

## Miss California, thanks for being honest

*by Roland\_S\_Martin*

A lot of folks say they like to keep it real, that they want authenticity and straight talk. Yet when someone actually does it, there is hell to pay.

Welcome to the world of Miss California, Carrie Prejean, who, since she answered a question regarding same-sex marriage in the Miss USA pageant April 19, has been attacked savagely by those who oppose what she had to say.

Leading the burn-her-at-the-stake parade is media opportunist Perez Hilton, the self-described gossip queen and the individual who kick-started this controversy by asking the question.

It seems that Hilton, who is gay, is none too pleased that Prejean chose to actually give her personal opinion on the issue; he ripped her on his blog after the show, using crude obscenities, and he continued to attack her at every turn on his media blitz.

Hey, Hilton, from a real journalist to a wannabe who traffics in gossip: Never ask a question if you're unprepared for the answer!

Isn't the whole point of asking a question to get someone's true feelings rather than the plastic and superficial answers we all are used to receiving?

Sure, Prejean could have gone the safe route and given one of those answers that reveal nothing and are hard to decipher – you know, the ones politicians give all the time – but, no! She actually gave her real opinion and now is being torn to shreds for it.

She opposes same-sex marriage. OK, fine. What if she had said, "Hey, I'm in full support of same-sex marriage." Would she now be celebrated on gay-focused blogs, magazines and Web sites? Would her current detractors actually be saying how open she is and that she's a great person?

Same-sex marriage is undoubtedly a hot-button issue. And being from California – the site of voter-approved Proposition 8, which outlawed same-sex marriage in the state – Prejean surely has heard the debate go back and forth. But her remark isn't outside the mainstream. A CNN/Opinion Research Corp. poll shows that 55 percent of Americans are against same-sex marriage, and Proposition 8 passed by a 52-48 percent margin.

What's interesting about this is that many of the same folks who are slamming her for her remark voted for President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden, who both have the same belief: Marriage should be between a man and a woman.

Even Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has made it clear that she has the same view, and it was her husband, former President Bill Clinton, who signed the Defense of Marriage Act, the federal law that forbids states from having to recognize gay marriages from other states.

In other words, four very popular liberals in the country have the same belief as Prejean, but a beauty pageant contestant is being torn to shreds. Hello, hypocrisy!

Those who criticize Prejean have the same right as she does to express their viewpoints. But enough with all the political correctness and the talk of how she should have danced around the issue, smiled and moved on.

At the end of the day, you have to be true to yourself – whether you're a gay gossip writer who favors same-sex marriage or a heterosexual woman who is against same-sex marriage. The day we condemn folks for speaking honestly is the day we become a bland society.

Maybe we're already there.

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