



Firing Back at the Media on Sexual Harassment

For years, feminists have used the media as a weapon in the culture war, particularly in the battle to demonize men and portray them as sexual harassers in need of “sensitivity training.” But now comes a commander in the U.S. Navy, who has turned the guns around and fired back.

He accuses a woman journalist from the *Miami Herald*, [the Washington Post reports](#), of waging total war against him with “vile and repulsive” comments that would get any man similarly situated fired immediately.

Writing to the newspaper’s editor, the *Post* reports, “Navy Cmdr. Jeffrey Gordon accused Carol Rosenberg of ‘multiple incidents of abusive and degrading comments of an explicitly sexual nature.’ Gordon, who deals primarily with the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, prison, said in the letter that this was a ‘formal sexual harassment complaint’ and asked the *Herald* for a ‘thorough investigation.’”

So horrible is the reporter’s behavior, he alleges, that he has “been abused worse than the detainees have been abused.”

Among the accusations made against reporter Rosenberg by Cmd. Gordon in his letter:

- Referring to a 9/11 co-defendant sitting on a pillow, she allegedly told Gordon, “Have you ever had a red hot poker shoved up your [butt]? Have you ever had a broomstick shoved up your [butt]?... How would you know how it feels if it never happened to you? Admit it, you liked it.”
- On another occasion, Rosenberg apparently saw Gordon partially clad after taking a shower, then commented thusly (with more than a dozen people nearby): “Seeing him topless in tent city was the most repulsive sight I’ve ever seen in my life. I wanted to vomit.”
- She called one of Gordon’s interns “your little chick with the hot pants,” and told the officer, while others were present, “I know you’re hot for your interns and bring them down as your ‘companions,’ but seriously, if I’m going to do their work anyway, what purpose do they serve?” Because one of Gordon’s interns was a young man, Gordon concluded that Rosenberg had implied he is a homosexual.

Rosenberg’s allies “dismissed the letter,” the *Post* reports, as “an attempt to discredit a journalist who has managed to transcend incredible odds to cover a story of tremendous significance to the American public.” She was “pushing the envelope” to get the story.

One of the *Post*’s own reporters isn’t quite so sure: Rosenberg, he says, “‘would treat [Gordon] and others in an aggressive, sometimes demeaning way. It’s hard for me to say whether it was abusive or harassment.’”

Whatever you call it, this one isn’t Gordon’s first complaint about the reporter. Last July, the *Post* reports, Gordon contacted the paper to “to correct Carol Rosenberg’s patently offensive conduct” but the results were “merely temporary.”

Cmdr. Gordon is retiring. That accounts, the *Post* concludes, for the candid and harsh tone of his complaint to the *Herald*. And given that nothing significant happened to Rosenberg after the first complaint, it likely means she needn’t worry about a thing.



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on July 27, 2009

R. Cort Kirkwood, managing editor of the *Daily News-Record* in Harrisonburg, Va., has been writing about American politics and culture for more than 20 years. Mr. Kirkwood has written for *Chronicles*, *The New American*, *National Review*, *The Remnant*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Baltimore Sun*, *The Orange County Register*, *Taki's Top Drawer* online magazine, and *LewRockwell.com*. For several years, he syndicated a column, "The Hard Line." Mr. Kirkwood is the author of the nonfiction title, *Real Men: Ten Courageous Americans To Know And Admire*, published by Cumberland House.



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