

## Conservative interests at work

### No reason for CBS to refuse to run MoveOn.org's Super Bowl advertisement

Who will win the Super Bowl — the Pats or the Cats? This Sunday, an estimated 90 million U.S. viewers will tune in to CBS to find out. But it is what the viewers will not see that has proven controversial.



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The Web site MoveOn.org recently held a contest titled "Bush in 30 Seconds." The contest sought half-minute television advertisements that best portrayed the negative effects of President George W. Bush's policies on the country. The Web site wanted to buy airtime to run a commercial entitled "Child's Play" during the Super Bowl. But CBS announced on Jan. 15 that it refused to run the ad during this Sunday's broadcast along with an ad from the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

This is a cowardly move by CBS, which should have allowed the online advocacy group to buy air time. After all, it wasn't a question of money.

The reasoning used by CBS for rejecting the ad may seem understandable at first. The network says it has a policy of not running ads involving political issues, according to the online magazine Salon.com. But this reasoning crumbles when one learns that CBS plans to air no less than three politically-geared advertisements during the Super Bowl. One is an anti-smoking commercial and another is a public service announcement about AIDS.

Although there is some debate concerning smoking legislation and substantial concern about AIDS prevention, these two ads are unlikely to upset too many people and probably will not create any noticeable controversy.

The third political ad CBS is running, however, is highly controversial. It originates from The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. It is highly inappropriate that CBS will air a spot from the Bush administration but not an ad that attacks the policies of said administration. To be fair, if CBS airs one side's advertisement, the other side should also get airtime if it can afford to buy it.

The winning ad of MoveOn.org's contest is unlikely to make many people angry. "Child's Play" is a moving piece that depicts children washing dishes in restaurants, mopping floors,

working in factories, etc. At the end of the spot, a simple question is asked, "Guess who's going to pay off President Bush's \$1 trillion deficit?" This ad is especially poignant considering the release of the annual budget report by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office on Monday. The report says the government could easily accumulate another \$2.4 trillion in debt, according to a Washington Post story.

Some observers have said Super Bowl viewers do not want to view potentially divisive advertising from an admittedly progressive group. They argue the Super Bowl is a time when America, indeed much of the world, comes together to watch one of the biggest sports spectacles on Earth. Their reasoning is that the only dividing lines that should be drawn that day should be between those supporting Tom Brady's Patriots or Jake

Delhomme's Panthers.

Some have also said if the ad had aired, instead of convincing people that Bush was doing a poor job in office as intended, MoveOn.org's efforts would have backfired and even more people would support the president after he came under attack during America's biggest sporting event. This may very well be the case, but if it can cough up the money, MoveOn.org has the right to take that risk.

The refusal by CBS to run the MoveOn.org ad and the one by PETA shows a growing conservative ideology on the part of the network — or at the very least, the willingness to kowtow to conservative demands. Earlier this television season, CBS cancelled a planned November sweeps miniseries entitled "The Reagans" after conservative groups demanded the movie not be aired. CBS also faced criticisms over another miniseries — this one concerning Adolf Hitler — but still aired the program.

MoveOn.org calls CBS' refusal to air its ad censorship. While it is not quite on the level of government censorship, the actions of CBS are deserving of criticism for stifling the great American tradition of debate. Let us hope that the network that airs the next Super Bowl will be more open to letting advocacy groups pay for commercials that deserve to be aired.

Collins Ezeanyim is a senior computer engineering major.



TONY PIEDRA • THE BATTALION

“... the actions of CBS are deserving of criticism for stifling the great American tradition of debate. Let us hope that the network that airs the next Super Bowl will be more open to letting advocacy groups pay for commercials which deserve to be aired.”

#### MAIL CALL

### CBS exercising free press rights

In response to a Jan. 29 mail call:

Andrew Prihoda alleges that, by refusing to air the controversial ad campaign sponsored by the left-wing activist organization MoveOn.org, CBS is infringing on the rights ensured to U.S. citizens by the First Amendment of our Constitution.

This amendment states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or the press; or of the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

After exhaustive research, I have found no clause therein that ensures that one's voice will be heard, or that one's opinions will be accepted.

In fact, CBS is exercising the right of free press by refusing to endorse content it believes to be false or defamatory. Many times, I have heard liberals tout their First Amendment rights, simultaneously seeking to abridge those rights for people who do not share their ideals.

This closes the public forum to debate. Let's put an end to the double standard and maintain a free America for all.

Gregory Mikeska  
Class of 2007

## Robinson has no place in church

The question of separating a man from his actions is one that has arisen repeatedly in recent years. Can former President Bill Clinton still be an effective leader despite his private turmoil? Are priests capable of spreading the word of God while being plagued with a sinful infatuation? Can Michael Jackson still be appreciated as an artist despite his alleged depraved behavior? And recently, can the Rev. V. Gene Robinson really be an effective leader in the Episcopal Church while seemingly not believing a part of the Bible from which he teaches? Indeed, a man can never truly be separated from his actions, and in the case of Robinson's open homosexuality, it has resulted in a schism in the Episcopal church.

Those opposed to Robinson's election met the week of Jan. 20 in Plano, Texas, to discuss what actions should be taken to right what they see as a very serious wrong.

As followers of and believers in Jesus Christ's message, Christians believe they are called to follow his example by loving and accepting everyone they come into contact with. Although many Christians fail at this far too often, it does not change the fact that it is the standard that all sincere Christians should aspire to. Robinson himself charged Christians by asking them on the Episcopal Web site, [gc2003.episcopalchurch.com](http://gc2003.episcopalchurch.com), "Do we truly value the people who hold an opposing view, while disagreeing with their position?" If he can ask that question, surely he should know the answer to it... those who oppose him are not judging him as a person. They are not saying that they hate him or that he should be discriminated against. They are doing exactly what any Christian should strive to do: truly valuing him as a person who holds the opposing view, while disagreeing with his position.

This being said, no matter how much he is still valued as a person, as a homosexual, Robinson has no place as a church leader. In regards to certain occupations, a person does



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not just do their job, they are their job. The priesthood is one occupation in which people have completely given themselves to their jobs. Thus, we should assume that they are exactly what they profess to be at all times. Their behavior should be consistent with what they teach, whether in the pulpit, the supermarket or their homes. They should never pretend to be an earnest believer if they are not striving

to follow every bit of the doctrine they profess.

Sophomore A&M student and Episcopalian follower Katherine White says that, more than anything, the situation with her church makes her sad — sad that the Episcopal Church has strayed so far from the Bible and that the church has come to embrace the standards of society over the standards of God. As a minister of God's word, a priest should strive to be stable, to never even think about looking to society as a standard and to not only believe this standard, but to uphold it in their own lives.

Even if he did have homosexual desires, as a man of God, Robinson should have known that people should not always act on their desires, whether natural or unnatural ones. He should have known that, as a man of God, it is wrong to "(make) a home for the past 13 years" with someone who is not a spouse. Robinson should have known, as a man of God, that with enough prayer and effort, he can overcome any homosexual temptation. The Rev. Phillip Jones, pastor of St. Clements Episcopal Church in El Paso, Texas, told The El Paso Times that "(those that side with Robinson) are basically saying, 'Jesus Christ cannot change your life.' He can and he will."

Robinson obviously believes the Bible to be true or he would not have, as the Episcopal News Service Web site says, remembered "accepting Christ 'as my personal Lord and Savior' at the age of 12." He believes the part of the Bible that preaches salvation but cannot believe that part that warns, "Men committed indecent acts with

other men, and they received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion" (Romans 1:27b). How can a man who does not fully believe what he preaches be trusted to lead the masses?

Those opposed to Robinson formed their own group — the Network of Anglican Communion Dioceses and Parishes. "Yet the creation of the Network of Anglican Communion Dioceses and Parishes stopped short of a schism with the Episcopal Church, raising the prospect of church-by-church fights for authority and control," says MSNBC. The network plans to seek support from their Episcopalian roots, The Church of England, which mostly opposes ordaining gays. The dissenters claim they will seek to set up a "church within a church" system.

Proponents of the Robinson camp, though, seem to be confused altogether about why they are involved in the church in the first place. They claim that no good Episcopal would go for the "church within a church" idea because it violates the church law that MSNBC reports as saying, "no bishop from outside a diocese can minister to a congregation without the local bishop's permission."

Daniel England, a national church spokesman, told MSNBC, "I don't think most Episcopalians, committed to a system centered on the authority of diocesan bishops are going to put up with that kind of behavior very long."

The problems with the church can be found within that statement. A church should not be centered on the authority of any man no matter how worthy or unworthy he may be. All the problems within the Episcopal Church could be solved if it would shift their focus from being a "system centered on the authority of diocesan bishops" to being a "system centered on the authority of God."

White sums up what most dissenters in the Episcopal Church believe, "Whichever church stands planted in the truth of the word is the church that I will support."

Holly Coneway is a junior English major.

