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Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Issue: # 065

December 19, 2013

Greetings!

I have to confess, I am about 9 days late in getting this issue of *Uncommon Sense* out. Circumstances beyond my control have me busy raising my 6-month-old grandchild, and that labor of love often involves sleepless nights, non-stop attention during the days, and putting off countless other projects, friends, and normal, everyday work. Raising a child means putting your own life on hold; it means sacrifice.

Raising a baby *is* a sacrifice. And it is fraught with myriad inconveniences and changing one's entire schedule and life style. But it's a noble sacrifice. The development of a human being is what's at stake. Providing a safe haven, providing comfort, and warmth, and love, . . . these are exalted activities.

No lie: it's just after midnight as I type this, and I hear the little guy upstairs in his crib, crying. Gotta go!

OK, let's get started.

Warm regards,

Ara Norwood

Self-Development

What is Leadership?

I recently finished teaching two sections of a class on management at a local community college. One of the things I noticed was that the students in both classes seemed preoccupied with the question of how management

is contrasted with this thing called leadership. It's an old question, really. It's been around for many years. I'm not even sure if the question of how leadership compares and contrasts with management is an important one.

Even so, I'd like to spend just a moment isolating what constitutes leadership.

When you have a leader, by definition you have followers. The very presence of a leader denotes followers. Thus, a leader is a person who has somehow persuaded others to follow him in the pursuit of some lofty objective. A leader

paints a picture of a desired future state - an outcome of some sort.



And then

this leader somehow galvanizes a group of people to follow him in the realization of that desired future state - something we call a vision.

Thus, a military leader persuades members of the armed forces to complete a mission, perhaps a peace-keeping mission, perhaps an assault on a high-profile target, perhaps a security detail to protect an asset of some kind.

A business leader will persuade a group of people to launch a product, or overtake a market, or engage in some form of innovation.

A leader in the arts may rally a group of musicians to master their instruments, memorize a daunting piece of music, and perform it live, drawing from within themselves a level of passion, sensitivity, and musicianship they didn't know they had, astounding audiences in the process and moving some to tears.

In each case, you have a leader who has seen a potential and desirable possibility, has painted a picture to his followers as to what is possible, and has led them toward a lofty destiny, overcoming obstacles along the way, and strengthening his followers to reach beyond their present capacity to attain greatness during the journey. Think of the work of any great leader - Winston Churchill, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Ronald Reagan, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, George C. Marshall, Steve Jobs,

Brigham Young, Leonardo da Vinci, Alexander the Great - and you realize that in one form or another, they did precisely those things I have described above.

And what is even more interesting to contemplate is that you do not have to be a man or woman of position-power to execute the traits of leadership. It is yours the moment you decide it to be so. Leadership is not about position. It is about choice.

What is your vision?

The Elephant In The Room **Hatred for the Holy: The Left's War on Religious Expression**

While our country was founded as a Christian nation, the Left continues to systematically erase all vestiges of Christian symbolism in its ongoing war against all things sacred. The latest casualty involves a Christian cross that has been the centerpiece of a Korean War Memorial in San Diego since 1954. But now, some 60 years later, it has been deemed a terrible imposition by the Leftist legal machine known as the ACLU.

It's interesting that a [CNN report](#) on the story does not even mention the ACLU - the organization of useful idiots the Left unleashes in its ongoing crusade to destroy any and all vestiges of public (and eventually private) expressions of Christian religiosity.

One can only conclude that the very notions of *Jesus Christ*, *Christianity*,



Christian Churches, and *Christian Religion* are deeply troubling to groups like the ACLU, and thus, in their intoxicating love of godless secularism, they must find any means of uprooting the body politic from its Christian moorings. They truly believe a godless society where anything goes is a better society. And somehow, the courts of today tend to side with them without consideration of the consequences of secularism.

Trying to sound like a patriot, Daniel Mach, who serves as the director of the ACLU Program on Freedom of Religion

and Belief (which should actually be termed "Program on Freedom *from* Religion and Belief") gave the usual dishonest explanations for their anti-religious actions: "We support the government paying tribute to those who served bravely in our country's armed forces. But we should honor all of our heroes under one flag, not just one particular religious symbol."

An even more troubling example of the totalitarian intolerance displayed by the Left concerns a fellow named Phil Robertson, who stars on a highly rated television show called "Duck Dynasty." I've never seen the show, but have heard about its popularity for some time now. Evidently Mr. Robertson, whose personal religious views come from some segment of the Christian faith, had the temerity to suggest that he believes homosexual behavior is sinful. Gay Rights activist Wilson Cruz not only condemns Mr. Robertson for his beliefs, but actually goes farther in trying to redefine what Christianity is. Says Mr. Cruz, "Phil and his family claim to be Christian, but Phil's lies about an entire community fly in the face of what true Christians believe." I suspect Mr. Cruz is trying to reframe the narrative into the idea that Christians find nothing wrong with homosexuality.

And Mr. Robertson's fate for daring to say he personally believes homosexuality is sinful? A&E Networks, which televises Duck Dynasty, has suspended him from the show indefinitely.

We learn from this that the Left, which demands tolerance for its own agenda, simply will not tolerate contrarian

views. Dare to express your religious conviction that homosexuality is sinful and you won't just be shouted down by the Left: your career will be destroyed simply because you hold a religious belief and dared to express it.



And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

Update

Martin Bashir Resigns from MSNBC

In the previous issue of *Uncommon Sense* (#64) I commented on the fact that Martin Bashir's unseemly rant against Sarah Palin went unpunished by MSNBC, which, in my view, represented tacit approval of the filth that came out of Mr.

Bashir's mouth.

While all of that appeared to be the case at the time of publication of issue #64, I must now modify that earlier



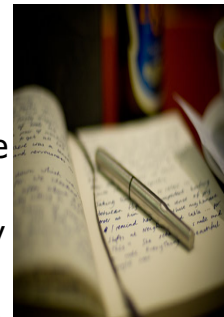
indictment of MSNBC and point out that Mr. Bashir [has since resigned](#) from the network.

While the "official" word-on-the-street is that the decision to resign came from Bashir, one suspects that he was forced to resign by the President of MSNBC, and so credit must be given where credit is due: my hat's off to MSNBC President Phil Griffin for doing the right thing.

From Ara's Journal

The True "Self"

I have always found it interesting how many of us have an online persona that is much more brash and sometimes even incendiary than our actual persona when we are interacting with people face-to-face in public. I am not alone in having a tendency to come across much stronger and even at times harsher and more pointed when I am interacting online - especially with someone I have never met - than when I am discussing the same sorts of issues in person with another individual, where I am apt to be far more reserved, far less disagreeable.



A perfect example of what I am talking about will serve as an illustration.

One of my subscribers to *Uncommon Sense* is JB, a professional man about ten years my senior. JB is a man of the Left, is astute, is well-read, and has a passion for history. He is also, like me, strong-minded, opinionated, and not afraid to take off the gloves and hit hard when he deems it appropriate. Periodically JB has read an issue of *Uncommon Sense*, particularly the **Elephant in the Room** column, and offered dismissive or negative comments about something I said. This has resulted in a bit of back-and-forth via email, replete with trash-talking (adult version, of course) and one-upping each other as we pick apart each others' arguments. It's actually kind of fun at times, especially when I get the upper-hand, as I did in our last exchange about Jefferson's views on the separation of Church and State. Not as much fun as when I am the one getting pummeled by his rhetoric, logic, and analysis, which is often superior to my own.

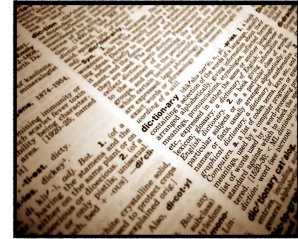
So imagine my surprise when, just a few weeks ago, I attended a party and found myself in the same room with JB. He had no idea I was there, and I wasn't even sure he would recognize my name when I approached him, shook his hand, and introduced myself to him. I watched as a sense of recognition swept across his face, and he said, "Hey, don't I know you from somewhere?"

I expected a cantankerous, contentious, rabble-rousing demeanor from JB. Yet it was anything but. I found him to be gregarious, interesting, open, gracious, and fun to talk to. We didn't spend a lot of time exchanging views on provocative topics at that party. In fact, he even went so far as to admit, openly, that he likes to have his views challenged, for it keeps him honest.

I also discovered we had some things in common - a love of music, and an ability to play the guitar. We spent much time trading stories about some of the great ones in the pantheon of rock and roll guitar lore. I found him to be an engaging conversationalist and quite informed.

While I am sure there will be more trash-talking in the future, as I irritate him with my conservative outlook on how the Left is harming society, there is, underneath it all, an underlying thread of respect, comity, and regard for my esteemed opponent, whose pleasant persona, in the end, trumps any sense of animosity, divergence, or animus.

Building Your Power of Expression



Prescience, n.

Pronunciation: 'preSH(ē)əns

Meaning: Ever come across someone who has enormous foresight, or who accurately predicts how events will transpire? That person is in possession of a fair amount of prescience. Or, if you prefer the adjective, that person is quite prescient. People with a lot of prescience tend to see around corridors, they are forward-thinking, they are anticipatory.

Usage:

- *Adroit and in possession of deep prescience, Alexander Hamilton both saw the need and executed the project of erecting lighthouses all up and down the eastern seaboard.*
- *A master chess player must be very prescient.*
- *In casting an eye to the future, the creative team at the Walt Disney Company often showed remarkable prescience in their choice of themes.*

New subscribers, the Special Report "11 Ways to Beat the Odds" should have been sent out to you already. If you have not received it, please communicate that to me via email (ara@aranorwood.com).

For more information on my work, follow me on Twitter ("Ara Norwood"), or on Facebook (keyword "Leadership Development Systems") or via my website: www.aranorwood.com

Sincerely,

Ara Norwood
Leadership Development Systems