

Opinion

Free Press Viewpoint



What do you want to do in the future?

It doesn't seem to be any easier to know what you want to do at 20 or 50.

People used to go to work for someone and they remained there until retirement. That is rarely the case anymore. People have to be willing to retrain and learn new things. They say a person will have at least three different professions in their lifetime. The question of "what do I want to do?" doesn't seem to get any easier.

At 20 decisions are affected by wanting a spouse, an education, job and having a family. At 50 the decisions are a little different. The kids should be mostly raised or at least almost out of college. The caretaking seems to be for either your parents or grandkids. Now the spouse thing can get a little complicated. As divorce has become more common the spouse that we have now may not be spouse we had at 20. Around 50 health issues start cropping up which can lead to life style changes. When the obituaries start having people younger than you it gives you a funny feeling. Women seem to be joining the ranks of the dying in their 50s.

That leaves a group of widowers. Do they want to remarry or remain alone? Asset management becomes more of a question. What about pre-nuptial agreements? It's different than when you are starting out.

Some women seem to gain attitude as they near the half century mark. They may no longer feel that they have to look cute to impress the opposite sex. Very few in their 50s look like they did at 20 even with help. Menopause is even coming out of the closet.

Men seem to have their mid-life crisis to deal with. Maybe the stereotype of a middle aged man with a 20 something blonde and a sports car will fade away.

Then there's companionship and/or chemistry. The Viagra commercials seem to promote 20s chemistry at 50. Are we being realistic or is it a good thing?

As the "Baby Boomers" get older the older the retirement age becomes. Changing one's profession at retirement age could be a good thing. Maybe some could get to do what they have always wanted to do.

The Americans could learn from the Orientals' attitude for age. Orientals value older individuals for their experience and knowledge. The elder of our society have almost become part of our throw away mentality.

The one thing "Baby Boomers" have going for them is sheer numbers. That in itself will force some changes for good I hope.

Pat Schiefen, Interim Publisher Colby Free Press

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 pjschiefen@nwkansan.com or pdecker@nwkansan.com.

Where to write, call

U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2443 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715 or Fax 202/225-5124

State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building, 303 SW 10th St. Rm. 171-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmorrison@ink.org web: www.ink.org/public/legislators/jmorrison

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol, 300 SW 10th St., Rm. 128-S., Topeka, Kan. 66612, 785/296-7399 ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

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

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Pat Schiefen - Interim Publisher
pjschiefen@nwkansan.com

NEWS

Patty Decker - Editor
pdecker@nwkansan.com

Tisha Cox - General Assignment
tcox@nwkansan.com

Jan Katz Ackerman, Area Reporter
ackermanjk@ruraltel.net

ADVERTISING

Crystal Rucker - Advertising Sales/Director
crystalr@nwkansan.com

Jasmine Crottinger - Advertising Sales
jasminec@nwkansan.com

Cindy Davis - Advertising Sales
c.davis@nwkansan.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Lea Bandy - Circulation Manager
lea@nwkansan.com

Jeanette Applegate - Bookkeeping & Ad Building
japplegate@nwkansan.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkansan.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Jim Bowker - General Manager

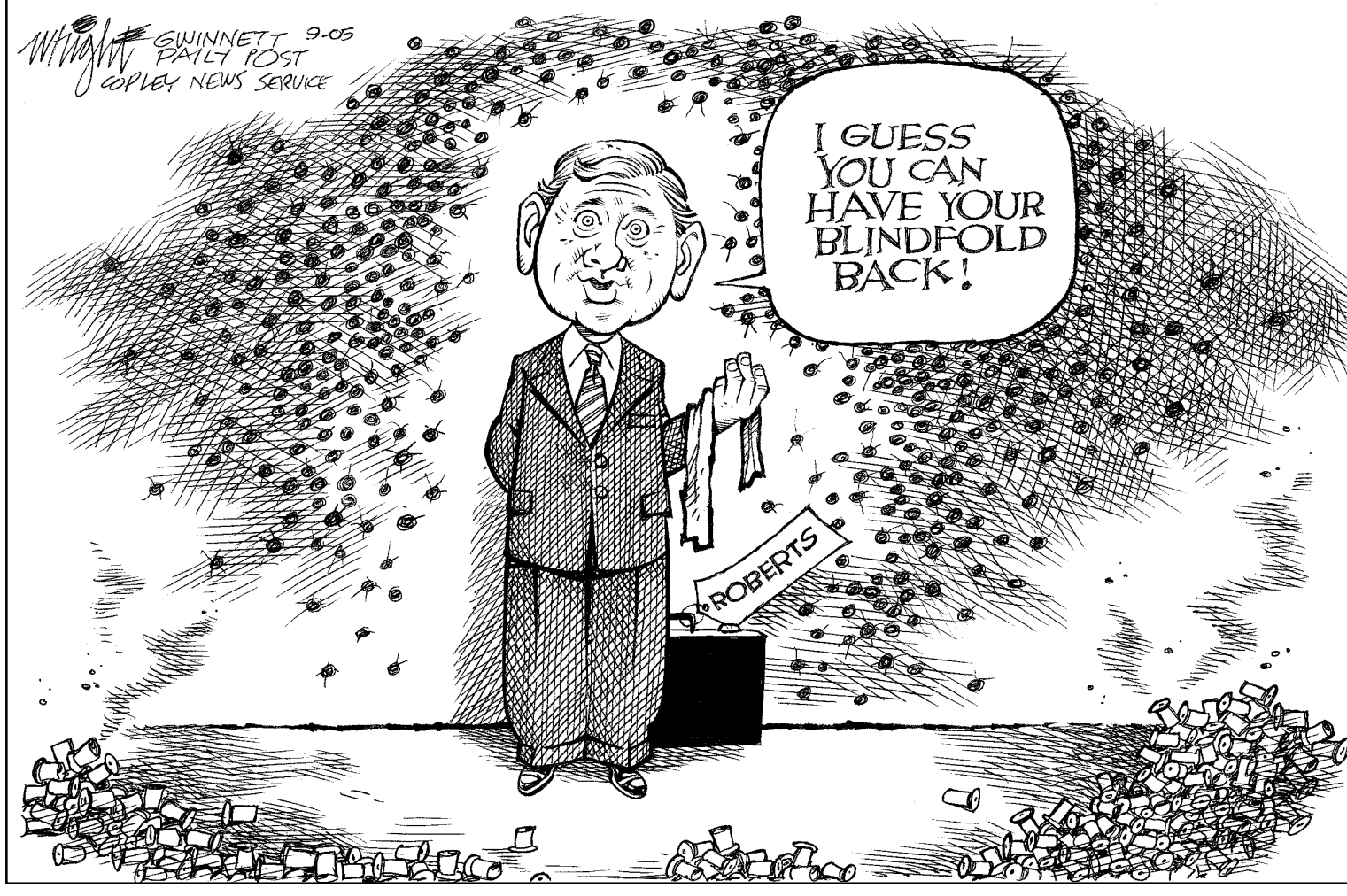
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Signs of watching too much TV

The past year without hockey and its return this fall has made me take pause and reflect upon the lessons of the past year. The moral I have learned is that I watched entirely too much television. Documentaries, dramas, scifi, miniseries, you name it. As I have said before, my hand was forced. I had no choice but to turn to other sources of entertainment for stimulation.

And looking back, When somebody mentions little green men, you correct them by saying "They're not green. They're grey."

You know the difference between a watcher, a Watcher and the Talamasca. (Buffy the Vampire Slayer, "Highlander," and Anne Rice's vampire series)

You would gladly join the above mentioned groups if they were to recruit you.

You know the meaning of "embrace" and it's not a hug.

Old New Orleans cemeteries don't scare you.

You also know stuff about the places that the commercial tour operators don't.

The voodoo shop didn't creep you out.

You laugh at things that make your friends and family go "Huh?"

Outdated, ancient weapons are easily identifiable. So are their proper uses.

You know what's really in the basement of the F.B.I. (and it's not the X-Files)

It's the bureau's Violent Crimes Unit, the people who profile serial killers and other perpetrators of violent crime.

A glamour isn't a copy of the magazine.



Tisha Cox

• Off The Beaten Path

Out of the way vacation spots like Rachel, Nev. are on your future trip itinerary. (Casinos, what casinos? Rachel, Nev.!) Place names like Groom Lake, Dreamland and "skunk works" get you excited.

A crop circle isn't a field irrigated by a center pivot irrigation system.

The thought of research doesn't make you cringe. Instead, it makes you deliriously happy.

On your computer, all the "good" sites are bookmarked. Or the addresses are memorized.

Not only did you remain spoiler-free during the first run of "Witch Hunter Robin" but you practically cheered when you heard "craft arcanum" and realized somebody actually got it right.

And the words "animus corpus" nearly made you choke on your popcorn when you heard it at the movies.

You get torqued when the library doesn't have any of the good books you're looking for and if you asked them to order them, they'd give you a funny look.

Acronyms like B.P.R.D. and the STNJ make sense.

"Van Helsing" was woefully inaccurate and not even Hugh Jackman as the title character could make up for that turkey.

While watching one of the fall's many off the beaten path new shows you keep score of all the factual inconsistencies in the script. (There are no Anasazi symbols for protection that you know of. If they did, you would probably have a tattoo. And Wendigo are actually from Canada also. Not just Minnesota or Michigan. Although that would explain a few things. . .)

The same stands for skinwalkers and black dogs.

After reading an Anne Rice novel you can actually say "been there, done that."

You've seen most of Vancouver, British Columbia without ever having been to the city.

When reminded of the corn field incident from 1998, you can look back on it and laugh. Finally.

Recent reminders of past film festivals left you speculating that the selective amnesia you seem to be suffering from was apparently a good thing.

Pop culture references are suddenly everywhere.

Maybe everything shouldn't be considered a "learning opportunity."

Some questions are better left unasked. And some ideas are better left unacted upon.

Tisha Cox is a general assignment reporter/photographer for the Free Press. Her column appears on Mondays. tcox@nwkansan.com.

Few have moral perfection in lives

In conservative Republican territory, Bill Clinton and Ted Kennedy are favorite whipping boys when they want to bash the "liberal Democrats". Bill and Ted's personal lives may not meet our demands for moral perfection. But, before you discredit their political agenda and social leadership, perhaps you should take into account a great number of other politicians, both Democrat and Republican. Very few of us can stand a test without finding shortcomings in our lives.

The present administration has plenty of shortcomings, when it comes to credibility and morality. Starting from the top and going down you will find plenty of scandalous material. Mr. Bush's military record has too many "18 minute gaps". His academic record and college days are not above reproach. He has a problem with accepting personal responsibility (The buck never stops at his desk). Dick Cheney cannot cover up his military avoidance, nor can he justify his loyalty to the energy cartels, when he formulates his policies. Karl Rove, close confidant and advisor to the President, has danced too close to the precipice and may fall to his political death. Tom Delay has some rather shady connections. The Attorney General, Secretary of Defense, U.N. representative and many others have less than stellar performances, when it comes to integrity and even

Ken Poland

• Ken's World

human decency. I hope President Bush has picked better qualified Supreme Court Justices than he did FEMA director! Brownie boy's political strings didn't do much for him when he was needed most.

Newt Gingrich, one of Clinton's adversaries, was doing a little hankie-pankie, while piously denouncing Clinton's moral turpitude. It took a couple tries before a suitable replacement was found for Newt's position. It seems the first couple candidates had a little problem with their "zippers" and clandestine relationships. A little research will reveal just how "human" our elected officials are. Us older folks can recall that President Eisenhower had a little problem over a vicuna jacket. Military gossip cast a little shadow on his fidelity to marriage. It's rumored that Ronald Reagan consulted his horoscope quite frequently before making final decisions.

Even, King David, one of our favorite men in religious history, failed miserably. He allowed lust and power to corrupt his relationship with both God and man. Did that prevent him from having been a good King? How about King Solomon and all his wives and concubines? They had him so strung out between all their gods and political affiliations, he didn't stay on the straight and narrow.

God will judge the soul and eternal destination of each and every one of us. It is our responsibility to judge and formulate the policies for the earthly kingdoms. In a democratic republic, we must protect man's freedom to choose, both politically and theologically.

Yes, we have a serious moral problem in the United States of America. But, it is not limited to any single partisan, religious or secular organization. The problem isn't limited to the "liberal", "conservative", "born again", "evangelical", "orthodox", "pagan", "mainline", "independent" or any other group labels you can name. The problem begins with "me". And when every one of us accepts responsibility for ourselves instead of looking for the speck in our neighbor's eye, perhaps we can begin to put our nation back on track.

You can reach Ken Poland at rcrwine@cheerful.com

Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

