

Opinion



Free Press Viewpoint

Clinton isn't doing Sen. Kerry a favor

Okay, the question must be asked: Why in the world is former President William Jefferson Clinton releasing his book "My Life" at this time, knowing it will overshadow the campaign of Sen. John Kerry for the presidency?

The answer is simple — duh?!: Because Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton think first of Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton.

As a longtime student of politics — the good, the bad, the ugly — it is our belief there is no other reasonable way to answer that question.

Let's face facts: If Hillary Clinton has designs on the White House, Sen. Kerry must not win in November. If Kerry does win, then Hillary is put on hold until 2012 and by that time she'll pretty much be off the presidential radar screen. Kerry, it would be assumed, would be renominated for a second term in 2008.

But, if President Bush wins re-election on Nov. 2, and at this point in time polling seems to indicate such to be the case, then the race for the White House in 2008 will be wide open — for Hillary to come riding in on the donkey and shoot down any challenge within the Democratic party.

Of course former President William Jefferson Clinton brushes off those assumptions. He must if he wants his book to sell millions of copies — mostly to Democrats. He can't anger them. He must not look like the spoiler. But he is. And it's not Ralph Nader, as some would want us to believe.

The release of his book at this crucial time in the Kerry campaign again underscores one of Mr. Clinton's major flaws: "Me first." And that old "I feel your pain" line must have Kerry's campaign brass questioning his — Clinton's — sincerity.

That's politics — the ugly side.
Tom A. Dreiling
Publisher

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Or e-mail td@nwkansas.com.

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COLBY FREE PRESS

155 W. Fifth (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963
Colby, Kan. 67701

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State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout Excellence, Column Writing, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography.

Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.

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THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the day observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Haynes Publishing Co., 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE is paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to The Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

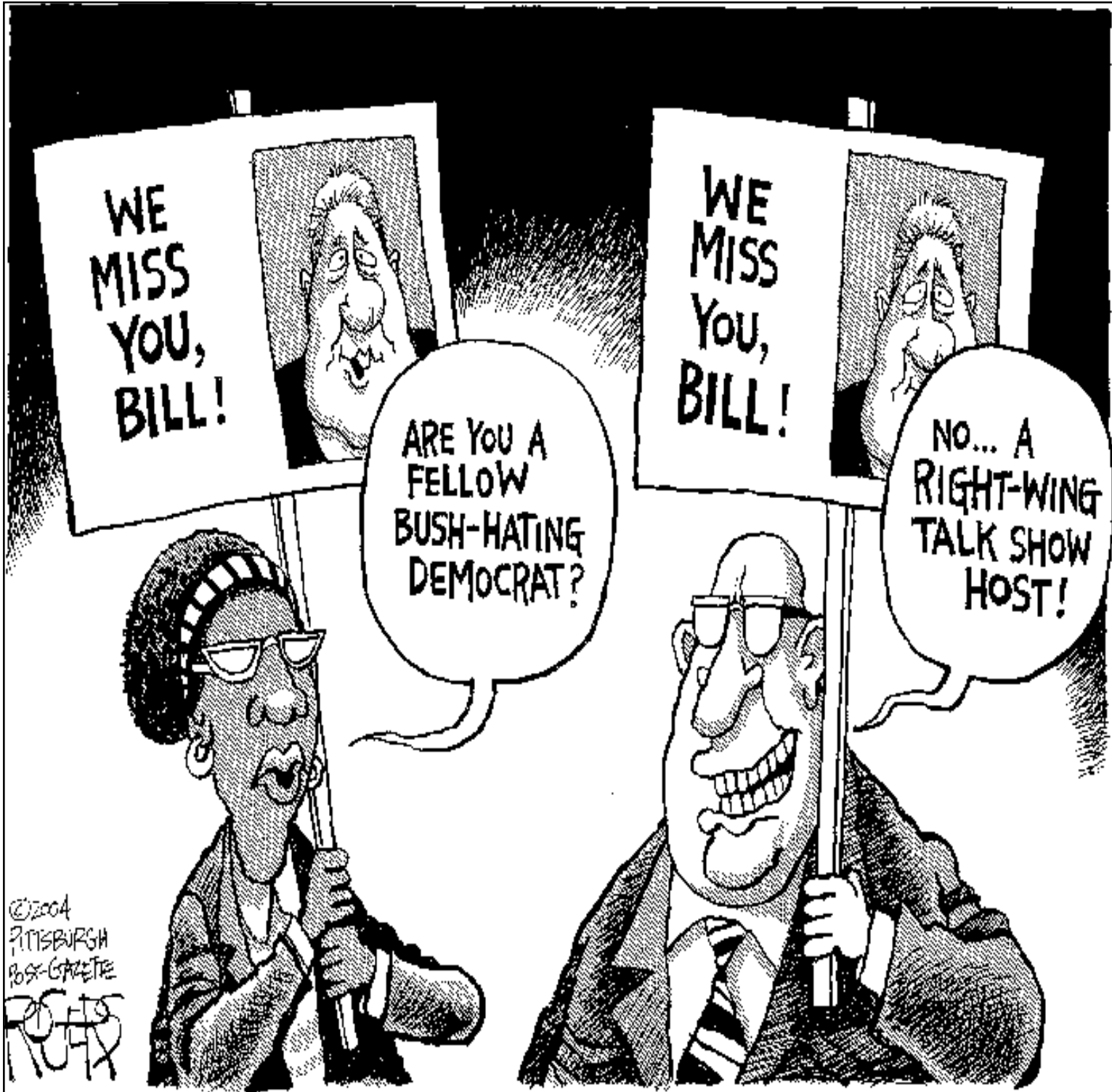
THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Colby by carrier: 4 months \$32, 8 months \$47, 12 months \$64. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$44, 8 months \$56, 12 months \$72. Other Kansas counties and surrounding states: 4 months \$51, 8 months \$61, 12 months \$75. All other states, \$75, 12 months.

Nor'West Newspapers

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Guess who came to dinner?

We had just finished our lunch and were admiring the art and artistry of old friends and new acquaintances when word of the bear reached us.

We were in Creede, Colo., the little town we lived in when our children were young. Creede is an old silver-mining town in southern Colorado. There are only about 700 full-time residents in the county, and most of them are our friends.

It's a bit of an art colony, with world-famous watercolorist Steve Quiller leading the pack of weavers, wood carvers and painters. It is also the home of the Creede Repertory Theatre, where dozens of young actors and actresses show off their talents each summer.

It was Memorial Day weekend, and time for the annual Taste of Creede festival. All up and down the two-block Main Street, vendors were cooking up tasty dishes and artists were showing their wares.

We had been visiting with two old friends, Rick and Teri Inman. Rick is a chef turned wholesale food distributor and Teri is a weaver of scarves and sweaters. She dyes her own wool, which she gathers from her herds of rabbits and mohair goats. Her products are soft, downy and expensive.

Rick and Teri weren't interested in the bear,



Cynthia Haynes

● Open Season

which had been treed at the end of the street. They live 17 miles upriver and have to keep close watch over their livestock to make sure the stock doesn't provide a meal for the wildlife.

I grabbed Steve's hand, however, and dragged him up the street. We'd seen bears before in downtown Creede, but it had been a while.

The young black bear was up a tree at the end of the street as a crowd of onlookers stared and a reporter for the local newspaper snapped away. I was rather surprised we got so close to the action.

Deputy Billy Fairchild leaned over and whispered, "I'm letting the press get close, so maybe he'll get eaten."

He asked the photographer and all the rest of us to move back.

"If the bear eats all these people," he said, with a grin, "I'll be in real trouble."

Having seen the bear, we moved on — there was still food to taste and friends to greet. Steve saw the game warden leave town with his bear trailer.

Later, the newspaper ran an article saying that the bear, a year-old male, had been tranquilized, removed from the tree with a cherry picker, tagged and taken off to the far mountains, where he would have to make his lunch from berries and grubs instead of hamburgers and city trash.

They tag the bears, and they'll give them two free rides. If one comes back a third time, he's toast.

Bears have been a problem in the mountains the last few years. It's been dry and the state dropped the spring bear season several years ago. The double whammy of more bears and less food has forced many a bruin to go looking for lunch in a trash can.

I hope that is our only bear of the summer, but I'm not counting on it. And I'm not putting the trash out back when I visit Creede this summer.

Cynthia Haynes and husband Steve are owners of Nor'West Newspapers.

Ready for some encouraging news?

Good news! Forbes.com has just released the results of a study performed by the Pacific Research Institute for Public Policy. Lawrence J. McQuillan reports in his article entitled, "Where The Opportunities Are," that Kansas ranks #1 in states "with the fewest regulatory body blocks and fiscal obstacles."

His article suggests that industries seeking to locate new businesses and subsidiaries should first consider Kansas and other states that constantly maintain similar pro business attitudes.

Indeed this is good news; it trumpets loudly the fact that Kansas is a business friendly state. Not all rankings, however, hold Kansas in such high regard. Many rankings consider Kansas no better than a mediocre proponent of business.

Why the difference? Most studies use the same data but assign different weightings to the variables. Forbes places a high value on "eco-



Gerry Fulwider

● A View From the Range

nommic freedom" and thus we were propelled to the top of this study as a result of our respect for property rights. We engage in less income distribution and attract less tort litigation than most states. Steve Forbes likes that.

Other states rating in the top ten of the Forbes study include our neighboring states of Colorado (2), Missouri (10) and Oklahoma (6). Other western states listed in the top ten include Idaho

(4), Utah (5) and Wyoming (9). This distribution suggests that a correlation between western state values and the needs of business exists.

Will this study cement our status as the new frontier for business relocation? Maybe not, but it certainly doesn't hurt. It does, however, provide us with recognition of our pro business values.

And, if it serves to heighten the perception that Kansas is a good place to do business, it is a worthwhile tool. If it heightens our own perception that Kansas is a good place to do business, it is truly an invaluable tool.

Gerry Fulwider is executive director of the Thomas County Economic Development Alliance. His office is located in the Thomas County Office Complex at 350 S. Range and his telephone number is (785) 462-4511.

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Doonesbury

● Gary Trudeau

