculation, during the first three years of the Bush administration compared with the first three years of the Clinton administration, the inflation rate is lower (1.9 percent vs. 2.6 percent), the unemployment rate is

lower (5.6 percent vs. 6.3 percent), annual productivity growth is higher (4.1 percent vs. .5 percent), and the increase in nonfarm real compensation per hour is higher (+0.8 percent versus -0.3 percent).

Perhaps Roberts' point is one of expectations: 5.6 percent would be excellent for a Democratic administration, however, we expect more from a Republican one.

The future looks so bright our UWF graduates are going to need sunglasses!

Clifton Redding  
Computer Operations Manager  
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## VOYAGER

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