



Swearing Off Swearing

BY KELLY HERTZ
kelly.hertz@yankton.net

I want to say something to you today, and I swear I don't want to offend anyone in the process.

A noble goal, that. I've taken on a New Year's resolution that targets swearing. I'm trying to curb my occasional tendency to utter expletives to embellish my thoughts and express my feelings. I've come to see the practice as a semi-embarrassing detriment.



Kelly HERTZ

On the other hand, the habit is soooooo addictive.

My interest in this quest germinated last summer when I read about a British study that found that cursing can be good for your health. Subsequently, as I bounced around iTunes and other online music sites, I noted the prevalence of "explicit" warnings for songs containing questionable lyrics. And I also started noticing the amount of profanity that fluttered around me day after day.

Hearing that swearing might be healthy for you isn't surprising. It's a handy tool for unleashing pent-up emotions, usually sparked by sudden situations that ignite exclamatory outbursts. A 2009 NBC story about cursing at the bad economic news of that time — titled "Recession F-Bombs: Why Swearing Feels Great" — stated that the use of profanity allows for an instantaneous emotional release (with physical benefits) when confronted by bad news. I also noticed it tends to have similar unburdening properties when you, say, hit your head on a cabinet door or get stuck driving behind a car that's crawling WAY below the speed limit up Broadway.

"Swearing results in a form of catharsis," psychology professor Timothy Jay told NBC in the 2009 story. "People feel better when they swear." In other words, it's a stress-buster.

Meanwhile, there's also been a marked loosening in cultural standards toward cursing. The best measuring stick I know is George Carlin's 1972 comedy routine, "The Seven Words You Can Never Say On Television." I now hear four of those seven words rather routinely on TV, thanks in part to the broadening verbal wondrous wrought by the dubious miracle of basic cable.

Profanity has also become much more prevalent in music. Even though such songs are labeled as "explicit" on iTunes, for example, I'm long past the point where I even notice the warnings. (Sometimes, you simply must embrace the profanity: For instance, there's no way you can listen to the clean version of Puddle of Mudd's 2002 hit "She Hates Me" and get the same exhilarating effect found in the explicit version.) I've even discovered it in some old and unexpected musical places. There's a very subtle F-bomb in the Beatles' "Hey Jude": It occurs at the 2:58 mark when (probably) John Lennon muffs a backing vocal and utters "@#!% hell!" The engineer on the recording missed it, and the rest is barely-audible-but-still-

there-if-you-really-listen history. As I thought about profanity as an emotional pressure valve and as a musical tool, I took more notice of the swearing that's around me. There's really a lot of it buzzing about, and I suppose I do my share to contribute to that pollution.

However, I have to figure out what "a lot" really is. When I grew up, I never heard the F-bomb until I was 12 years old — which seems practically impossible now, given today's standards. But whether it speaks of my upbringing or to my relatively closed childhood (I was sick a lot), the word never touched my ears until one summer day at the baseball field in Menno when someone blurted it out before a pickup game. Thereafter, I began hearing it a little more frequently; then I heard it everywhere — after 12 years of never hearing it at all.

Now, that word, along with many others, is terribly commonplace, which is unfortunate. Profanity coarsens our communication and, thus, our culture. It gives numbing approval to being rude and offensive, even if that's not your intent.

(As an aside, another study, as reported in the New York Times, found that men swear more than women — unless the woman in question is a member of a college sorority. Take that for what it's worth.)

So, why the (expletive) do we do it? It goes back to that news item that started all this: It often just feels good when we unleash such words. We attach an emotional weight to them, whether as a form of release, as a judgment or as a verbal assault.

The trick is to find other, more acceptable words to which we can tie our squirming emotions. But I know, for instance, that if I'm trying to send out a page here on deadline and none of the fonts in an ad are showing up correctly, exclaiming "Oh, fudge!", "Rats!" or "Holy contributing to the delinquency of minors" (which was an actual line of dialogue from the 1960s "Batman" TV series) isn't going to cut it. Not even close.

In truth, my resolution is really a self-test. I really don't swear all that much, but I tend to do it when I least realize it. The writer in me argues that using curse words is a cheap, crude, unnecessary embellishment. So, I figure I can do better. But I still struggle with impulsive situations, which happen about every hour or so — and ironically, I curse at myself for doing it.

I can't speak for others (literally, in this case), but if I'm going to speak for myself, I want to see if I can do it without stooping to reflexive profanity. Why? Just because. And to do this, I must buck a societal trend, as swearing has become a verbal plague. And only we can act as the cure by swearing off swearing.

You can follow Kelly Hertz on Twitter at twitter.com/kelly_hertz

Point Of View

Our Congress And Its Priorities

BY JOHN MAGNUSON
Yankton

If we are a sum total of all the decisions and actions taken in our life, then how does this speak to the actions of the U.S. Congress? Our life is in a rapidly changing dynamic world and we need a government that can respond expeditiously to today's challenges. Our government should be a part of the solution not the problem. But what we see over and over again, particularly in our Congress, is a body not in motion and not representing the will of the people. The conservative wing appears to be out of touch and capable of only blocking legislation that should have been passed months ago. Their thinking is old school and just doesn't work for today's problems. Is there intelligent life in the US Congress? Consider some of their key ideas and then you decide.

A high-minded senator once stated that everyone knows that raising taxes on the wealthy will only result in fewer jobs for the middle class. Oh, really now, senator. As any college freshman knows, job creation is a function of supply and demand. Business hires workers when the demand for their product or service increases and causes the need to increase production. In truth, whether or not the wealthy have extra money, has absolutely nothing to do with job creation. A filter factory in Yankton will produce more if customers are sending in orders, and will consider adding more jobs if the current work force cannot keep up with demand. This is simple supply and demand and nothing more.

But this begs the question, what do the wealthy do with extra income?

All indications are that wealthy people speculate in the financial markets — you know, petroleum futures, grain futures, real estate junk bonds, hedge funds and so on. We have seen first hand what speculation in petroleum futures has done in the past to the cost of gasoline at the pump.

What really drives the economy and increases demand is consumer spending. The lower and middle classes are the driving engine for consumer spending. We always have been. Take away our money, you take away product demand and you take away a thriving economy. Do this by outsourcing jobs, by lowering our incomes and by feeding us lies that we somehow owe the rich not to raise their taxes. Oh really!

Another popular idea these days is that government is bad and so the less government, the better. This is the favored idea of the libertarians and conservatives. Somehow, if government just stays out of the way, the markets will work things out and we will all be better. Therefore, we don't need Social Security, Medicare, environmental

protection, public education, banking regulations, unemployment insurance, or basically any public regulators at all. The private sector can remedy all of these issues much more effectively and much cheaper than the federal government.

Whoa — now hold on just a New York minute! Haven't we seen that an idea so wrapped up in itself, must come in an awfully small package? We have seen first hand how the stock market has handled our 401ks and retirement pensions. The only chance us poor folks have is a government that watches over us and keeps the buzzards from circling overhead. We need a security net for the future and we need promise for our children. We are not a financial entity with the bottom line as the only priority. We do not want our life problems to be money making opportunities for the greedy. We need a strong government to guard our interests, because if not the Feds, who else? Wall Street, perhaps? The idea that government is bad, is an exploitative idea fed to us so that others can cash in.

What about the idea of gun control legislation? Congress has chosen not to take meaningful action for years citing the Second Amendment. Should our Congress pay homage to an NRA Pied Piper that is only a front for the arms industry in this country? Will they have us arm our schools to prevent mass shootings?

Well then, what about our nursing homes, hospitals, churches, libraries, grocery stores, apartment complexes? What about any place that has a concentration of people that could be targets? Armed guards everywhere? Oh really!

Of course we can blame gun violence on video games and movies, but isn't this just another weak smoke screen? We know that other countries watch the same movies and play the same games, but don't go out and shoot each other.

The obvious answer many don't want to hear is that we have too many guns. We have been a cash cow for the arms industry for too long, plain and simple. Until we start buying back guns en masse, halting the sales of all military assault weapons and all magazine style semi-automatic weaponry, this problem will persist. We need a new interpretation of the Second Amendment for the 21st century so that we can combat urban gun violence in Dodge City. We are not stuck in the Wild West and we need a Congress that can take action.

Supply-side voodoo economics, privatization and arming ourselves to the teeth isn't working. We need new ideas and new action. Our dysfunctional Congress is clearly more concerned about their corporate obligations than what's good for our country. We should vote every last one of these double-talking Jezebels out of office. What are they good for?

THE PRESS DAKOTAN

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861
Yankton Media, Inc., 319 Walnut St., Yankton, SD 57078

OPINION | WE SAY

Justice Reform



THUMBS UP to Gov. Dennis Daugaard's proposal to address South Dakota's relatively high imprisonment rate and the costs that accompany it. As Rep. Bernie Hunhoff of Yankton noted after the State of the State address, reform of the corrections system is long overdue. We agree with Daugaard that "prison is not the effective place to treat those with drug, alcohol and mental health issues."

Given that 80 percent of South Dakota's prison inmates are non-violent offenders, we believe smarter ways can be devised to rehabilitate them and make them contributing members of society. We look forward to hearing more about corrections reform in the coming months.

Weather Or Not



THUMBS DOWN to the weather of 2012. After all, aside from the warm winter, it was a pretty miserable year. According to the NOAA, Nebraska and South Dakota had their hottest years on record. In addition, Nebraska had its driest year on record, and South Dakota had its 13th driest. With climate change still a minor chord in national and international politics, we can expect the types of extreme weather events seen in the Great Plains and elsewhere to continue unabated. Welcome to the new normal. We just hope Mother Nature finds it within herself to give our two humble states a cooler, wetter year.

Dance Hall Days



THUMBS UP to the Groveland Park Ballroom north of Tyndall for its induction into the South Dakota Rock and Roll Music Association (SDRRMA) hall of fame. The induction ceremony will be held April 13 at the Ramkota Exhibit Hall in Sioux Falls. The ballroom was originally located near Yankton before it was moved to Tyndall. The pavilion hosted regional and national bands, often drawing audiences of 1,000. The Beringer family of Tyndall owned the facility starting in 1947. Bob Maag, a Tripp owner now living in Huron, will be recognized not only for his later Groveland ownership but also as a member of the band Nickel Bag of Soul, another hall of fame inductee. Let the music roll!

Zero



THUMBS DOWN to the Baseball Writers' Association of America for in effect indicting an entire decade when it chose not to elect anyone to the Baseball Hall of Fame this week. The rub for many writers apparently was the fact that two of the new candidates — outfield and home run champion Barry Bonds and pitcher Roger Clemens — carry the taint of the steroid era that dominated headlines a few years ago. In the process, other players who had no

known connection to steroids failed to reach the 75-percent induction plateau; this group included (but isn't limited to) the likes of Craig Biggio, Jeff Bagwell, Mike Piazza, Curt Schilling and Jack Morris. The writers, at least at this point, seem to be throwing a blanket of suspicion over everyone who played during the mid- to late 1990s and early 2000s, when the shadow of steroids lurked in many corners. It's guilt by association, and for the time being, the writers are letting it taint a lot of great legacies. And that's a shame.

ONLINE OPINION

The results of the most recent Internet poll on the Press & Dakotan's Web site are as follows:

LATEST RESULTS:

Table with poll results for Chuck Hagel nomination: Do you support the nomination of Chuck Hagel for Secretary of Defense? Yes .49%, No .40%, Not sure .12%, TOTAL VOTES CAST .481

The Press & Dakotan Internet poll is not a scientific survey and reflects the opinions only of those who choose to participate. The results should not be construed as an accurate representation or scientific measurement of public opinion.

CURRENT QUESTION:

Do you support the legalization of gay marriage in your state? To vote in the Press & Dakotan's Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press Today is Friday, Jan. 11, the 11th day of 2013. There are 354 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Jan. 11, 1913, the first enclosed sedan-type automobile, a Hudson, went on display at the 13th National Automobile Show in New York.

On this date: In 1805, the Michigan Territory was created by an act of Congress.

In 1861, Alabama became the fourth state to withdraw from the Union.

In 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed the Grand Canyon National Monument (it became a national park in 1919).

In 1927, the creation of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was proposed during a dinner of Hollywood luminaries at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles.

In 1935, aviator Amelia Earhart began an 18-hour trip from Honolulu to Oakland, Calif., that made her the first woman to fly solo across the Pacific Ocean.

In 1942, Japan declared war against the Netherlands, the same day that Imperial Japanese forces invaded the Dutch East Indies.

In 1943, the United States and Britain signed treaties relinquishing extraterritorial rights in China.

In 1963, the Beatles' single "Please Please Me" (B side "Ask Me Why") was released in Britain by Parlophone.

In 1964, U.S. Surgeon General Luther Terry issued the first government report that said smoking may be hazardous to one's health.

In 1972, East Pakistan changed its name to Bangladesh.

In 1977, France set off an international uproar by releasing Abu Daoud, a PLO official behind the massacre of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

In 1995, 52 people were killed when a Colombian airliner crashed as it was preparing to land near the Caribbean resort of Cartagena — however, a 9-year-old girl, Erika Delgado, survived.

Ten years ago: Calling the death penalty process "arbitrary and capricious, and therefore immoral," Illinois Gov. George Ryan commuted the sentences of 167 condemned inmates, clearing his state's death row two days before leaving office.

Five years ago: Bank of America said it would buy Countrywide Financial for \$4.1

billion in stock in a deal rescuing the country's biggest mortgage lender. Authorities in Jacksonville, N.C., found the remains of Marine Lance Cpl. Maria Frances Lauterbach in the yard of Cpl. Cesar Armando Laurean, a comrade she had accused of raping her. (Laurean, who fled to Mexico, was later arrested and sent back to the U.S.; he was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.) Former Olympic track gold medalist Marion Jones was sentenced to six months in prison for lying to investigators about using performance-enhancing drugs and her role in a check-fraud scam. Sir Edmund Hillary, who conquered Mount Everest, died in Auckland, New Zealand, at age 88.

One year ago: Joran van der Sloot, the longtime suspect in the still unsolved disappearance of American Natalee Holloway in Aruba, pleaded guilty in Lima to the 2010 murder of a Peruvian woman, Stephany Flores; he was sentenced to 28 years in prison. French TV cameraman Gilles Jacquier was killed while filming a pro-government rally in Homs, Syria; he was the first Western journalist to die in the Syrian uprising.

Today's Birthdays: Producer Grant Tinker is 88. Actor Rod Taylor is 83. Composer Mary Rodgers is 82. The former prime minister of Canada, Jean Chretien, is 79. Actor Mitchell Ryan is 79. Actor Felix Silla is 76. Movie director Joel Zwick is 71. Country singer Naomi Judd is 67. World Golf Hall of Famer Ben Crenshaw is 61. Singer Robert Earl Keen is 57. Actress Phyllis Logan (TV: "Downton Abbey") is 57. Musician Vicki Peterson (The Bangles) is 55. Actress Kim Coles is 51. Actor Jason Connery is 50. Contemporary Christian musician Jim Bryson (MercyMe) is 45. Rock musician Tom Dumont (No Doubt) is 45. Rhythm-and-blues singer Maxee Maxwell (Brownstone) is 44. Movie director Malcolm D. Lee is 43. Singer Mary J. Blige is 42. Musician Tom Rowlands (The Chemical Brothers) is 42. Actor Marc Blucas is 41. Actress Amanda Peet is 41. Actor Rockmond Dunbar is 40. Actress Kristolyn Lloyd (TV: "The Bold and the Beautiful") is 28. Reality TV star Jason Wahler (TV: "Laguna Beach"; "The Hills") is 26.

Thought for Today: "Finish each day and be done with it. You have one day you could." — Ralph Waldo Emerson, American essayist, poet and philosopher (1803-1882).

CONTACT US

PHONE: (605) 665-7811 (800) 743-2968
NEWS FAX: (605) 665-1721
ADVERTISING FAX: (605) 665-0288
WEBSITE: www.yankton.net
EMAIL ADDRESS: news@yankton.net

SUBSCRIPTIONS/ CIRCULATION: Extension 112
CLASSIFIED ADS: Extension 108
NEWS DEPARTMENT: Extension 114
SPORTS DEPARTMENT: Extension 106
ADVERTISING OFFICE: Extension 122
BUSINESS OFFICE: Extension 119
NEW MEDIA: Extension 136
COMPOSING DESK: Extension 129

MANAGERS

- Gary L. Wood, Publisher
Michele Schievelbein, Advertising Director
Tonya Schild, Business Manager
David Jeffcoat, Circulation Director
Tera Schmidt, Classified Manager
Kelly Hertz, Editor
James D. Cimburek, Sports Editor
Beth Rye, New Media Manager
Kathy Larson, Composing Manager
Bernard Metivier, District Manager

DAILY STAFF

- Andrew Atwal
Derek Bartos
Brett Beyerle
Cassandra Brockmoller
Rob Buckingham
Randy Dockendorf
Jeannine Economy
Jeremy Hoeck
Nathan Johnson
Muriel Pratt
Sheldon Reed
Noelle Schlechter
Cathy Sudbeck
Kelsey Thomas
Sally Whiting
Brenda Willcuts
Jackie Williams

Published Daily Monday-Saturday

Periodicals postage paid at Yankton, South Dakota, under the act of March 3, 1979. Weekly Dakotian established June 6, 1861. Yankton Daily Press and Dakotian established April 26, 1875.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078.

MEMBERSHIPS

The Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan is a member of the Associated Press, the Inland Daily Press Association and the South Dakota Newspaper Association. The Associated Press is entitled exclusively to use of all the local news printed in this newspaper.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES*

Table with subscription rates: CARRIER DELIVERY (1-month \$12.09, 3 months \$36.27, 6 months \$72.53, 1-year \$133.09), MOTOR ROUTE (1-month \$14.51, 3 months \$43.53, 6 months \$87.05, 1-year \$139.14), MAIL IN RETAIL TRADE ZONE (1-month \$16.93, 3 months \$50.79, 6 months \$101.57, 1-year \$148.82), MAIL OUTSIDE RETAIL TRADE ZONE (1-month \$19.35, 3 months \$58.05, 6 months \$116.09, 1-year \$186.33). * Plus applicable sales tax for all rates.

FROM THE BIBLE

With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Micah 6:6. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis