

from our viewpoint...

Bare breast creates stir; we're missing the point

Such a stir one middle-aged woman's breast can cause. Congress wants an investigation, new laws, stiffer fines for indecency.

Federal Communications Commission chair Michael Powell wants new rules, slaps heavy fines on foul-mouthed radio jocks.

Across the country, people howl and wail.

OK, it was tasteless and tacky. If not for the fact that millions of Americans were watching the pathetic Super Bowl halftime show, not much mention would have been made. It wasn't, after all, a whole lot more than the family would see on a Sunday trip to the beach.

Nudity has become a staple on cutting-edge television, on cable but also on network drama. Just because NYPD Blue airs later, do you really think the kids aren't watching?

It probably wasn't such a good idea, but a national emergency?

The country has greater problems. Domestic violence, for one.

It was three weeks after the Janet Jackson flap before anyone even mentioned that the song and dance routine she and Justin Timberlake were doing bordered on abuse. He was singing about tearing her clothes off, and no one seemed to mind.

So, is it OK to talk about roughing your woman up, as long as you don't show any skin on television?

Domestic violence is a major problem, though much of society still tends to look the other way. Domestic cases often are not reported publicly and far too often, no charges are filed. There's still a feeling that what people do at home stays there.

Is sex on the air a problem? The feds levied huge fines against a disc jockey who calls himself "Bubba the Love Sponge" last week. We haven't heard his program, but how does it compare to the dozens of people shot and killed by cops, bad guys and good guys during the average television week?

Why is all this violence OK?

Why do video game producers pander to our violent side? Maybe blood sells even better than sex.

Compare the two, and decide which is more harmful.

Wife beating, or skin?

Murder as entertainment, or Bubba the Love Sponge?

In a world where children die every day of disease and hunger, where women are abused in country after country, where cheating amounts to business ethics and lying passes for statesmanship, is a little skin the biggest problem we have?

After the outcry this year, a repeat is unlikely at any future Super Bowl halftime.

But is anyone getting worked up about the real problems we face? — *Steve Haynes*.

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I'm a 'underliner, highlighter' when I read

I don't know about you, but I like to read.

It's a good thing that I do because my job requires a lot of it.

I'm an "underliner" or "highlighter" when I study; I guess it's easier to concentrate when I have a marker in my hand.

However, to go to sleep at night, I read fun books — ones that make me relax so my brain will turn off and my eyes will close. Occasionally though, even those books make me sit up and mark passages that I particularly like.

Here are some wonderful descriptions I wish I had written:

1) Describing an upstairs apartment: "Third-floor wheeze-up" (Motor City Blue by Loren D. Estleman).

2) "Amanda... made a left turn in her mother's college car, a 1962 baby blue (the kind of blue you don't see on cars anymore, it being too innocent for the times) Ford Falcon" (Gigi Levangie Grazer in Rescue Me). [My husband bought a brand new, baby blue 1952 Chevrolet when we were young and dating. We kept it until we were transferred by the Air Force to England in 1964.]

3) Death was described as a "long home"



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(Joy Davidson in Smoke on the Mountain). [That's a comforting thought, isn't it?]

4) "Then at last I would know everything she told me was false. Now she forces me to sift through her stories, hoping the lies slip through my fingers and the truth remains in my hands" (The Runaway Quilt by Jennifer Chiaverini).

5) "If we are fussing, we are not fishing Our job is not to throw rocks, but to throw ropes" (Jerry Pereira, president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina). [That last part would make a great motto for a church!]

6) "He loved the short walk to the barn over the crackling gravel road in the warm spring morning with the stars white and blue and yellow in the sky like a bowl of delirium..." (Fred Chappell in Brighten the Corner Where You Are).

There is glamour in generating electricity

There are three essential components of a good electrical system. The first is a good reliable generator, the second is a good transmission line that moves the electricity to your community and the third is the smaller distribution lines to local businesses, farms and homes.

The "glamorous" part of the system is the generators. I don't care whether it is the nuclear reactor at Wolf Creek, the coal-fire plant at Holcomb, the hydroelectric plant at Lawrence, gas and diesel municipal power plants or the wind generators at Montezuma, there is a certain majesty observing these marvelous machines. I have always enjoyed the sounds and smells, watching the gauges and every visible moving part at the Oakley Power Plant.

A couple of years ago, I spent an afternoon at the Bowersox Power Plant in Lawrence. The water current turns the turbines at 109 revolutions per minute and it was fascinating watching technology that is centuries old still supply power for the electric grid.

Several times I have visited the Montezuma wind farm and marvel at these massive wind machines; the towers are 208 feet tall and the three blades of each turbine are each over 70 feet long. I am told the latest technology is at least 50 percent larger.

The ignored crucial component of a viable electric delivery system is the transmission lines. These are the large electric lines that go from town to town. The support towers are so ugly that no one wants them to destroy their view of a Kansas sunrise or sunset, and they are a nuisance to farm around.

Historically, transmission lines were constructed by a utility operating as an integrated monopoly that owned the generator and held a franchise to serve the businesses and resi-



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dents of a specific service area. Because of the monopoly status, rates were set by the Kansas Corporation Commission and the utility had an opportunity to earn about 12 percent a year on its investment.

Eventually transmission lines interconnected with other utilities so that they could supply each other with electricity during planned maintenance and repairs of the generation system. In time, because the transmission lines connected generation between states, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission became responsible for determining the rates that could be charged for using the transmission lines.

Newly constructed generation is likely now to be built by a company that is not a utility but has negotiated long-term contracts with a utility to supply electricity. Sunflower Electric at Holcomb is considering a second plant, but the cooperative would be the operator and probably not the owner.

The wind generators at Montezuma are owned by a company in Florida but the electricity is marketed by the company that serves the Dodge City and Liberal area. Before more wind generation can be constructed in Kansas, we have to have more transmission lines to carry the electricity to market and the crucial question becomes: How do we encourage construction of more electric transmission lines?

For a few years, the discussions centered

7) "(Her) father... was a man of decorum, which means he was more likely to spread his hostility with a butter knife than a butcher's" (Richard Paul Evans in The Locket).

8) "It is folly, I suspect, to commence each morning with a letter to my lost love and conclude it with my diary, thereby bleeding at both ends of the day" (Richard Paul Evans in The Locket).

9) "I'll be et f'r a tater" (Jan Karon in Shepherds Abiding).

10) Said in pleasure at seeing his loved one: "Your eyelashes are going up and down, and little stars are coming out of you" (Jan Karon in Shepherds Abiding).

Aren't those great?

It gives me pleasure to know I can appreciate descriptive writing — even if I can't do it very often.

And since this is the week we all eat corned beef and cabbage and claim to be Irish, I'll close with an Irish blessing:

"May your past be a pleasant memory, Your future filled with delight and mystery, Your now a glorious moment, That fills your life with deep contentment."

around two ideas; either the ownership of the transmission lines should be separated from generation and companies would be formed that would own, operate, and maintain the electric transmission system with rates established by federal commission; or utility companies would own the transmission lines but they would be operated by a company established just for this purpose.

The legislature is considering allowing municipalities and utilities to use Kansas Development Finance Authority bonding when constructing transmission lines, to allow accelerated depreciation cost recovery and to allow a greater return on their investment.

Talks are going on for another north-south line along the east edge of my district to connect to major transmission lines in Nebraska and Oklahoma. This will relieve congestion on current lines and open opportunities for further development of wind generation. A 21 mile transmission line will be built this summer for the City of Kingman, utilizing aluminum conductor core technology. This is a new high-temperature, low-sag cable that is simple, cost-effective and rapidly deployable. It can deliver up to twice as much power as conventional transmission cables of identical size.

I am looking forward to a time when we can harness more of our wind, solar and other renewable resources to meet our nation's energy needs.

Please feel free to contact me on this or any issue. I can be reached by writing to Sen. Stan Clark, State Capitol, Room 449-N, Topeka, Kan. 66612; by calling (800) 432-3924 or (785) 296-7399; by fax at (801) 457-9064; or by e-mail at sclark@ink.org.

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