

# CONDI'S JEWELS

I appreciate the desire to make Condi look like a bitch. Or rather, to expose Condi's imperious side. But does anyone suspect there's some crucial context left out of this story?

**Coit Blacker**, a Stanford professor who is one of the secretary of state's closest friends, recalls going into a shop where Rice asked to see earrings. The clerk showed her costume jewelry. Rice asked to see something nicer, prompting the clerk to whisper some sass under her breath.

Blacker remembers Rice tearing the woman to shreds.

"Let's get one thing straight," he recalls her saying. "You are behind the counter because you have to work for minimum wage. I'm on this side asking to see the good jewelry because I make considerably more."

A manager quickly brought Rice better baubles.

I'm just guessing, but "whispering some sass" seems like code for, "making a racial remark." And while, *if* the clerk assumed Condi shouldn't see the real things because she's black (I'm guessing, though it could also be a range of other issues, including that she's single), it doesn't excuse the comment about minimum wage, I have to confess I've resorted to some bitchiness when salespeople have assumed I wasn't worthy of seeing the good stuff because I was a DFH, female, or unmarried (back when I was).

The rash judgments of salespeople is one place where our society's prejudices remain on ugly display. I wouldn't be so quick to assume that that's not what happened here.