

Extreme hypocrisy: The sex lives of Republicans

IN EARLY November of 2004 I wrote about George W. Bush's first post-reelection appointment – his selection of anti-abortion activist Dr. W. David Hager to head the FDA's Reproductive Health Drugs Advisory Committee. This was the same Dr. Hager who wrote that women suffering from PMS need only to turn to the bible for help. In his private practice he refused to prescribe birth control medication to unmarried women. As a Republican political activist Hager opposed the sale of birth control drugs he identified as abortifacients. In essence, by putting an avowed opponent of reproductive health in charge of reproductive health drugs, Bush followed suit on his four-year track record of putting wolves in charge of hen houses.

Hager won appointment, not as chair, but as the Advisory Committee's most influential member nonetheless. Since his appointment, Hager successfully prevented legal over-the-counter sale of the "Plan B" morning after emergency birth control pill. Advocates point out that the pill is only effective if it is readily available so that women can purchase it the morning after having sex – or after being raped. And by all accounts, the pill is benign – probably safer than aspirin. Hager's complaint has nothing to do with product safety, however, which is the charge of his committee, but with his belief that the Plan B pill is

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an abortifacant, since it prevents a fertilized egg from implanting in the uterus (Breast feeding, by the way, has the same effect on a woman's body, usually preventing pregnancy as long as feeding continues).

Bush's butt master

Hager has been in the news more recently, since his Evangelical Christian conservative wife of more than thirty years divorced him, for among other reasons, Hager's compulsion to anally rape her and his strange need to leave money by her bed after doing so. At first, his former wife, Linda Davis, now married to a Methodist minister, kept quiet about the abuse, wanting to protect her adult children from the scandal. Eventually, according to an interview published in *The Nation*, Davis came forward after hearing her ex-husband stand on a church pulpit and spew a 'my wife done me wrong and left me after 32 years' country music style misogynistic sermon. Davis was disgusted that her husband "had the gall to stand under the banner of holiness of the Lord and lie, by the sin of omission" about his divorce. After that, Davis felt she had a moral obligation to make the record of her divorce from Hager public.

Davis explained how Hager, true to his fundamentalist beliefs, felt that the man of the house should control its wealth – hence he kept strict control of the family's finances. He gave his wife access to the family's money in the form of payment for sexual services. Usually this meant various forms of sodomy that disgusted and pained Davis. When Davis later developed narcolepsy, according to *The Nation*, a disorder affecting sleep-wake cycles which causes its victims to unexpectedly pass into unconsciousness, she alleges that Hager would take advantage of her unconscious states to penetrate her anally. In Hager's mind, this rape wasn't theft, since he always left money at the scene of his crime. Perhaps nonconsensual anal sex is Hager's fundamentalist idea of Plan B contraception – a nation of "Sodomite" rapists without any need for abortion or birth control. Or more to the point – Hager's own domestic life models his hatred toward all women – who in his world would be nothing more than a flock of child-bearing cows and whores – financially dependent and without reproductive rights.

The reactionary politics of fundamentalist Republicans gives me plenty to write about. I usually have no interest, however, in reporting on their private sex lives – which I'd like to leave in the 'none of my business' category. But I can't, since this crowd is all about puritanical moralism and sexual fascism. It's their sexual mores that they want us to emulate. They've built their careers on hate speech, usually targeting homosexuals, and anti-sex crusades, usually targeting anyone with a healthy sex life. They've put sex front and foremost in their politics – attempting to use an arbitrary sexual moralism as a

replacement for real moral values – plundering the world while ranting against “Sodomites.” In this cultural environment, their sexuality is news. They’ve made it news. And in Republican sexual circles, Hager’s alleged history of sexual abuse isn’t an aberration.

“Republican of the Year”

Take the case of Mark Grethen, a longtime GOP activist and fundraiser. He was to be honored in Washington D.C. as “Republican of the Year” – an honor bestowed upon him by Representative Tom Davis of Virginia. Only Grethen couldn’t make it to the awards ceremony since he had recently been convicted of six sex crimes involving raping children. He’s scheduled to be in the Deep Meadow Correctional Facility until September 25, 2024.

Then there’s the case of Judge Mark Pazuhanich. Pazuhanich, a former Republican ‘law and order’ district attorney, was sworn in as judge in Monroe County, Pennsylvania, after being charged with fondling his own 10-year-old daughter at a Hilary Duff concert while under the influence of a cocktail of recreational drugs. The judge later resigned from the bench after receiving a sentence of 10 years’ probation as a sex offender. Hopefully Pennsylvania’s Megan’s Law will keep Pazuhanich from showing up as a judicial nominee for the federal bench down the line during a Jeb Bush filibuster-free presidency.

Or how about Philip Giordano. This former Republican mayor of Waterbury Connecticut ran for U.S. Senate in 2000 against the neoconservative Democrat, Joe Lieberman. Giordano is now serving a 37-year prison sentence for buying a little girl from her prostitute mom. Giordano also paid to have sex with the woman’s niece as well. The F.B.I. stumbled upon the child abuse while investigating Giordano for corruption – recording a phone call where Giordano told the hooker that “I want one of the little girls.” He also told the woman that she “might as well put a knife through” her throat “and kill yourself” if his name ever got mentioned. Well, it got mentioned.

Gay bashing pedophiles

Earl “Butch” Kimmerling, a Republican homophobe made a name for himself through his anti-gay activism. In 2000, the Indiana school bus driver successfully led the fight to prevent a gay couple from adopting an eight-year old girl. He and his wife, who over the years housed almost 50 foster children for the state of Indiana, went on to adopt the girl themselves. Kimmerling, the family values crusader who argued that gay couples could never provide the same healthy environment that heterosexuals could, is now serving a 40-year prison sentence for molesting the eight-year old girl.

Another Republican homophobe, Spokane Washington Mayor Jim West, built his political career railing against gay rights in the Washington State Legislature. During his

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two decade tenure in the legislature, West proposed legislation barring gays from working in schools, day care centers and select state offices. He also voted to define marriage as only a union between a man and a woman, and as Senate Majority Leader, he killed legislation banning discrimination against homosexuals. As mayor of Spokane, he vetoed legislation providing health benefits to same sex spouses. More recently the Spokane Spokesman-Review caught him in a sting offering a City Hall job to an 18-year-old man in exchange for sex. The paper also alleges he molested two young boys over 20 years ago. West hasn't yet been charged with a crime. And the Spokesman-Review's sting itself reeks of homophobia – yet it clearly documents the hypocrisy of West's sexual totalitarianism.

Kiddie porn Republicans

Then there's the kiddie-porn crowd. Take Richard Delgaudio. He served as president of the Republican-affiliated Legal Affairs Council, raising money for Oliver North's defense during the Iran-Contra scandal, and for former Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger's defense fund (back in the pre-Ashcroft/Gonzales days when Republican criminals were actually sometimes tried for their crimes). He also raised money for such Republican notables as Ronald Reagan and Jesse Helms. More recently, he pled guilty to charges of producing child pornography after getting caught paying two teenage girls to pose for his camera in a Baltimore hotel. And then there's anti-abortion crusader Nicholas Morency, who recently pled guilty to offering a \$1.5 million contract to anyone who would murder an abortion provider. In the course of the investigation, authorities also turned up a computer packed with child pornography. Morency's perception of reality seems all screwed up – with him thinking zygotes are children, and children are sexual beings without the right to childhood.

And remember Susan Smith? She's the mother who drowned her children in her car, later concocting the story that they were carjacked by "a black man." It turns out that she's been suicidal since her teens, when her stepdad, Beverly Russell, a prominent figure in South Carolina's Republican Party and a local Christian Coalition leader, started a sexual affair with her – keeping up the sexual contact until a few months before an increasingly unstable Smith killed her children. Between the time Russell molested his stepdaughter as a teen finally as an adult, Mr. Russell worked on the presidential campaign of the Christian Broadcasting Network's anti-gay crusader, Pat Robertson.

Sexy mules

All of this brings us to the recent case of the nation's highest profile radical anti-abortion

activist, Neal Horsley. Horsley made his mark with high profile threats to "arrest faggots." In his "Christian Reconstructionist" view, homosexuals should receive the death penalty. And so should gynecologists. Fox News' Alan Colmes interviewed Horsley recently about his website where he posts the names and home addresses of gynecologists who perform abortions (one such physician was Bernard Slepian of Amherst who was subsequently murdered by an anti-abortion terrorist), with an invective for like-minded terrorists to do them in.

During the interview, Colmes popped an unrelated question, asking Horsley if there was truth to rumors that he engaged in sex with animals. Surprisingly, Horsley said "yes," and excused his sex with mules as a youthful indiscretion. This revelation proved bizarre, even by Fox standards, so Colmes asked for clarification. Horsley responded by accusing Colmes of being far removed from the reality that bestiality is rather common in rural Georgia. Perhaps in Horsley's utopia, where real men rape mules, abortion will be a thing of the past – and "pro-lifers" can abandon their murderous ways. Or perhaps Horsley is just one messed up dude – but this buggerer of mules has made a vocation of lecturing the rest of us about our sex lives. Let's see – a loving caring monogamous relationship between two men is an abomination, but a man and a mule – now there's a heavenly match. Got it?

Let's look at the bigger picture. Since the 2004 election, a lot has been made of the red state – blue state divide, with red states voting for Bush and blue states going for Kerry. The corporate media's simple analysis has Bush cleaning up in the more "moral" bible-belt red states while Kerry swept in the godless blue states – hence the divide. Following the same tired media story, Kerry's home state of Massachusetts came to symbolize the quintessential blue state while the Connecticut born and bred Bush's adopted home state of Texas came to symbolize the quintessential red state. So let's look at these two states.

According to the Boston Globe, Massachusetts has the nation's lowest divorce rate at 2.4 divorces annually per 1,000 residents. The rate for Texas is 4.1. Now there's nothing wrong with escaping a failed marriage – so divorce is not necessarily a bad thing. But to the bible-thumping crowd attempting to dictate America's family values, it's one of the indicators of societal collapse. Hence it's interesting to see how they match up to their own standards. According to the Associated Press, the all-red bible belt states of Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Texas lead the nation in divorces, weighing in collectively at about 50 percent above the national average. By contrast, the deep blue states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont have the lowest divorce rates in the country. Perhaps this is because