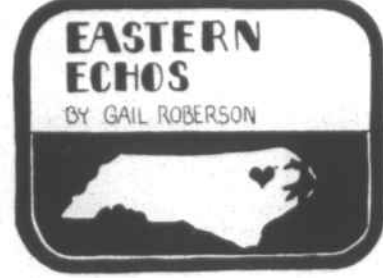


PERSPECTIVE

Verbal warfare is among our human shortcomings

Perhaps Alice Roosevelt Longworth provided the last word about verbal insults with a pillow in her sitting room bearing this statement: "If you can't say something good about somebody, sit right here beside me."



We all have our shortcomings, and verbal warfare is certainly one of them. I used to inform my brothers that I was going to "beat the shuckings" out of them if they didn't leave my possessions alone. I was never too good at creating that just-right verbal insult on a moment's notice, but I DID manage to get the point across, though it might have been a bit more inventive.

However through the years there have been a few who were filled to the gills with wit, imagination and style, and therefore became downright expert at the art of insult. Take Mark Twain for instance. Words did not run the other way when he needed them, especially when it came to abstract art, for which he had a particular dislike. He once described a painting as "a tortoise-shell cat having a fit in a platter of tomatoes." About this same time, another critic

described the whole field of abstract art as: "a product of the untalented, sold by the unprincipled to the utterly bewildered." Mark Twain continued to delight his audiences with comments such as, "Fleas can be taught nearly anything that a congressman can"... and "why do you sit there looking like an envelope without any address on it?" No wonder he was such a great writer. He knew how to use the English language to the best effect...AND to call a spade a spade in anything but dull conveyances.

A friend of mine has told me more than once that "it was very good of God to let them marry one another and so make only two people miserable instead of four." I take it that she does not think highly of this particular couple, and she certainly proved it so with style.

Writers can be insulted within their own profession at the highest level by...the rejected manuscript. Recently I read in a magazine of my trade, the absolute worse reject that a writer could possibly receive from an editor: "Your manuscript is both good and original, but the part that is good is not original, and the part that is original is not good." Lord, I hope I never get one of THEM things!

P. G. Wodehouse didn't do so bad either when he advised a friend to get a haircut because he "looked like a chrysanthemum." Neither did Groucho Marx when he once informed an author that "from the moment I picked up

your book until I laid it down, I was convulsed with laughter. Some day I intend reading it."

But I like Winston Churchill, whose wit was never-ending. Lady Astor once said to him: "Winston, if you were my husband, I should flavor your coffee with poison." Whereas, Churchill, never to be outdone and with a lively and quick wit of his own, simply replied, "Madam, if I WERE your husband, I should drink it." Gotcha!

Churchill also had a line for Bessie Braddock when she confronted him for being in a state of intoxication. "Bessie, you're ugly and I'm drunk. Tomorrow morning I'll be sober, but YOU'LL still be ugly." Direct confrontation does work.

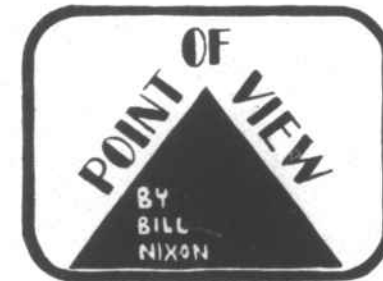
But, it's us women who usually have the last word... "Whatever women do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily, this is not difficult." Give Charlotte Whitton, former mayor of Ottawa, credit for that one.

And then there's my most favorite toast, which also adds insult to injury: From a patriot... "To the enemies of our country! May they have cobweb breeches, a porcupine saddle, a hard-trotting horse and an eternal journey."

So, if you want to insult someone with style, buy yourself a copy of "The Book of Insults, Ancient and Modern," by Nancy McPhe, from which most of the above was taken. If you've got to be incivil, the least you can do is to practice it with a little style!

Parents must undertake the responsibility of discipline

Here we go again. A recent letter from a reader had my dander up. The reader was offering her comments on a story telling how Kroger Stores in several Ohio towns had removed the candy and gum from one of the check-out lanes in their stores.



In her own words, the reader said she was "so pleased" to see the article and planned to take copies of the article to the various stores she frequented. She planned to ask the store managers to do the same in their stores. Doing so, she noted, would relieve her mother of being faced with giving in to their children's requests for candy and gum or the ensuing commotion created by the kids when mom says "no!"

This mother goes on to say she hopes other parents will reflect their concern by doing the same thing. Then, she says, "Maybe we can get something small like this accomplished."

Chances are mom's efforts will be of little benefit. Store managers and operators are fully aware that today's parents can not (or will not) control their kids. They know most parents will not suffer the possible embarrassment of correcting their kids in public. That's why the candy and gum is there. And usually at a level convenient to children.

It seems today's parents are constantly seeking ways to shift the responsibility of raising their children. From controlling their television viewing habits to their schooling, it seems too many parents today are expecting too much and giving too little. Why do they have children?

It seems discipline, a major part of being a parent, has gone the way of many other responsibilities. We've come to expect some other force to make many of the decisions that we should ourselves. We've allowed, by our own lack of attention, government to have a greater

say in our daily lives, while complaining when outside interference takes away our liberties.

We can't have it both ways. Government is all too ready to take over when we are unable, or unwilling to be responsible. Often, when they do, their answer to our problems ends up creating more difficulties than we had.

It's time Americans, and especially parents, started accepting their responsibilities if we are to maintain the freedoms we now enjoy. One of those, the right to rear our children as we see fit, must not be taken away. It's time for parents to start acting like parents.

This is not to say that parents should begin at once "clubbing" sense into their children. Abuse of our kids should never be an option. Nor does it mean we should deny our kids any of the pleasures of life. Regardless of how much we may say about the "hard" times we had as kids, no parent really wants less for his

child than he had.

Along with material things, we must remember that the most important gift we can give our children is love. And we must teach them to be responsible. We need to prepare them for the world we will be turning over to them. The way to do that is to teach them good work habits, responsibility, and respect for others.

Daughter Caroline is three years old. She has a mind of her own, and often, her direction is not the same as mine. She has received her share of reminders by way of her rear that there is a certain direction she must take... and it isn't always hers.

I don't like to spank her anymore than she likes to be spanked. But it is my responsibility as a parent to do so. It is also one of the ways that, though she doesn't understand now, I show that I love her and am concerned about her growth. Hopefully, she'll grow to be a responsible adult, just as I have had to be a responsible parent.

Road problems during era of dirt roads

The presence of large trucks on today's highways engenders a certain amount of controversy. Critics protest that the vehicles present traffic dangers and create road damage, necessitating limitations on speed, length, and weight. Truckers counter that their major role in the nation's economy would be severely hindered by unwise restraints.



A similar tune was played in Perquimans nine decades ago. The lumber business was a major part of the country's economic life then, being the principal source of non-farm employment. Hauling lumber, however, placed a severe strain on the local network of roads—dirt roads.

Jacob H. Parker, the county's representative in the state legislature, sought to deal with the road problem during the first of his two terms. In January 1893 he presented a bill which would require timber getters to restore damage done to public roads.

Parker, a Populist who also had Republican support, was immediately attacked in the press. Thomas W. Babb, a partisan Democrat who edited Hertford's first newspaper, blasted Parker on the editorial page of the "Perquimans Record" on January 18, 1893.

If one class of citizens was to be required to pay for damaged roads, Babb asked, "Why not require the same thing of everybody that uses the public road...? This strikes me as being but fair."

Babb insisted, "We fail to see the justice of Mr. Parker's discrimination against" timber getters. "They are law abiding and pay their taxes and we fail to see why they should not have the same right to haul shingles, staves, wood, logs, timber in any form over the public road as Mr. Parker has to haul cotton or

Like Thrills?
Back Out Of The Hertford Post Office

Starting a life of marital bliss

Just in case you're not too terribly observant, there's something rather new and flashy being sported on the fourth finger of the left hand of our youngest advertising representative.



Monica's engaged! I'm really not supposed to make this public yet, it's really not even my job, but I knew you'd want to know.

It's not really a match made in heaven; it started at The Perquimans Weekly office.

Monica has pledged her eternal love to a former employee who has aspired to bigger and better things — a fast car and a state job.

Monica's engaged to Ken Castelloe, our former advertising manager, who left our ranks to become a North Carolina Highway Patrolman.

Plans for the big event, to take place in August, have been in the making for quite some time. All efforts on our part in the office to discourage entering into

this "blissful" state too hastily have been thwarted.

We've tried everything.

We've described in grim detail, all of the things that can go wrong during those early years of wedlock; i.e. toothpaste squeezed from the middle of the tube, mismatched socks, sports sections at the breakfast table; you know, all the little picky things that can drive you straight up the walls.

Monica's not listening. We've tried the "if I were 18 and single again" approach.

We've pointed out all the wonderful opportunities available for an intelligent and attractive young woman to take advantage of. We've dangled promises of spring breaks at Fort Lauderdale, summers at Nags Head, loads of fun with no commitments.

Monica's not listening. The financial burdens that come with the early years of marriage have been told and re-told in her presence. She's been told that he'll be able to go out and buy stereo equipment, weight benches, cameras, CB radios, — all the things that are necessary to a young man's happiness.

She's been made aware that she won't even be able to justify the purchase of a pair of pantyhose on the "family" budget.

You guessed it — Monica's still not listening. We've told her all about the male ego, the male pride, the male selfishness, the male immaturity, the male stupidity... (to our male readers we apologize for the preceding statements, but we're getting desperate.)

You probably won't believe this, but Monica still won't listen.

We should probably abandon any hope of talking her out of the upcoming reunion. We've even tried getting her to postpone the event for a year, or maybe even a dozen years.

She's not buying it.

Eventually we'll probably have to face the fact that Monica is in love, and with that love comes the commitment of marriage and family.

We probably still won't give up, for a while anyway, as we continue to live our youth through her freedom.

It has become a national pastime, this deal of trying to talk Monica out of marriage. When you really get down to the heart of the matter we don't want Monica to leave us. We've gotten used to that big bright smile, and once she's married and moved away we won't see it that terribly often.

Monica, in case we don't talk you out of your "silly" plans, we want you to know that we wish you only happiness, and that we'll miss you when you're gone. Don't let that go to your head though, we still expect a lot out of you while you're still here!

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