

# More Stories!

## Forum

Number 50

March, 2008

## Guest Lecturer

by Ryan R. Matt

In college, I would defy every one of those political action groups to stop complaining and to instead go vote. I knew that aside from the organizers of the groups, none of them voted. I was a wanted man for proclaiming what became my motto: *If you didn't vote, you didn't deserve your first amendment rights and had no opinion worth hearing.* And I would ignore any complaint about our government from anyone who did not vote.

After two years of ignoring the arguments of those who hadn't voted, I incited such anger that people would vote just so they could complain to me. Students hunted me down on campus to say they had voted, and now I couldn't ignore their opinions. They also liked how I didn't tell them who to vote for, unlike most of the liberals.

The locals were furious that a bunch of college students could be so successful in swaying their elections. They tried to stop us. I and many others wrote to the board of elections and sat in at public meetings until they accepted the college voters. So, when I encountered the same attitude here in Oneida County, I wrote a letter to the editor that was rejected because wanted me to write an editorial/guest column. While never giving me credit, about three months later the Oneida County Board of Elections changed its position with respect to the local college students. They credited a kid from Hamilton College. I don't remember his name.

In 2004, in the middle of my Constitutional Law class, I forgot to shut my phone off. I don't put it on vibrate because you can still tell when people call. Well, our professor had a very strict policy of cell phones in class. Usually, he would wait for you to turn it off and then punish you the next week by having you recite all the cases due for that class and grill you pretty hard on them, utilizing the Socratic method. You basically stood for 3 hours under the gun. That usually was

enough, but if you were stupid enough not to learn your lesson the first time, on a second offense he would take the phone and answer it himself. Then he'd hold onto the phone until the end of class. If it went off again, he would really embarrass you.

He was in the middle of his American Patriotism speech, trying to motivate all of us to vote and my phone went off. He told me to answer it and put it on speaker phone. It was my aunt who, when not around people on official business is very colorful in her choice of words, especially around me. I answered in fear, "Hello?"

"Well you patriotic bastard," she said, "I just wanted you to know that for the first time in my life, I've voted. Now you can't tell me I have no right to bitch about how shitty the government is. And you'll be happy to know that even your apathetic cousin voted too. I won't tell you who we all voted for, but we voted. And to make you even more happy, I told all my co-workers, 'You'd better vote or my nephew who is in law school will probably try to sue you for your citizenship.' So far all but one has voted, but that brainless twit didn't register in time."

"Oh, ok, thank you Aunt Jane. I'm glad you thought about me and voted today."

"You're welcome. Now," she continued. And at this point I thought she was going to bash President Bush in one of the only classes I have ever been in where the conservatives outnumbered the liberals 5-1. But instead she said, "Have you found any cute law school girls to f-ck?"

The entire class burst out laughing, I nearly died and hung up the phone.

My professor asked permission to steal my motto and use it to get more people to vote. I just received an e-mail from him this past November saying he had several kids tell him the motto is a great one and that they're going to use it. He claims he gave me the credit, but it doesn't matter. Just go vote.

As embarrassing as my aunt can be at times, her initial remarks got me off the hook for having to recite all the cases for next week's class. Did I mention I hate the Socratic method?

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*Also known as "Swimmy" on a number of upstate NY forums, the author is a law student who often finds himself in unusual predicaments.*

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