

# THE DAILY DISPATCH

---

## **Ludacris, Cheney: Language double-standard**

*By JASON ALSTON, Daily Dispatch Writer*

When Ludacris insisted that he had "hoes in different area codes," the country didn't take it too well. Bill O'Reilly blasted him. Pepsi fired him. Women's groups all over the country called for a boycott against him. The objection to Luda's lyrics was widespread and long-lasting.

But on the other side, no biggie. O'Reilly alluded to a desire to kill Al Franken on his radio show last year by saying that had he and Franken endured their now-legendary conflict in the Old West, O'Reilly would have settled things by shooting Franken "between his head." Public response to this was minimal and people mostly only made fun of O'Reilly for the wording of his statements instead of criticizing O'Reilly for the message he was conveying.

Back in the Fall of 2000, then-Gov. George W. Bush was caught calling journalist Adam Clymer a "major league a--hole." Again, no big deal. There was about a week's worth of fallout from the public and seemingly no objection from the Bush-backing Religious Right.

And now, just last Tuesday, CNN News reports that Vice-President Dick Cheney used the f-word in response to statements by Vermont senator Patrick Leahy after Leahy reminded the vice-president that he had once called Leahy a bad catholic. Again, limited public objection and barely any mention of this incident from America's conservative moral police.

Is there a double standard at play when Americans crucify rappers for profanity and negative messages but let politicians off the hook? Some seem to believe the answer is no. The reason why many Americans hold rappers up to higher standards of decency than even they themselves live is supposedly because rappers reach children with their messages and no one wants the children to be corrupted. Because rap is marketed to kids, America wants rappers to keep it clean.

And I guess since kids don't follow politics, journalists and politicians can say whatever they want.

Wrong.

Politicians should be held to the same decency standards that rappers and other entertainers are being held to. The rappers may be the ones who the kids are listening to in their free time, but when the kids are in school, they are learning about and discussing the actions of our elected officials. Some kids may feel that rappers are telling the stories that they can relate to, but it is actually the job of the politician to represent and make decisions for his constituents and their families, including the child who has not yet reached voting age.

And yes, most kids are imitating rappers, not politicians. But the behavior of a politician should never be so unbecoming that children would be prohibited from talking or behaving the same way. The argument that the children probably aren't watching should be no excuse; anything a politician does should be subject to observation and scrutiny from any American that his actions are affecting or will affect in the future, regardless of how old that American is.

The politicians should be the people that we want our kids to emulate, but this won't be the case as long as politicians are name-calling, cursing people down, and behaving like foulmouthed seventh-graders.

And O'Reilly? His show is watched by children believe it or not. He has even considered writing a book geared toward his younger fans and he was once e-mailed by a young girl who complimented him for being able to withstand such mean comments from other viewers. By his own admission, O'Reilly is reaching a young audience, so his messages shouldn't include the same thuggery that he so vehemently opposes from rappers. Expressing a desire to shoot a man for dissing him? You'll find the exact same type of talk in the 50 Cent vs. Ja Rule rap feud. That said, O'Reilly is a hypocrite and is no better than the rappers that he criticizes.

Politicians and journalists are servants of the public and children are included in this entity we call "the public." Members of these professions therefore should not be let off the hook for making any statement that we would find objectionable if made by a rapper or anyone else who influences children.

The writer can be reached at [jalston@hendersondispatch.com](mailto:jalston@hendersondispatch.com).

### **Ludacris, Cheney: Language double-standard**

When Ludacris insisted that he had "hoes in different area codes," the country didn't take it too well. Bill O'Reilly blasted him. Pepsi fired him. Women's groups all over the country called for a boycott against him. The objection to Luda's lyrics was widespread and long-lasting.

### **For terror detainees: Fair trial in order, but not free attorneys**

A big news item that has been surfacing all week is the right of detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba - not just the right to a trial, but be given representation at taxpayer expense.

[Home](#) | [Local News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Obituaries](#) | [World News](#) | [Archives](#) | [Classifieds](#)  
[Display Ads](#) | [Finance](#) | [Health](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Town Hall](#) | [Calendar](#)  
[Business Directory](#) | [Staff Directory](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Place An Ad](#) | [Guestbook](#)