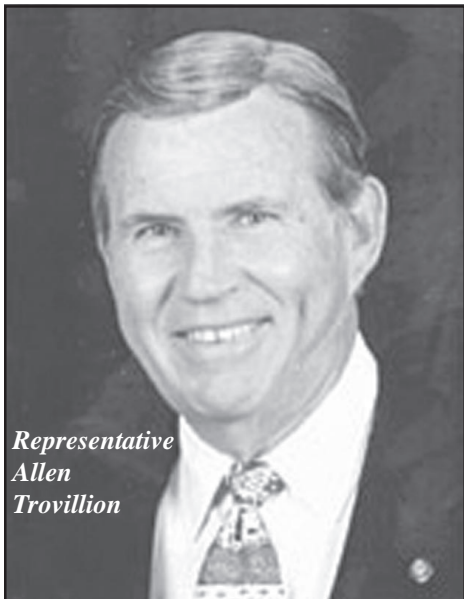


EDITORIAL CARTOON

Editorial

State Rep. Spews Hatred

Governor Bush's Silence A Disgrace As Well



Representative
Allen
Trovillion

this past week introduced a bill that would require all public libraries to use "pornography filters" on all of the Internet-equipped computers. They ought to install one over his own mouth. Apparently, he already has a steel trap and an iron door on his mind.

Simply, Trovillion is a national disgrace, who has ceased being a representative of the people. Nationally, his remarks have become a joke, but gay teens in straight schools continue to be criticized, ridiculed, cursed at and beaten up just because of who they are. The Trovillions of the world foster this fear with their unabated and reckless ignorance.

For an elected official to speak to children in the manner in which he did is a complete outrage and totally unacceptable. The mental scars Trovillion has placed upon those children will follow them for the rest of their lives

The Legislature should censure him and the Governor, Jeb Bush, should repudiate him. All over this country decent people of honorable conscience are doing just that. It is therefore troubling, disarming, and significantly humiliating for us all that the best our Governor, Jeb Bush, could do, is say that 'while I disagree with Trovillion, he has a right to his beliefs.'

That's a joke, Governor. He has adopted a series of public positions that call upon you to find a higher moral plane. They call upon you, in a moral crisis, not to remain neutral. They call upon you to take a stand that rejects hate and speaks for unity. **Do you have the courage Governor?** Did you ever hear of the phrase, 'If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem.'

Look the other way on this Governor Bush, and we will look the other way on you for the rest of your political career.

For posterity, let us make it clear, in this, the year of 2001, what State Representative Allen Trovillion (R-Winter Park) has done.

He told a group of school children that "gay people are destroying this country, and that they are all going to go to hell," where, we must conclude, we will find a bed, oh so very close to him.

But Trovillion is a forgetful flea in the body politic, a relic whose day and time have passed him by, a sad and disgraceful fool who should be forever branded and marched off the public stage.

Nationally, gay and lesbian groups have mobilized and censured him publicly. His juvenile response has been to close down his fax lines, shut down his email servers, and refuse to answer his phone. He is the weakest link, and we shall all soon be waving him goodbye. His acts of transparent cowardice continued this week when he attacked Broward County libraries for having too much "masturbation" in them.

Now that no one can talk to Mr. T, he

EXPRESS YOURSELF!

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THE EXPRESS CHAT ROOM

Letters to the Editor

Alvear Is Simply as Anti Gay as the Anti Gays

I read Michael Alvear's column in your April 9th issue, and then cross referenced it with some of the antigay propaganda on the Web. Would it surprise you that there were striking resemblance's?

"Gay men are obsessed with physical appearance making vanity and superficiality hallmarks of their culture."

"Gay men are the most promiscuous segment of our society, making sexually transmitted diseases and unstable relationships one of the observable hallmarks of their culture."

Alvear's use of the First Amendment, Free Speech, as a defense against his critics is the same refuge taken by the most vociferous opponents of equal rights for all people. What he should have done in his latest column, was to apologize for the insult that he delivered to Lesbians in his previous column.

I believe that Alvear, as an editorial columnist for a Gay and Lesbian community newspaper, has an obligation to the community he serves to try to debunk myths and generalizations, stereotypes and labels. Or, if he is going to espouse them, then he should very clearly state that he is expressing his opinion, and not fact.

Regarding lesbians and the visual arts: There are a number of famous lesbian visual artists who have had significant influence on painting and photography: Alice Austen, Bernice Abbot, Romaine Brooks, Louise Bourgeois, and Mary Cassatt, to name just a few. No, they are not pop icons, but, their contribution to the arts is probably more significant. Furthermore, there are numerous organizations, worldwide, for the promotion of lesbian visual artists. And, we shouldn't forget that countless lesbians are involved in the theater, television and movies in lighting, set design and props. Perhaps, Alvear should explore why these legions of artists are unknown to us. That, would be a service to his readers!

As for his statements about gays: While certain segments of the gay population may be more preoccupied with physical appearance, and, perhaps a more visible segment of the gay population, the vast majority of gay men are probably no more vain than most men in our culture. Rather than making that silly statement, Alvear might explore how a minority that is defined by its sexual behavior might place greater importance on sexual attractiveness.

According to most studies, men are more promiscuous than women, single men are more promiscuous than married men. And, gay men, who have no societal support for long-term loving relationships, may be the most promiscuous of all. Perhaps, Alvear should explore whether promiscuity causes unstable relationships, or lack of societal support for men loving men facilitates sexual promiscuity. Or, Alvear might investigate whether it is promiscuous sexual behavior that promotes disease versus unsafe sexual behavior. They are not the same thing!

When a person of any race makes the statement that "blacks are better than whites in sports, because there are more blacks in professional sports," it is as misguided as saying that "white males make better CEOs because most CEOs are white males."

Whether these statements are called "generalizations," or they are called stereotypical thinking, they are wrong. And, they are wrong because they are based on subjective observation. Or, they make a cause and effect leap of faith with unsubstantiated underpinnings. Provocation is not responsible journalism. It incites anger and resentment. Responsible journalism gives us insight and perspective. I believe that Alvear owes us all an apology, not for his callousness, or insensitivity, but for shallow, sloppy and superficial journalism.

Sincerely,
Pete Halpern
Miami Shores

Reader Loves Templeton's Columns

I just wanted to say thank you for all Jon Templeton's wonderful, well written, John and John, columns in the *Express*.

I have been in a relationship for 6 months now, with the guy I always wanted. Wierd how things work and now after 3 years of knowing each other, we are together.

The relationship has been difficult and very challenging. He's 37, I am 29 and we both come from different backgrounds and beliefs. He's American, I'm Latin. He's conservative while I am more liberated. I am free when it comes to sex; he's

more quiet, I want to dance, he wants to stay home.

We have worked through a lot of jealousy and envy (like you say in your article), sometimes I would like to be like he is, when it comes to getting things done and sometimes we would like to be like I am, relax and playful.

I just wanted to share this with you. I have tons of questions to ask, and lots of stories from our relationship. Thank you for sharing your thoughts and experiences.

Cheers!
MR

Congressman Wexler Rips Trovillion's Commentary

"I am greatly saddened by the intolerant and hurtful remarks of Florida State Rep. Allen Trovillion, R-Winter Park, to a group of gay high school students during their recent visit to his office in Tallahassee."

Every individual who walks into the office of an elected representative deserves to be treated with basic respect and dignity. Unfortunately, these students were confronted with statements of contempt and homophobia. There is no excuse for such discrimination in America in the year 2001.

I applaud these young people for their courage in traveling to their state's Capitol to discuss issues that are sensitive and deeply personal. I hope that

this experience does not discourage them from doing so again in the future."

Statement By Rep. Peter Deutsch, D-Fla. Thursday, April 12, 2001 "Discrimination can not be tolerated at any level of society - especially from our elected officials. An elected official's personal prejudice has no place in a democratic government and is completely unacceptable.

Intolerance strikes a blow to the core of democracy. As history has shown us, prejudice knows no boundaries, and it is my sincere hope that these students' own sense of judgment and tolerance will strengthen their resolve to combat acts of bias in our society.

New Reader Applauds Express Editorials

First let me mention two things. One, I just started reading "Express" 3 months ago. That is actually when I learned of its existence, although I have lived in South Florida for three and a half years. It is great to have newspaper that professionally provides the GLBT community with "real" information about issues that concern us all.

Second, this is the first time I have written to any media, organization or other.

I just had to write regarding the editorials "Bush All Wrong On Judges" and "Hot Air" from your March 26 issue. For me, the two issues are inseparable. They were the two issues of serious concern to me throughout this past election and beyond.

The first time I looked into candidate Bush's eyes I saw, a man that I believed could not be trusted in the White House. Therefore, it is no surprise to me that he is pursuing the agenda that he is regarding the environment and the judiciary. It was disheartening for me to that so many Americans either did not see the same thing or chose to ignore it (although Gore did win the popular vote). Many people go deaf and blind when they are promised a tax cut and a refund.

It was no secret that the newly elected President of the United States would be afforded the privilege of nominating possibly as many as three new judges to the Supreme Court (the strongest branch of government) during his term in office. Not to mention the innumerable appointments of federal court judges. These appointments could change the face of American life, as we know it for a long time to come. Anybody that thought he would appoint moderate judges was/is delusional.

Finally, the environment: Bush comes from a background tied to oil. So it is no surprise that he supports that industry. When he proposed to extend exploration for oil deposits domestically, he specifically mentioned areas of the country now protected against such activity. I envisioned oil companies going around the country destroying the most the most beautiful and unspoiled areas of our country. Areas that now protected by the Federal Government.

My surprise today is, now that Bush is President he will be hard to restrain. People are now concerned about his agenda. Better they should have showed more concern during the campaign.