

Aspirational R.S.V.P.: Saying yes when you mean no

By Henry Alford, New York Times

Let's call it the aspirational R.S.V.P. – when someone replies yes to an invitation, even though he knows, or is fairly certain, that he can't or won't attend.

“Aspirational R.S.V.P.s have become rampant, thanks to Facebook,” said the painter and translator Daisy Rockwell. “Very often when I post an event there, people will choose ‘Join’ simply as a show of solidarity. If you ask them if they really plan to come to your Massachusetts event all the way from California, they are affronted, as though you are criticizing their noble sentiment.”

Reservations-making without commitment is the apotheosis of digital glibness; it's a vote of confidence built on rickety scaffolding.

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