

Opinion



Monday's Salute

Thumbs



√to **Alex and Amy Rosales**, Colby — parents of Thomas County's "First Baby of 2004," Ian John.

√to **Dr. Keith Coplin** — Colby Community College professor, who will be signing copies of his novel, "Crofton's Fire," on Tuesday from 4-6 p.m. at the H.F. Davis Library on campus.

√to **Rep. Jerry Moran** — who was in Colby today at the Senior Progress Center as part of his annual "Listening Tour" of the big First District.

√to **Jose Banulos** — who, during the recent holidays, returned to Winona to visit with Bob and Anne Lowe, who were his host parents while he was an exchange student in 2000-2001 at Triplains High School. Jose is from Mexico.

√to **Jim McDonald** — now in retirement after serving as Colby postmaster 11 years and a total of 37 years with the United States Postal Service.

√to **Linda Smith** — postmaster at Oberlin, who is filling in as Colby postmaster until a permanent selection is made.

√to **Sue Draper** — for adopting "Dottie" for her father, Willard Morgan.

√to **the Thomas County Commissioners** — on your stated support of the mission and purpose of the Thomas County Economic Development Alliance.

√to **the Colby Jaycees** — for your ongoing "Coats for Kids" project.

√to **all Military Personnel** — here and elsewhere for your service to your country.

(This salute is compiled each week by TD. For details on submitting a name or names for inclusion, e-mail td@nwkansas.com or call 785-462-3963.)

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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Bill Day The Commercial Appeal
Smallville's Future Subject



Life in Kansas has fiction beat any day

Over the summer, I started watching "Smallville." It's not the first time something like this has happened.

"Buffy the Vampire Slayer" and "Roswell" were two other Warner Brothers series that got me hooked when there was absolutely nothing else on worth watching.

Smallville, though, is different.

Being from Kansas, I can't help but compare the state where I was born and raised to the fictional town of Smallville.

For starters, the show is filmed in Vancouver, B.C. in Canada.

Show me a spot in Kansas that has that many trees and that much water.

While parts of the show are kind of hokey (it is about a superhero after all), they did nail some of it right on the head.

Like the Kents. Oh dear. They kind of remind me of my parents sometimes. I don't know if that's good or bad.

They also make it look like there's this huge city just a couple of hours down the road.

Well, Wichita could qualify, I guess, but it's no Metropolis.

Real life does imitate art because everybody does end up going to Wichita at some time to go shopping or otherwise get out of town for something different to do.

Except the fictional Metropolis has one feature no city in Kansas has. The second episode of the new season was a doozy. It showed Metropolis as having loading docks. As in loading docks for ships.

That was pretty funny.

I kind of think they're ignoring the fact that it's supposed to be Kansas, although I do wonder



Tisha Cox

• Off The Beaten Path

what part of British Columbia you could drop a Kansan in and try to convince him it's home or it'll pass for home.

Alberta maybe, if you blocked out the mountains. But B.C.?

Art imitates life in that there is one big company that everybody works for. That would be Luthorcorp, (as in Lex Luthor of the Kansas Luthor's), the shady company that employs probably half the state. If only we could be so lucky.

In reality, we have the aerospace companies in Wichita, Iowa Beef Processors, Monfort and National in western Kansas, and all of the agricultural and energy companies along with the support industries that most people work for or they know someone who does.

They also got the stereotypical one place to hang out in the entire town. Except The Talon in "Smallville" beats any movie theater I've actually been to here in Kansas.

It's got a coffee shop also. Colby has Starbucks and two movie theaters so I guess reality does have it beat at least on quality.

There's also the dark underbelly of Kansas crime in "Smallville." The fictional Luthor family has a questionable reputation.

In reality, Enron has a more than questionable reputation with former employees who still live here.

Lexcorp has nothing on the former energy corporation that lied about its earnings.

Smallville's also a lightning rod for strange happenings. Like the meteor shower of remnants from the blast that destroyed the planet Krypton, stranding the planet's last son on Earth and causing a whole heap of trouble for its residents.

If that's the case, Greensburg matches that description but I think they only had one meteor hit near town and it's not kryptonite.

They've also got a hand-dug well and fictional Smallville doesn't have anything like that.

Kansas does have its strange side. You just have to know where to look so at least they got that right.

In reality, if you believe the rumors, Stull's probably the strangest, or at least most sinister site in the state. Atchison is the most haunted and Dighton was the site of a huge UFO flap back in the 1970s.

I don't know about weird happenings but there are a number of more interesting people in Kansas. None of them are super-powered aliens as far as I know.

(Except Colorado probably has Kansas beat in that department. There are a lot of really strange people there, especially Boulder.)

It is kind of nice to see that a place that gets stereotyped often isn't as sedate as it seems.

So, depending on your cup of tea, the truth is stranger than fiction.

Tisha Cox is a general assignment reporter/photographer for the Free Press.

Howard Dean: Biotheologian



Dr. Warren Throckmorton

• View from the Campus

Does God make people gay? At first glance, this is a question that appears theological. However, Howard Dean, democratic presidential candidate and a physician, looks to biology for his answer. Campaigning in Iowa, when asked about his views of homosexuality, candidate Dean said, "The overwhelming evidence is that there is a very significant, substantial genetic component to" homosexuality, Dean said, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. "From a religious point of view, if God had thought homosexuality is a sin, he would not have created gay people."

Now let's see what chapter and verse of Holy Writ did Dr. Dean consult to arrive at that conclusion. Genesis? No, that's where Adam and Eve were created. No gay people there. Leviticus? No, don't want to go there. The New Testament? Nothing promising there either. So what's the basis for Dr. Dean's theological views?

Here is the argument: if homosexual identity is determined by one's genes, God must have planned it that way and actually approves it. I'll evaluate such thinking momentarily but let me pause to note that this premise adds another title to Dr. Dean's long resume': biotheologian.

According to Michael Cavanaugh, author of *Biotheology*, "in a sentence, biotheology synthesizes biology and theology by deriving the study of God from the study of life...biotheology rejects supernatural explanations." In harmony with this description, biotheologian Dean gleans God's thoughts on the subject of homosexuality via his interpretation of biology and genetics.

In the enlightened world of biotheology, who needs Scripture or church tradition? Science will tell us what God thinks. The faithful in the Howard Dean church of biotheology will be unburdened from Scripture study to learn of God's principles. Just read the latest issue of *Science* for one's daily devotional study.

Such a means of attaining divine wisdom may lead biotheology believers to confusing outcomes. For instance, a study by Michael Bailey

and colleagues on twins recently proposed that sociosexuality was highly related to genetic factors. What is sociosexuality you ask? Basically, the term refers to willingness to engage in casual sex. So a large measure of the reason certain people hop in the sack indiscriminately could be related to genetics? Paraphrasing biotheologian Dean, we could say, "From a religious point of view, if God had thought casual sex is a sin, he would not have created people who engage in casual sex." Interesting way to gain converts. Better start a building program for that church.

Back to the subject of homosexuality. I suppose in the domain of biotheology, if science does not support a premise, then neither does God. On our topic, one scientific organization, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) reveals these words of knowledge from their Fact Sheet on Sexual Orientation: "Some people believe that sexual orientation is innate and fixed; however, sexual orientation develops across a person's lifetime...to date there are no replicated scientific studies supporting any specific biological etiology (cause) for homosexuality."

Apparently then God does not make people gay.

So what happens to Dean's biotheology now? Contradicting Dr. Dean, there isn't "overwhelming evidence," that there is a "very significant, substantial genetic component to homosexuality." Certain people develop same sex feelings through life and then some of those people iden-

tify as gay and some of them do not. Thus saith the APA.

Who was Howard Dean preaching to out there in Iowa? Evangelicals? No, I think he probably just made them mad. A learned man such as Howard Dean must understand that evangelical voters see through biotheology. However, he also knows that those who have faith in the existence of the gay gene make up an energetic part of his base. Slipping some to Wesley Clark in the polls, Dr. Dean needed to preach to the choir. You must have faith to say things such as pronounced by the doctor.

And I'll bet he was reaching out for an amen from the true believers.

Warren Throckmorton is Director of College Counseling and an Associate Professor of Psychology at Grove City College. His research "Initial Empirical and Clinical Findings Concerning the Change Process for Ex-Gays," was published in the June 2002 issue of the American Psychological Association's publication "Professional Psychology: Research and Practice."

About Grove City College: Barron's lists Grove City College as one of the Most Competitive colleges in the nation. *U.S. News & World Report* ranks Grove City as #1 Best Value and #4 Best College in its category. With an enrollment of 2,300 students and possessing a beautiful campus, Grove City College advocates the free market economic system and accepts no federal funding. Founded in 1876, Grove City College is a private Christian college teaching the liberal arts, sciences and ABET-accredited engineering. Tuition is about half of the national average for private colleges. Activities include 20 varsity sports teams, club and intramural sports, a large music program and 130 student organizations. Grove City is located 60 miles north of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

