

21ST CENTURY HATE

I was noodling around the intertoobz tonight, and was struck by the thought that the concept of "American Exceptionalism" may refer to our ability to bring teh stupid.

First up to bat are the down with brown anti-immigrant numbskulls. From the Los Angeles Times:

Walt Staton wanted to help people, and his tool was a water jug. On the morning of Dec. 4, he and three others drove southwest from Tucson, to the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, which tens of thousands of illegal immigrants traverse each year.

But the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said the plastic jugs he left for the immigrants endanger wildlife, and this week Staton was sentenced in federal court in Tucson on a charge of littering. He was given one year of unsupervised probation and ordered to spend 300 hours picking up trash.

The sentence, however, does not quite capture the emotions surrounding the case – yet another testament to the volatility of the illegal immigration debate in Arizona. Prosecutors had asked for a \$5,000 fine and five years' probation. Staton, for his part, had insisted on a trial, rather than pay a \$175 fine.

In recent months, as the legal proceedings progressed, each side has essentially accused the other of staging a show trial to bolster its view of U.S. border policy.

Staton, a 27-year-old Web designer and soup kitchen volunteer, viewed his actions as humanitarian. As he had done for five years with the faith-based aid

group No More Deaths, Staton in December lugged water up hills and through scrub to remote, migrant-carved trails. Only this time, when he and his comrades returned from leaving eight jugs at their last stop, authorities were waiting, and he was cited by a Fish and Wildlife Service officer.

This is just sick. The Federal government, through the Arizona US Attorney's Office, egged on by the anti-immigration movement, which is very vocal in Tucson and Southern Arizona, got a burr up its butt and spent over \$50,000 to prosecute this heinous criminal who took time away from his volunteer work at a soup kitchen to try to keep some human beings from dehydrating to death in the desert. Littering. The brown hating Lou Dobbs crowd makes a lot of noise and bring a lot of pressure in Tucson and parts due south. I guess they got a trophy Dobbs can crow about now. In the immortal words of Vince Lombardi, what the hell is going on here?

Next, from my local rag, the Arizona Republic, comes the nay on gay ganglion for brains bunch up in Utah:

A southern Utah newspaper has rejected a gay California couple's wedding announcement, saying its policy is to publish announcements only for marriages legal under Utah law.

The Spectrum in St. George initially accepted a paid wedding announcement for Tyler Barrick and Spencer Jones last week, but then changed course, Jones said. The San Francisco couple were legally married June 17, 2008. They wanted the announcement printed in Jones' hometown paper ahead of a family party next week.

Yep, can't have anybody knowing that teh gay get hitched. I guess they figure if they don't print

it, no one will ever know. Good grief, can't we just move on? Please?

Well, at least the fine authorities up there in Utah decided to drop the charges against the gay couple that had the audacity to kiss each other:

The Salt Lake City prosecutor's office says it will not pursue charges against two men who were cited for trespassing on a Mormon church-owned downtown plaza earlier this month after sharing a kiss.

The United States may have elected a black man president, but you look out there every day and have to wonder just how far we really have come. It is not nearly as far as a great many people in this country think or give themselves credit for. Imagine if that energy was channeled to a productive, instead of destructive, end.