



**Your On the  
Street Reporter**



**Uyless Black**

**Ashley Judd at the National Press Club**

## Preface

Hello and welcome. I thank you for taking the time to examine some of my work. Additional information can be found at [www.UylessBlack.com](http://www.UylessBlack.com) and [blog.UylessBlack.com](http://blog.UylessBlack.com)

This material represents a work in progress. As readers provide feedback, as I uncover new information, if I uncover errors, I will update or correct the text of this manuscript. That stated, I hope my initial efforts have led to a fairly stable offering.

On-line publishing is a new experience for me. Most of my work has been produced in books from my publishers. They are fine companies, but I wanted to try something new. I find I now have more control over my work. Not the content, as my publishers have never asked me to include or exclude anything of significance. Rather, I find I can now more easily integrate, separate, or merge pieces of work. Hard copy does not lend itself to such flexibility.

Most of the writings you will find at my Web site and my blog are available free of charge. Some material is on a fee basis, but not much.

I ask you to honor the copyrights on this material. Unless the book, essay, or report is priced, I am creating this work for our personal use. It is not intended for commercial consumption. Please note the footnotes and obtain permission from the sources if you wish to re-use any of the text, tables, or photos for commercial purposes. If I later decide to sell any of this work, I too will go through the copyright procedures. You are welcome to cite my work; I ask you to provide attribution.

I have used hundreds of sources for my work and I am keen to credit others' help. It only takes a footnote, and I hope other writers do the same for me. If I have missed citing a source, it is without intent.

I use comments and conversations that are inside quotes in one of three ways: As verbatim reconstructions (from recordings); as nearly accurate reflections (from my notes); or as more distant remembrances (which I usually paraphrase). I take Mark Twain's approach to quotations: I strive for accuracy; if I do not have exact notes, I strive to convey the spirit and meaning of the quote.

I hope to hear from you about my work. I hope you enjoy it. I hope you will find some of it edifying. I hope you get a few laughs along the way.

## Ashley Judd at the National Press Club

**June 22, 2005**

Hello from Your On the Street Reporter. I spent a few hours last night at the National Press Club attending a dinner at which Ashley Judd was the featured speaker. Here is a report on this event.

### **The Motivation to Attend Ms. Judd's Speech**

The truth is I attended this dinner because of Ashley Judd's face. I am not making a sexist statement. Man or woman, who would not go out of their way just to look at Ms. Judd? Initially, I had no idea of the subject matter of her speech. My email informed me she would be in attendance to discuss the subject of...at which time I stopped reading and called-in my reservation.

As you know, last week I attended Vice President Cheney's speech *in spite of Dick's* face. Again, I am not making a sexist statement. Man or woman, who would go out of their way just to look at Mr. Cheney? I was not alone in my motivation to view Ms. Judd's countenance. One of my dinner companions had the same idea. After our introductions, and to break the ice, I asked him, "What brings you out tonight?" A stupid question, but it beat asking about the weather on his side of the table.

He might have well responded, "A full moon." But he had a polite reply to my inanity. He looked at me for a moment and then smiled. I waited for an answer. None came, just the smile. I responded, "I see; same here. Ashley Judd."

"Yep."

### **Ms. Judd's Speech**

Ashley Judd's topic was HIV/AIDS. She is a spokesperson for YouthAIDS, an organization whose mission is to educate and protect young people from HIV/AIDS. The principal focus is on young people who live in impoverished parts of the world.

I suspect I just lost some of my readers. Ms. Judd's topic and the information give the audience was not only important, it was sadly fascinating. Please read on.

I also suspect I belong in the category of most of America's citizens regarding HIV/AIDS: Indifference. I read about the subject in my morning paper. I watch a TV report about it. I try to digest statistics on the magnitude of the problem. More often than not, my deficit attention span leads me to turn to the sports page, flip the TV channel to an HBO movie, and saunter into the kitchen to check-out last night's leftovers.

What is the average citizen's concern with HIV/AIDS? Probably the same as mine: Marginal. Just keep the disease out of harm's way to my loved ones and me. At a minimum, just beyond the front door of my life. After all, it's a matter of choice. The groupies' chosen life style leads to HIV/AIDS. Not to mention the chosen life styles of prostitutes and druggies.

Yes, but how about those who have no control over their “life styles?” How about the yet unborn? The children of sexual predators? The young sons and daughters who are raped by their father? The men, whose customs require the submission of women to unprotected sex? The women, who must “negotiate” with their mates for them to use a condom? The sex workers, who ply their trade in order to eat their next meal, and whose principal motivation is have an exit strategy out of the room when the customer discovers his skin is to be covered with another less-than-stimulating protective skin?

What struck me during Ms. Judd’s speech (see Figure 1) was the “gender inequality” mentality leading to so many cases of HIV/AIDS. She spoke of this belief (and practice) in one part of the world she visited. She told us a man who is HIV/AIDS positive is led to believe, “...having sex with a virgin will cure him of the virus!”



**Figure 1. Ashley Judd speaking on HIV/AIDS.**

Ms. Judd then talked about the subsequent, resultant rapes of suspected virgins, such as nuns and little girls. You bet. Go for it. No better way to cure your ills and get-it-off than offing the unwary and undiseased.

She spoke of the Youth/AIDS programs on educating people about delayed sex; about abstinence; about just taking a short time to put on a condom before having sex. As I listened to her, I recalled a phrase I had come across earlier in my life. It’s called the Immediacy Syndrome: A desire for the immediate fulfillment of a wish, in which any delay toward completion creates an acute breakdown of the pleasure-seeking areas in the brain.

I thought to myself that Ms. Judd, Youth/AIDS, and all of us face a very big problem in asking our species to forbear or abstain. It’s against our nature. Our nature tells us, “My sperm must be embedded into her ovaries before someone else does the deed. I can’t have my competitor’s genes out-doing mine. Besides, Immediate Climaxes satisfy my Immediacy Syndrome.”

## **Q and A**

On a lighter side, I was tempted to pose a similar question to Ms. Judd that I unsuccessfully posed to VP Cheney. As you may recall, my query to Dick was, “Do you know you look a lot better on TV than in person?” My question to Ashley would have been, “Do you know you look even better in person than you do on TV?”

But that question would have been too flippant for such a serious occasion. So, I passed on the Q and A.

## **Restaurants and Golf?**

By her own volition, Ashley Judd has decided to carry a heavy load. She could be back in her home state of Kentucky, working on the 9<sup>th</sup> generation of her family. She could be making another movie. She could be doing nothing, just basking in her fame as a film star and her success at being good-looking. But she has chosen to spend much of her time for a cause.

As I left the National Press Club and as I thought about Ms. Judd and her speech, some thoughts of my dinner companion came to me. He explained he was an attorney. He told me he was a Jew, but had attended a Catholic college out of curiosity. He said he spent the first part of his life in the restaurant business (He is the same age as our son (37)).

He told me the definition of success in the restaurant trade was to start-off very wealthy and end-up semi-wealthy. (I was tempted to ask him for his business model). His take on his occupation was too complex for me to understand completely. I just assumed he was telling me to spend money *at* a restaurant, but not *for* a restaurant.

But he also mentioned something else about why he attended the Ashley Judd speech. He was interested in listening to new ideas, which he said was one reason he chose a Catholic school for his undergraduate work. Aside from Ashley’s fame and good-looks, he was looking for something at this event that was beyond his café and lawyering activities.

As I made my way across the Potomac River, I thought about his remarks. In my retirement years, I have been pursuing these treks: Learning to play golf and accepting it as an accepted way to practice self-flagellation. Learning to drink Cognac (XO) and accepting it as yet one more way to induce unhealthy, but assuaging liquids into my body. Learning to watch prime time TV and accepting it is probably killing my already dying brain cells. Learning to do nothing and accepting it as a welcome relief from doing too much in my younger years.

I also thought of Ashley Judd’s remarks. I thought of her choking-up several times during her speech; of the time she spends on her cause; of her up-coming meeting with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; of her decision to spend a big part of her time on a selfless activity.

Ms. Judd may play golf. She may be a Kentucky horse woman. She may knit. She may drink gallons of XO. I don’t know. But as I think about the trivial pursuits in my retirement years; as I think about my On the Street Reporter jokes; as I try to master the game of golf; I think Ms. Judd’s pursuits are a good antidote to my prosaic concerns.

Here's to you Ashley Judd. You're a fine looking person. But more important, you're a fine person.

Your On the Street Reporter.