

EDITORIALS



Jeez it, the cops!

Word police have us surrounded

THE OTHER DAY a headline in your friendly statewide paper used the word “gypped” and the Internet fainted. Or at least one overly pure word cop called out the Paddy wagon. Such things happen when Internet critics spaz out.

Great Scott. So some honest-Injun headline writer Jerry-rigged a headline to fit a story about drillers and royalty money, and now all the natives are restless?

It reminds us of all the fuss when a certain coach for a certain football team in another state (the state rhymes with Salabama) used the word coonass—and it was caught on tape. After all, he was telling a coonass joke. Which are the best kind. This coach, whom we won't name but whose initials are Nick Saban, found himself in a real controversy when ESPN ran the tape, but bleeped the “coonass” part. As if it were a cuss word! We know nobody in South Louisiana who feels that way.

Now there's a Mexican standoff between those of us who'd like to use language to paint a certain picture, or many certain pictures, and those who'd rather reduce language to a series of colorless and unexciting phrases, like the ones you'd find in a modern boardroom. Complete with Language Coaches who'd like to integrate the company into the new normal and streamline survival strategy to sustain synergy by actioning a paradigm shift. And, at the end of the day, empower proactive associates to leverage key learnings with a holistic approach. (Trigger warning: Next sentence isn't

meant to be literal.) Somebody shoot us. So now gypped is supposedly forbidden. What next, Irish coffee? Indian giver?

The forces of political correctness will try to nibble away at the language, eliminating verve at every opportunity, however small. Until the language has been cleansed—of all meaning, and life. But then what will we have left? How long before all color is drained from the American language (close relative: English) and how long before that wild tapestry and ever-changing poem, that natural masterpiece, becomes reduced to Newspeak used by the kinds of politicians who live in mortal fear of offending anybody who might accidentally be listening?

Like the poor, we'll always have those with us who are just dying to be offended. And highly offended at that. (What, not just medium-offended?)

We'll not have it. Not as long as aging fingers can type. Long live our language! Long live the coonasses who tell their kids to raise dat window down, New Joisey Tough Guy-ese, Tex-Mex, California Laid Back-ery, and Boston Brahmin. And all the ways they use their words—and experiences—to convey their thoughts. We promise not to be offended the next time we hear the word redneck. In fact, it would be a promotion for some of us all too genteel types.

Let's make a deal: The word police allow us to use gyp on occasion, and we won't get upset when somebody mentions fish wrapper.

Deal? We promise we won't Welsh on it.

Save this bridge

AS THE week came to a close, all was set to go for the rally last Saturday at the base of the historic White River Bridge in Clarendon, and just about every dignitary in the state had signed on to support the fast-growing movement. And why not? What's not to like? For this ambitious project combines the attractions of history, nature and state and local pride.

To quote Mayor Jim Stimson III of Clarendon, “There is tremendous enthusiasm among our citizens to save this bridge.” It had been scheduled for demolition, but even the state's highway department had the good sense to change its mind.

The 85-year-old bridge may get a whole new lease on life—and the prospect has drawn cheers from people around the state and the world, including Governor Asa Hutchinson and the state's Department of Arkansas Heritage. The result should be the longest pedestrian and bicycle bridge in the world over some of the most interesting bottomlands in the world.

“The world is watching,” to quote Connie DePriest of the Friends of the Historic White River Bridge.

The western approaches to the bridge extend over the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge includes some 56,000 acres spread over Jackson, Woodruff, Monroe and Prairie Counties, and is one of the few places in the Mississippi Flyway unchanged by canalization and drainage projects. Ducks galore!

This small, wonderful state has benefited by following through on visions before. This time they won't be dreams of industrialization but its opposite: a return to primeval times when the Indian tribes celebrated Arkansas' happy hunting grounds. And white explorers looked with wonder at the future state that awaited them in history. Lewis and Clark—and the president who dispatched them, Thomas Jefferson—would surely be pleased.

What a blessing it is once again to not just watch history being made but to make it. And without besmirching the natural environment. As with the economy, there's nothing like a good leaving-alone to benefit all, and not just in this generation but for generations to come. Or what used to be called posterity. As in the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution:

“We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

Just as today, by working with nature instead of exploiting it, Arkansas can proceed to save not just a bridge but an old vision of the state restored and refreshed. This used to be called conserving nature—as in conservation—and once again it can be practiced with a good conscience instead of a bad one.

OTHERS SAY

Put 'em up

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

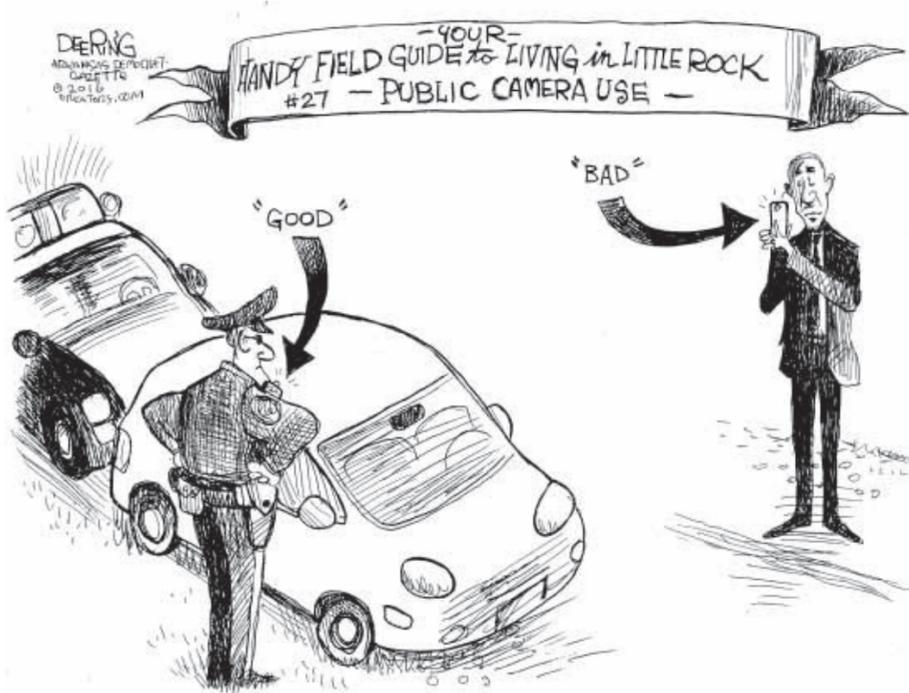
For years, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point has required its male cadets to box in their first year. But women weren't allowed to join them. Now West Point has changed its rule: Plebe women, too, must box.

As long as boxing is a requirement for cadet men, that is what equality requires.

Some may argue that the risk of concussion outweighs the benefits. According to a *New York Times* story last year, nearly 1 in 5 West Point concussions

came from boxing. But West Point's students, women as well as men, have chosen to enter a dangerous profession. Exempting women cadets was coddling, not a word anyone would expect in the same sentence as “West Point.”

The U.S. Armed Forces have opened all combat roles to women, and five women from this year's West Point graduating class chose to pursue the responsibilities of infantry officers. In the U.S. Military Academy, too, women deserve to be treated equally. This boxing requirement is part of that equality.



COLUMNISTS

The Clinton calendar



David Brooks

Hillary Clinton made a very pertinent comment last week: “Why aren't I 50 points ahead?” you might ask. Indeed we might!

Clinton is running against a man whose approval ratings are under 40 percent and his disapproval rating is the highest of any candidate in American history. Only 38 percent of Americans think Donald Trump is even qualified to be president, according to a Quinnipiac survey.

Trump has practically no campaign to speak of while Clinton has a very professional one. Clinton is swamping Trump on the airwaves. Estimates vary by source, but according to *Advertising Age*, \$145 million has been spent on pro-Clinton TV and radio ads while only \$4 million has been spent on pro-Trump ads.

Meanwhile, the Trump scandals blow through like hurricanes in the tropics. Thanks to reporting by the *Washington Post*, we've learned that the Trump Foundation makes Trump University look like a model of moral rectitude. Donations Trump raised through that foundation went to pay his company's legal bills and to buy two portraits of himself.

Every week he manages to stain his character a deeper shade of black.

And still he is within 2 or 3 points of Clinton nationally and leading in a bunch of the key swing states. When you look at the secondary questions in the polls, Trump is doing miserably, but in the top-line “Who are you going to vote for?” question, he's doing decently.

What is going on here? Tyler Cowen recently gathered some of the more interesting theories on his blog *Marginal Revolution*: America is not ready for a female president. The Democrats have a lot of policy proposals, but the Republicans are running on big ideas. A more diverse country is a more fractious and polarized country, and over the past few weeks white Republicans have been coming home to their candidate.

I see some truth in those theories, especially the last one. But my single explanation would be this: Clintonworld is a semi-closed system that operates according to its own calendar. Donald Trump is egregious, but at least he's living in the 21st century, as was Bernie Sanders. Clintonworld operates according to its own time-space continuum that is slightly akilter from our own.

In the 21st century, politics operates around a

different axis. It's not left/right, big government/small government. It's openness and dynamism versus closedness and security. It's between those who see opportunity and excitement in the emerging globalized, multi-ethnic meritocracy against those who see their lives and communities threatened by it.

Clintonworld is a decades-old interlocking network of donors and friends that hasn't quite caught up to these fundamental shifts. That's because Clintonworld, in the Hillary iteration, is often defensive, distrusting and oriented around avoiding errors. In each of her national campaigns, Clinton has run against in-touch-with-the-times men who were more charismatic and generated more passion than she did. She's always been the duller, unfashionable foil.

Her donor base and fundraising style is out of another era. Obama and Sanders tapped into the energized populist base, but Clinton has Barbra Streisand, Cher and a cast of Wall Street plutocrats.

Her out-of-time style costs her big with millennials. If she loses this election it will be because younger voters just don't relate to her and flock to Gary Johnson instead.

We have an emerging global system, with relatively open trade, immigration, multilateral institutions and ethnic diversity. The critics of that system are screaming at full roar. The champions of that system—and Hillary Clinton is naturally one—are off in another world.

There is a strong case to be made for an open world order, and a huge majority coalition to be built in support of it. But she is disengaged.

Don't get me wrong, I still think she'll eke out a win. I just hope her administration is less foggy than her campaign.

David Brooks is a columnist for the *New York Times*.

Two against one

JAY AMBROSE
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

It was two against one in the Monday night presidential debate. We had moderator Lester Holt, who apparently assumed he was a candidate, too, and Hillary Clinton, well-equipped with policy malformations, against Donald Trump. Trump wasn't nearly as bad as I anticipated—much closer to reality on the economy, police, guns and Iran, for instance, if issues still count in this contest.

Again and again, the ill-informed, biased Holt asked Trump tough, personal questions and, when he didn't like the answers, interrupted him in a way that should have been left up to Clinton, who was spared an equivalent assault. They call it fact-checking, but this was a debate, not a reporter's interview, and he had some facts utterly confused.

The economy was issue number one, and Clinton espoused the usual, worsening federal interventions, the most absurd being President Barack Obama's global warming plan. Now before the Supreme Court, the clearly unconstitutional plan could cost all kinds of fossil fuel jobs, as Trump pointed out.

Trump had it right when he talked about a hefty reduction of the highest corporate tax rate in the developed world and otherwise arranging a means to bring home billions earned abroad. Clinton said he had no plan to do either, which is either a lie or ignorance. Holt, ever alert on Trumpian mishaps, said nary a word.

Trump went overboard as usual on his trade attacks, although reviewing some provisions in some treaties could make sense. Both are wrong on the Trans-Pacific Partnership deal that could be important economically as well as diplomatically. The difference is that Trump comes at it sincerely, while Clinton, who helped formulate it and praised it to the skies, is now against it as a matter of political convenience. In other words, deviousness remains her middle name.

Clinton was also wrong on thinking back-

ground checks are the answer to too many guns in criminal hands. Go ahead and expand them, but there is no evidence that they work, whereas there is plenty of evidence about the effectiveness of stop-and-frisk as recommended by Trump to save thousands of lives in Chicago. Both Clinton and Holt made it sound as if stop-and-frisk was now illegal, at least in New York City, when what we have had instead is an officially condemned ruling by a federal judge that it had been unconstitutionally applied in the city.

There was lots more to the debate, of course, and Trump repeated old stupidities along with too much self-defensive focus on himself. But that was caused in no small part by Holt hitting him with questions on such things as not turning over his tax returns, his long-term refusal to give his birther theory a funeral and his saying Clinton did not look like a president. If Holt thought that was a service to the American people, why didn't he think it a service to bring up the Clinton Foundation, the FBI's condemnation of how she handled classified material as secretary of state or her own ways of being hurtful to women?

Clinton, at the end, smashed Trump with things he should never have said about individual women, and—showing signs of needed self-control—he was gentlemanly enough not to bring up the way her husband ruined the lives of multiple women and she colluded in their defamation.

Just as Trump decided not to invite Gennifer Flowers to the debate, it's now his job to correct himself sufficiently to keep Clinton out of the White House. Impossible? We will see.

Guide to the Editorial Page

Only the editorials express the opinion of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. They almost always appear on the left side of the editorial page. The columnists—local and syndicated—express only their own opinions, as do the cartoonists whose work appears on this page.

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