

commentary

from our viewpoint...

Air Force Academy needs new tradition

All the service academies are steeped in tradition. The newest, Air Force, seems to have developed a tradition of male cadets raping the women.

Worse, the victims are telling the world, if a woman reports such a crime, the norm is for the air force to call her a liar, or worse, and quietly force her out.

This is not about the argument over whether women belong in the armed forces. Or even about whether women belong in combat.

Women are in the service, for better or for worse. In the air force, as pilots and in a hundred other roles, they will find combat.

Forced to investigate, the air force says it has so far identified 56 cases over the last 10 years where women were raped or sexually assaulted at the academy. Investigators believe there will be more.

A squad of 17 investigators is camped at the Colorado Springs campus, digging deeper into the rape scandal. Today, at least, the air force is talking about the problem seriously.

It took a couple of brave young women to come forward and tell the nation what was happening.

They reported, and others have backed them up, that the academy did not investigate their claims. Instead, air force officials told them, essentially, that whatever happened was their fault.

One woman said her only mistake was trusting a senior cadet to give her a ride home.

Eventually, most of the victims left the academy and the air force. They went to other colleges where rape is viewed as a crime, not a sport, today. Where rape crisis centers listen to women and try to help them.

The men — they went on to become officers, if not gentlemen. Though it seems like the women might have more integrity, that's the way it happened. They were punished for being victims, the men were promoted.

It's shameful that one of our vaunted service academies would foster such values. Rape has never been a military option for America, anymore than we would sanction wanton killing of civilians or any other war crime.

But apparently, air force cadets are not bound to take a lady's word for it when she says "no."

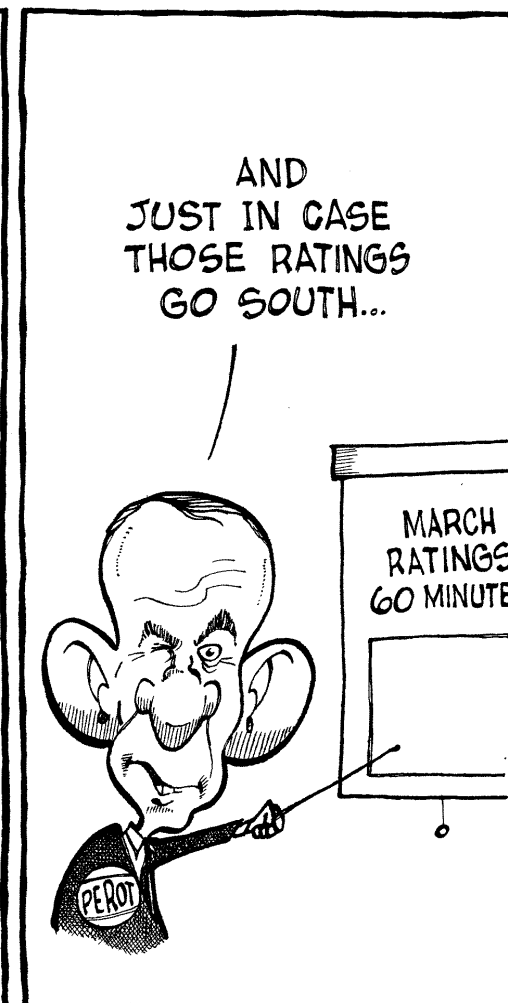
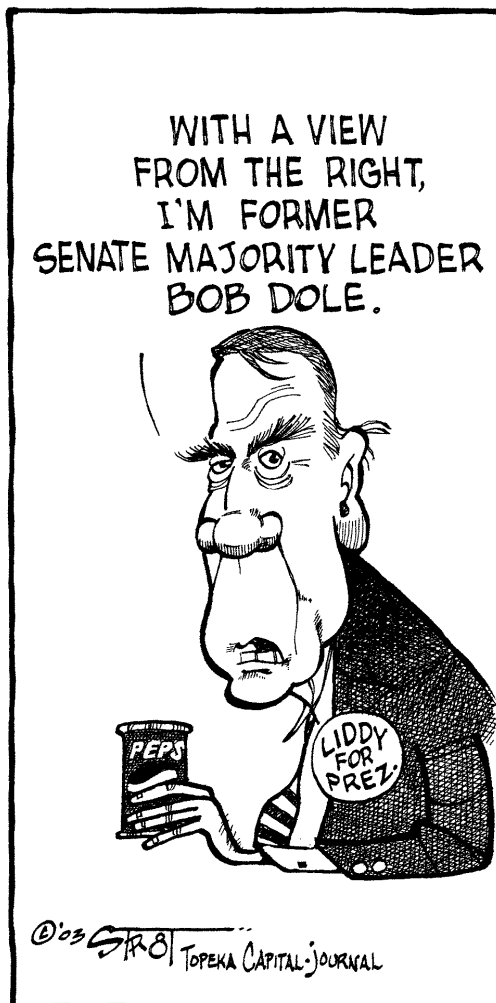
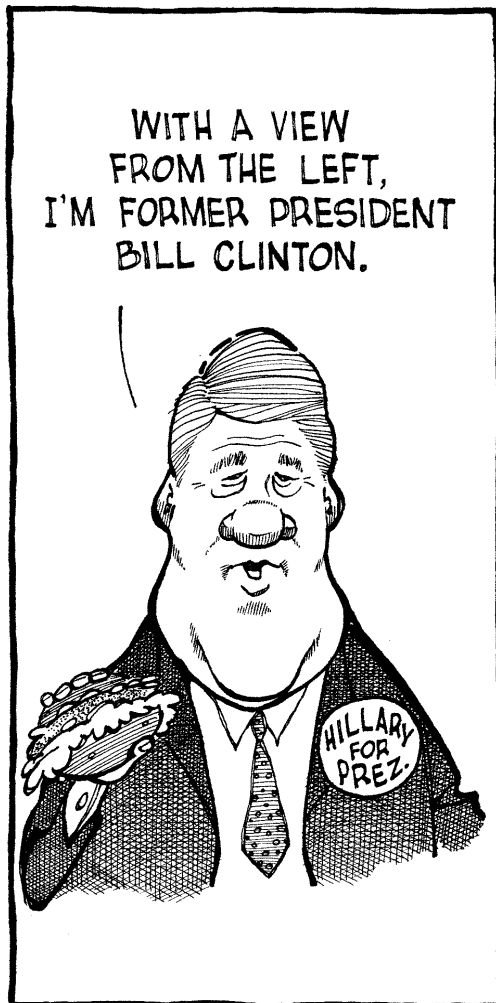
The air force says it is investigating. The air force says it will clean house. The air force says it is teaching cadets that no really does mean no.

It should go beyond that. The young women who were wronged deserve an apology, and if they want it, another chance at the careers they sought.

And the men, the guys who wouldn't take no for an answer? They should be sought out and either drummed out of the force, or invited to spend their next vacation in Leavenworth.

America, we should be ashamed that this was allowed to happen.

It's not what our military should be. — Steve Haynes



Being a mother-in-law was a shock

I don't know about you, but becoming a mother-in-law was a shock for me.

I didn't think it would be, but it was.

Over the years, I've spent a lot of time thinking about why. My main conclusion has been a resounding - why not?

Families all have their own dynamics of living.

Parental rules and desired outcomes affect daily living. Where there is neither of those things, chaos reigns. Rules designate not only boundaries, but also love.

I believe God created parents to be love-givers, role-models, rule-makers, boundary-setters. Parents are to love their children and guide them as they experience the world. Too many parents have relegated those roles, at least in part, to daycare providers. But that's for a different column.

There are natural ties between fathers and daughters, sons and mothers.

Many times the male bonding or female bonding doesn't happen until the child be-



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• commentary

comes an adult.

I didn't really understand my mother until after my father died, and I'm grateful I had the chance to know her.

It's difficult to recognize a child's maturity and/or ability to make sound decisions without our help. It's a surprise to share his/her affections with almost total strangers.

I remember a joke I heard years and years ago: "One of the great mysteries of life is how the boy who wasn't good enough to marry the daughter can be the father of the smartest grandchild in the world." I've seen that happen over and over, haven't you?

So a child grows up and marries a member of a different family. Thus, in-laws are created.

Now years ago, before this country became so mobile, your child would probably marry the girl/boy next door. The families had known each other for years. They knew each other's values, which tended to be pretty much like your own family. Even then, there were in-law problems.

It isn't so hard to realize that not knowing the family dynamics only compounds any problems. All at once your precious child is exposed to and listening to different voices, different influences. He/she has to make some compromises and adjustments. It's difficult for everyone.

Parenting prepares us for a lot of things, but it certainly doesn't lead naturally to "in-lawing." I suppose we just expect it to go smoothly. We think all we need to do is just expand our family circle of love. But love is expressed in many ways, and not everyone gives or receives love in the same way. Too often misunderstandings result and grow.

What a heartbreaking thing to witness; how God must cry.

Many changed religions in Bible times

Some who read my last column in the Mid-week, Tuesday, March 11, edition of *The Goodland Star-News* may have been surprised at my suggestion that many people may need to change religions.

However, the Bible tells us there are forms of worship that are unacceptable to God and that several people changed religions in Bible times in order to serve God acceptably.

In the fourth chapter of John, a conversation is recorded in which Jesus talks to a Samaritan woman who points out that the Jews and the Samaritans worship in different ways and asks which is acceptable.

He tells her in verse 21 that a time will come when neither way will be acceptable. Jesus tells the woman in verse 23 that people will need to worship God with spirit and truth.

In Matthew 7:21 Jesus says, "Not everyone saying, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one doing the will of my Father who is in the heavens will."

Clearly, some religions are not acceptable to God — those whose members do not do his will. Among those in Bible times who changed religions were Abraham, Ruth and Jesus' disciples. Jesus Christ himself was the one who started the new religion they changed to.

Joshua 24:2 says, "And Joshua said unto all the people, 'Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old times, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.'"

Hebrews 11:8, 9 says, "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed in going out to a place he was destined to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, although not knowing where he was going. By faith he resided as an alien in the land of the promise."

Although Abraham's father served false gods, Abraham served the only true God and had such faith that he made sacrifices in his way of life to serve Him acceptably. He was rewarded by having a role in fulfilling God's promises.

When Ruth's husband died, her mother-in-



sharon corcoran

• use it or lose it

law, Naomi, urged her to return to her family in Moab. Ruth insisted on sticking with Naomi.

Ruth 1:16 says, "And Ruth proceeded to say, 'Do not plead with me to abandon you, to turn back from accompanying you; for where you go I shall go, and where you spend the night I shall spend the night. Your people will be my people, and your God my God.'"

Ruth, a Moabite woman, had married an Israelite. Evidently, she saw the value in worshipping the true God as Israelites did rather than practicing idolatry as her parents had done. When her husband died, she went with her mother-in-law to Israel and continued in true worship. She married Boaz and became an ancestress of Jesus Christ.

When Jesus was growing up, he was part of the Israelite nation and participated in worship at the temple as was the form of true worship at that time. When he grew up, he began his work of "teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the kingdom." (Matthew 9:35)

The Jews were still under the Mosaic Law, handed down to them from Moses, who received the laws from God. When Jesus died, he fulfilled that law, opening the way for a new form of worship.

Hebrews 10:1, 12 says, "For since the Law has a shadow of the good things to come, but not the very substance of the things, men can never with the same sacrifices from year to year which they offer continually make those who approach perfect. But this man offered one sacrifice for sins perpetually and sat down at the right hand of God."

The Jews had to offer sacrifices for their sins under the Mosaic Law, but Jesus offered his life as a sacrifice for sins. That was the only

sacrifice needed. While on earth, Jesus chose his apostles, called disciples to him and taught them what they would need to know for this new form of worship. When he died, the Jewish form of worship became obsolete from God's standpoint.

Many Jews followed Jesus, and others joined the new religion after being taught by his followers. Eventually, people from the Gentile nations were also offered the opportunity to receive salvation through Christ.

Acts 2:36-38 says, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for a certainty that God made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you impaled. Now when they heard this they were stabbed to the heart, and they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men, brothers, what shall we do?' Peter said to them: 'Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins.'"

Since the Jews rejected Jesus and put him to death, the nation as a whole was rejected by God, but individual Jews who repented of the nation's collective sin and their own personal sins could still receive salvation. But they had to change their religion.

The world today is in a moral crisis. Many people do not read the Bible, and few consider it important to know how to make their worship acceptable to God. Some people want to pick and choose the teachings they like from a number of different religions, while others want to stick with the religion their parents raised them in.

Jesus said only those doing his Father's will could be in God's kingdom. We have to know what God's will is in order to do it. That requires earnest reading and study of the Bible. When we know what God's will is, we have to do it. That requires effort and sacrifice on our part.

Abraham and Ruth left the religions of their parents and were blessed by God. It was a sacrifice for them, but not one they regretted. Jesus' disciples faced intense persecution from the Jews and from the Romans, but they endured in order to served God acceptably. We have to do the same.

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