

Reflections

by Alta Nye Oxendine

JANUARY 2005

It's been several years since my daughter suggested I turn to the Christian radio station (Good News Network) that had just come to our area. I have appreciated WTS for many years. But I especially like the broad variety of programs, including weekday speakers and call-in shows on 102.9 FM WLPG.

Today, for the second time in a couple of years, I happened to catch the name Kelvin Sampson, on the brief sports report aired twice during the morning hours. I failed to focus soon enough to grasp exactly what Kelvin was saying about his OU basketball team. But I always get excited when I hear something about him or his family.

PREJUDICE

Another appropriate topic today for our area was Chuck Swindoll's discussion of prejudice, a sin of which almost all of us human beings are guilty, whether we are aware of it or not. It's not like we make a choice to feel that way. It's almost always something that happens emotionally before we are old enough to stop and analyze it.

After coming to this county, I was thankful that my first sociology class began with a discussion of the "WE" group and the "THEY" group. We are each born into a "WE" group, and we all have a tendency to distrust members of those other "THEY" groups. (Of course members of each of those "THEY" groups consider theirs the "WE" group.)

Even though I learned years later that my first sociology professor was (at least at the time) a member of the Communist Party in this country, the CPI SA, I have to give him credit for teaching me some very important basic truths about groups.

And, I am SO thankful that God gradually turned me around from my childhood fear and prejudice toward one of the groups I had never had a chance to know, to my present PRIDE in my own Indian family, and in the positive accomplishments of all American Indians, here and elsewhere.

One of the main reasons one group is afraid of other groups is power. Either they have the power that we do not have, but want, or we are trying to keep them from gaining the power that we have at the time. Since coming to this county, I have seen a power shift in some organizations from white to non-white. I wish we could all learn to SHARE power and responsibility, no matter which ethnic group we were born into, or how any of us looks or talks.

As I keep sharing from time to time, I am no longer the kind of pacifist who believes we must have peace at any price. But I'm still a peacemaker who wants to encourage people to try to understand one another.

As I tried to say in my "Mobile Homes" poem, we are all VERY MUCH alike on the inside! And I am convinced that the ONE who created ALL of us loves EACH of us equally!

PEOPLE TO PRAY FOR

I am thankful to report that my friend, and my daughter's mother-in-law, "Miss Elsie" Hunt, is improving. But she had some difficult times with her runaway heartbeat, as well as her ear and throat pain. For nearly two weeks she was in progressive care in two hospitals - Southeastern at Lumberton and Duke in Durham. It seems strange to attend Branch Street United Methodist Church without her there. I know that she and others who are recovering from illness or injury would appreciate our prayers.

And my heart goes out to the family of Shana Locklear of Hezekiah Road, who lost her life in a collision involving a tractor-trailer. That kind of accident still triggers an emotional reaction from me, after 24 and 1/2 years. When I was in Montana in the 1990s, a girl who had just graduated from high school was killed in a collision with an "18-wheeler" as they call those big trucks out there. In that case, I had gotten to know her mother, because she had earlier taken me to a weekly computer class at the very high school I had attended during World War II.

I long ago learned to respect all kinds of large trucks. But I'm glad it was possible to get over my petrifying fear of being on the same stretch of highway along with one of them. When I'm waiting at a stop sign, and I see one coming, I gladly wait until it passes, even though it may delay my errand or trip by a minute or more.

Let's remember to keep in our prayers all families who are going through the trauma of having lost a loved one to death, or to drugs, alcohol, or some other tragedy.

IRAQI ELECTIONS

We surely need to be in prayer for the election in Iraq, don't we, whether or not we were in favor of getting involved in that war?

As I've said before, I also believe that we need to pray for the souls of Saddam Hussein and his Ba'athist henchmen. It looks to me as though the reason our country supported the Ba'athists several decades ago was to keep the Iraqi Communist Party from gaining control. I believe that they ended up getting support from the Soviet Union, and that they could be receiving support from Putin and Russia right now. Did you notice that a lot of Russians moved out of Iraq prior to each of the past two wars there? Of course this does not seem to fit the recent report that a member of the Iraqi Communist Party has been held by "insurgents." But, according to my studies, the KGB and GRU-controlled Soviet regime fine-tuned their methods to become "masters of deception."

If you are one who believes that Communism was a threat to free societies like ours in the past but is no longer active, note what former KGB chief Vladimir Putin was determined to do to prevent neighboring Ukraine from electing a president who was not affiliated with the old regime. Some people even believe that he was involved in poisoning that candidate to eliminate him as a contender.

Perhaps poisoning has not been involved in rigging Russian elections (including Putin's re-election), but other candidates have been eliminated one way or another.

Also, look up Communism on the Internet. At least one of the web sites is attempting to gain new Communist members here in this country.

We also need to pray for the new Ukrainian president, as well as for Putin, and for all who still call themselves Communists along with "former" Communists around the globe.

Speaking of prejudice, I used to just write off all Communist leaders as evil people. Now I believe that most, if not all, of these leaders who are currently in power, were subjected to some kind and degree of brainwashing, likely early in life, in order to activate them for their mission of destroying religion and replacing cultures and governments around the world.

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Council Shenanigans

by Billy Red Banks



"Constitution? What constitution?"

A Commoner Comments

by Robert Currie, Jr.

It was almost good news. The associated Press article was titled "Foxworthy offers 'Redneck' humor with 'Blue Collar TV'." I read on eagerly anticipating the announcement of a new program maintaining a standard of entertainment America can be proud of. After all, save an occasional slight drift into the edge of off-color humor, Jeff Foxworthy's material is wholesome entertainment parents can enjoy in the presence of their children, without being embarrassed or forced to explain things children should not hear in the first place.

But my bubble popped when I read Foxworthy will be joined on the show by Larry the Cable Guy. Larry the Cable Guy and I do not go back very far. In fact, I had never heard of him until a recent afternoon of babysitting with two young children and two teenagers. An eleven-year-old eagerly invited me to watch a DVD featuring Larry the Cable Guy, but went on with the other youngster and one of the teenagers to play video games. When a fourteen-year-old started the DVD, I fully expected to see a Jim Carrey, Eddie Murphy or Robin Williams type in a humorous movie. Was I ever surprised, then shocked, and finally extremely disappointed, first of all that parents would allow their children to watch such filth, but more so, that such filth is filmed and marketed here in our nation.

Larry, wearing a shirt with the sleeves cut out, came on stage to the enthusiastic screams of a large audience, and emitted a trademark phrase they all recognized. He laid a guitar decorated with a Rebel flag on a stool. I didn't watch long enough to see if he played it later or not. But apparently there were no self or ancestor-respecting descendants of Confederate casualties and veterans in the crowd, because no one protested the association of the Rebel flag with such scandalous verbal filth. Of course, Rebel flag revelers have a history of failing to atone for their ancestor's battle flag, as evidenced by their silence when it was adopted by hate groups that associated it with Hitler's swastika and the burning of the most accepted symbol of Christianity during hate crimes.

I've been in a number of locker rooms in my time, but never have I heard the level of debauchery that spewed from the oral sewer that serves as Larry the Cable Guy's mouth. The only time he strayed from absolute verbal filth was to praise the current President of the United States, which also drew ecstatic screams from the audience. I wonder if the president has seen the DVD, and if so, does he appreciate praise from such a debased source, and applause from an audience that would stoop so low as to enjoy such filth.

I cannot prove my point, because I will not stoop to repeating examples of what Larry the Cable Guy considers humor. But even if I could and would, the journalistic principles of our great nation are yet to stoop to Larry the Cable Guy's level, the newspapers that present my column and the many that print my letters would not print such verbal filth from the cesspool of American entertainment.

So at the risk of sounding contradictory, may I encourage you, away from your children of course, to watch Larry the Cable Guy's

DVD. Not all of it, just enough to hear how egregiously low a so-called entertainer can go, and see an audience praise a filthy-mouthed pervert who makes Jerry Springer look like a saint and our nation's chief executive simultaneously. And we Americans are supposed to be a moral example to the nations of the world?

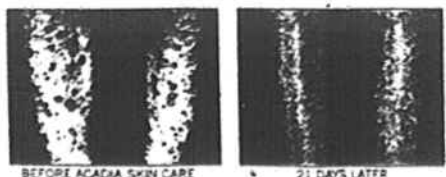
"But our democracy allows freedom of speech, we can't do anything about it." Are you sure? Why can't we come together as moral, decent American citizens regardless of our doctrinal differences, and send a message to those who are paving the way for our nation's moral decline? Why can't we start with a well-organized boycott of Jeff Foxworthy's "Redneck" humor with "Blue Collar TV," and its sponsors' products? Foxworthy's acceptable comedy is entertaining, making some of us even laugh at ourselves. But does he have the right to open the door for a comedian who obviously has no respect for himself, us, or however much is left of our nation's moral principles?

Think about it, please!

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Pediatric Pointers

by Dr. Joey Bell, Pembroke Pediatrics

This time of year many children may be suffering from allergic rhinitis, or "hay fever." Allergic rhinitis is a reaction that occurs in the nose when airborne irritants (allergens) trigger the release of histamine. Histamine then causes an inflammation and fluid production within the nasal passage, sinuses and eyelids. Children with allergic rhinitis will experience sneezing, itching, congestion and a running of the nose. Sometimes they may have a bad cough that is worse at night or nose bleeds. The most common causes of allergic rhinitis include dust mites, pollen, mold, and animal dander.

The best treatment for your child's allergic rhinitis will be avoidance of the allergens that are causing the problem. For pollen allergies, keeping windows closed and using the air conditioning can help minimize the amount of pollen and mold that circulates indoors. For dust mite allergies, washing your child's bedding frequently in hot water or using plastic covers on the mattresses and pillows can also minimize exposure. Cleaning the house thoroughly and frequently also helps. Children with a pet allergy should simply avoid being around pets.

When environmental measures such as the ones described above are inadequate to control your child's symptoms, your provider may recommend the use of prescription or nonprescription medications. Over the counter antihistamines like Benadryl, Dimetane, Dimetapp, and Alerid, tend to decrease the release of histamine, possibly decreasing the symptoms of itching, sneezing, or the runny nose. These medications generally cause drowsiness and can also cause dry mouth, gastrointestinal upset, and irritability. Other antihistamines less likely to cause drowsiness such as Zyrtec, Claritin, or Allegra may also be prescribed by your physician.

Decongestants may also help in treating your child's allergy symptoms. These medications work by making the blood vessels in the nose smaller and can relieve nasal congestions, but have no effect on itching, sneezing, or nasal discharge. The most commonly used decongestant is pseudoephedrine.

When antihistamines and decongestants do not sufficiently control your allergy symptoms, prescription nasal sprays such as Flonase, Rhinocort, Nasonex, Vancenase, or Nasal may be added to your treatment. These medications work to decrease inflammation and swelling in the nose and work best before the symptoms start, but can also be used during a flare-up. Maximal relief from steroid nasal sprays may not be obtained for as long as 2 weeks, so decongestants or antihistamines may be used temporary for relief of symptoms.

If your child does not respond to avoidance or to the above medications, your child's provider may then recommend allergy shots or immunotherapy. Immunotherapy usually involves a three to five year course of repeated injections of specific allergens to decrease the reaction to these allergens when your child comes into contact with them.

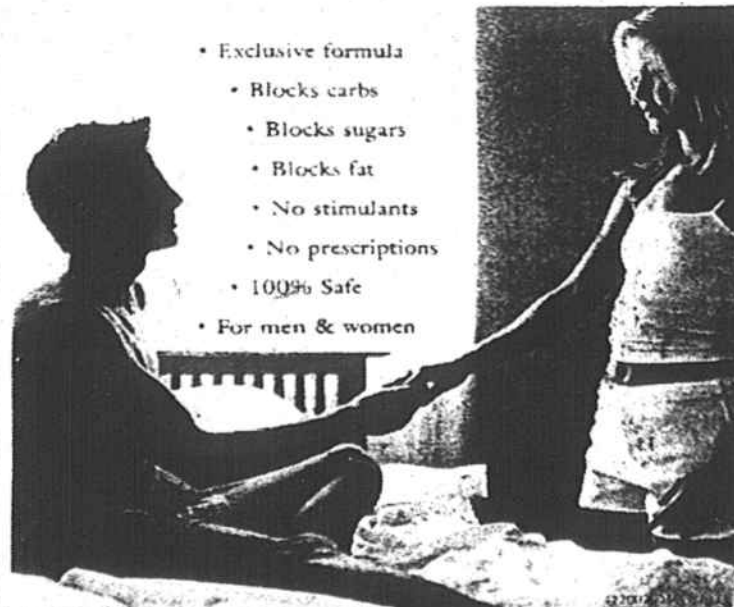
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