

Opinion



Other Viewpoints

Intelligent design is middle ground

Those pushing for the teaching of intelligent design in public schools have a great hook when selling their theory to the public. They equate a belief in intelligent design with a belief in Christianity; if you believe in evolution, they say, then you reject a belief in God.

That's the stand taken by State Board of Education Chairman Steve Abrams. He said recently that one cannot believe in both evolution and the Bible. That comment is worrisome coming from the board's chairman, considering that in a recent poll 65 percent of Kansans surveyed said it is possible to believe in both the Bible and evolution. ...

Intelligent design holds that some things in the natural world can only be explained as coming from a superior being. That fits nicely with the story of creation in the Bible, which is basically the same creation story found in the Jewish Torah and Islam's Koran.

Many Christian denominations teach that evolution and creationism are compatible and that good Christians can believe in both. That position also is held by a respected voice in the intelligent design community, John Angus Campbell, a retired professor of communications at the University of Memphis and a fellow at the Discovery Institute, which promotes intelligent design.

Campbell says teaching intelligent design can serve a useful purpose in education by teaching students critical thinking. But, he says, it should not be taught in public schools as scientific theory. ...

That is a common-sense position held by an intelligent design supporter. But that is not the position held by the conservative members on the State Board of Education, who control the board by a 6-4 margin. They rejected science standards proposed by a panel of experts in science and education, choosing standards that include criticism of evolution.

This is a basic ploy by intelligent design supporters who want to increase teaching of intelligent design in public school science classrooms.

Kansans should reject such efforts. Intelligent design is a faith-based theory best taught in classes on comparative religions, not in science classrooms, because it is not science.

Salina Journal

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 pjschiefef@nwkansans.com or pdecker@nwkansans.com.

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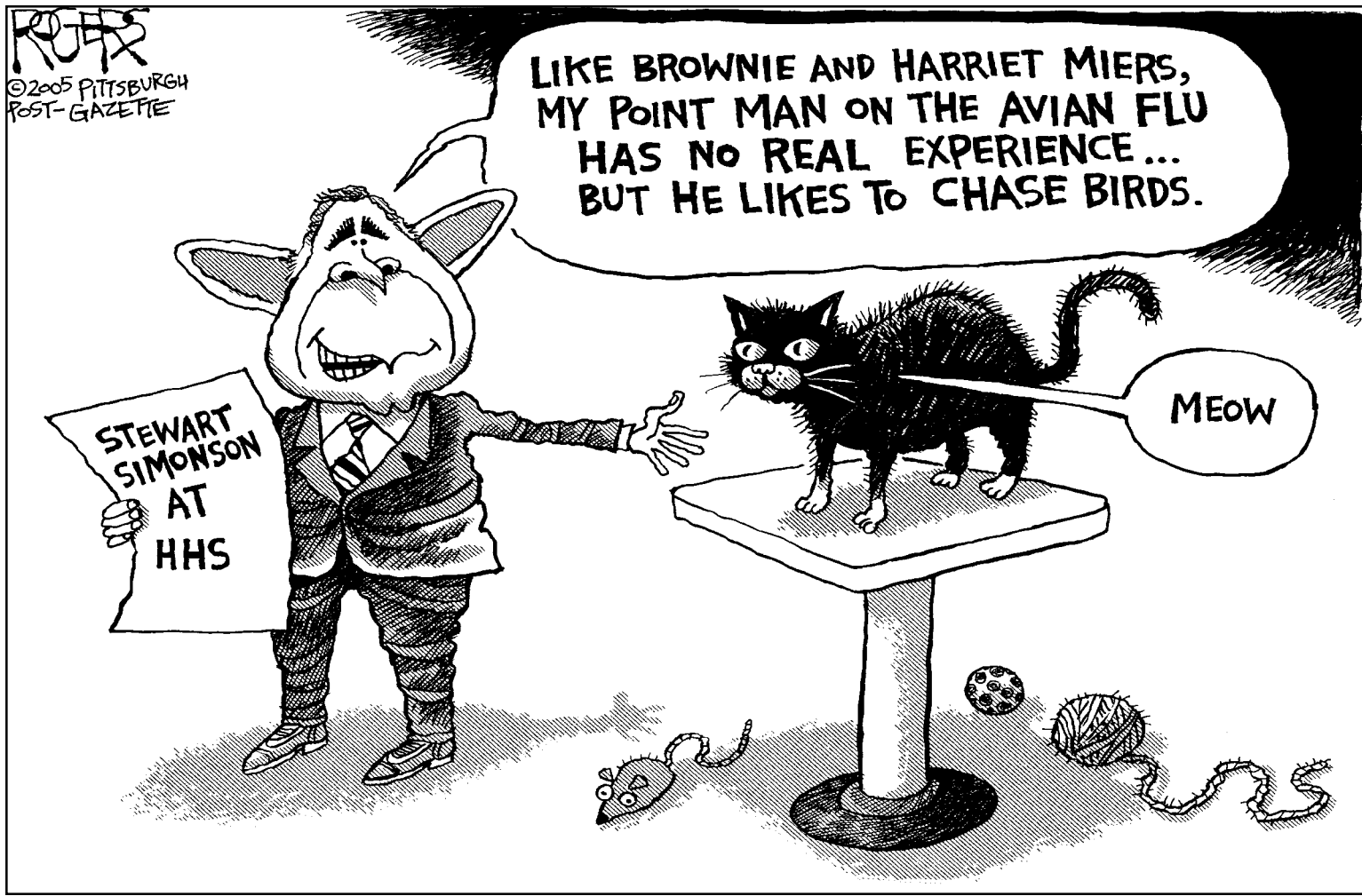
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Vacation was a little too exciting

I got back from vacation a week ago. I didn't take one big, long trip to one place. Instead, it ended up being a series of several short trips.

Kind of funny it ended up that way, but it seems like I did more that way than going one place and staying there the entire time before coming back.

I spent three days at home, visiting my mom and sister Chris, saw my grandma and other sister, Lori, and a few other people I hadn't seen in a while, then eventually ended up in Denver for a couple of days, then Colby, Lakin and back to Colby.

Denver was its usual busy self, bustling with people and too many things to do. We were there for one main purpose, a concert at the Pepsi Center on Wednesday night, to see Nine Inch Nails perform.

We crammed in a lot in a little over 48 hours, a couple of things we'd never done before, including the Denver Downtown Aquarium (formerly known as Ocean Journey).

Hands down it was one of the most memorable excursions we've ever taken. Chris and I had a good time, looking at all the exotic tropical fish, sea horses and more. They also had otters and tigers and the "storm in the desert" exhibit, which resulted in an uncharacteristic reaction from Chris. It sent her straight toward the desert tortoise exhibit, which had a tortoise and also three rattle snakes, which made her bolt one more time.

I nearly lost her at that point, but her desire to not see anymore snakes made her hang back until I caught up.

The big finale at the aquarium featured lots of tropical fish and several kinds of



Tisha Cox

• Off The Beaten Path

sharks. They had a captive audience watching them for more than 20 minutes.

Out in the lobby, we finally found the manta ray tank and for \$2, you can buy dead fish to feed to the rays. That was fun, except the rays swarmed and we both got soaked, but also got to pet the critters.

The next day, we spent loafing around and had lunch at one of our favorite Denver West locations — Wienerschnitzel. I've never seen my sister wolf down food so fast. It was cold and windy that day, but at least it was clear, unlike the weather for the U2 concert we went to in April.

Then we stood in line for two hours to get inside the Pepsi Center and met some interesting people. Once inside, the nice security guards made us all sit down on the floor so they could make sure no one did anything they weren't supposed to do.

The same guys that made everyone sit down were later eating and playing with animal crackers right before the concert started. It was funny, considering they were both big, burly bouncer-types. I guess they needed something to do to break their tension because they looked a little afraid of some of the people there.

Turns out, as usual, the people they should have been concerned about looked what most people would consider normal.

Do we really know politicians?

Do you really know your President? Or, do you only know a politician who has been covered by a slick and shiny veneer applied by a coalition of bureaucrats and far right religious leaders?

How, in the name of CCC (Compassionate Conservative Christianity), can our President threaten to veto a bill because of an amendment (which passed 99-9 in the Senate) that reinforces our commitment, as a nation, to support the Geneva Convention, disallowing torture, humiliation, and inhumane treatment of prisoners? This administration contends that if we don't bring the detainees to the United States we are not bound by the Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, in spite of the fact that we signed that Declaration. Neither are we bound to honor the International Covenant on Civil Rights and Political Rights, nor are we bound by the Convention Against Torture.

We helped write all those covenants and declarations and signed them, pledging our

Ken Polland

• Ken's World

support and adherence to their provisions. Is the evidence that our word and our signature is of no binding worth an indication of our CCC?

How, in the name of CCC, can our President and his administration promote tax benefits to the large and/or diversified companies who garner no bid contracts in the cleanup and rebuilding of the Gulf area, devastated by Katrina? Meanwhile, the local and smaller companies, who don't have income levels that receive significant benefit from those tax benefits are left out. This administration has encouraged relaxation of environmental and safety standards, ben-

efiting the employers at the expense of employees and the environment.

How, in the name of CCC, can we attempt to balance the budget or even cut the level of deficit spending by pushing more tax cuts and cutting assistance programs to the most needy of our society?

Are the proper behavior and moral standards of Compassionate Conservative Christianity acceptable on the basis that they are not as bad as the enemies morals and behavior? Are we being imitators of Christ when we endeavor to only exceed the lowest common denominator in moral and ethical behavior? Did Jesus cater to the rich and powerful?

Perhaps, we need to quit hiding behind our pious indignation over past indiscretions and failures of previous presidents and their administrations and strip away the veneer of our present leadership.

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Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

