

# The Press & Dakotan

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OPINION

## S.D. Adjusts To A New Reality

South Dakota has never been viewed as one of the leaders in the evolution of the same-sex marriage issue in this country. Indeed, this state passed a law to define marriage in the most traditional, heterosexual terms, and was willing to defend its law in court once a lawsuit had been filed against it. That's understandable and probably reflective of a majority of the people in this red state.

But state officials must also be given credit — if you're the kind of person who's willing to give such credit in this issue — for not digging in its heels in resistance to the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision that declared all same-sex marriage bans, including South Dakota's, unconstitutional.

When the court decision was handed down last month, the eyes of county officials across this state turned to Pierre for guidance on how to proceed in the wake of the ruling. In less than a couple of hours, the office of Attorney General Marty Jackley issued the go-ahead for counties to start issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples in full compliance with the court decision. Shortly thereafter, the state immediately announced that it had changed the language on its marriage licenses to reflect the gender-neutral nature of this new reality.

Three days later, the state announced that same-sex couples could use the marriage license and other documents to change the names on their driver's licenses.

So, South Dakota wasted no time in complying with the federal law, even if it conflicted (read: override) state law.

This is unlike a few other states where some officials have either openly resisted the court decision or have not offered the same kind of decisive direction in guiding how local authorities should deal with requests for marriage licenses by same-sex couples.

There are numerous other issues that must be dealt with as South Dakota and every other state makes adjustments to the new court-mandated status quo. For instance, Jackley has joined with other attorneys general to ask Washington for legal protections for people who have religious objections to same-sex marriages. But on the broader canvas, South Dakota officials have shown they have been quick, even aggressive, in making adjustments to the basic issues. If you support the court's decision or are impacted by it, that's a promising transition.

kmh

IN HISTORY

**By The Associated Press**  
Today is Wednesday, July 8, the 189th day of 2015. There are 176 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On July 8, 1776, Col. John Nixon gave the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence, outside the State House (now Independence Hall) in Philadelphia.

**On this date:** In 1663, King Charles II of England granted a Royal Charter to Rhode Island.

In 1853, an expedition led by Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in Yedo Bay, Japan, on a mission to seek diplomatic and trade relations with the Japanese.

In 1889, The Wall Street Journal was first published.  
In 1907, Florenz Ziegfeld staged his first "Follies," on the roof of the New York Theatre.

In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson received a tumultuous welcome in New York City after his return from the Versailles Peace Conference in France.

In 1947, demolition work began in New York City to make way for the new permanent headquarters of the United Nations.

In 1950, President Harry S. Truman named Gen. Douglas MacArthur commander-in-chief of United Nations forces in Korea. (Truman ended up sacking MacArthur for insubordination nine months later.)

In 1965, Canadian Pacific Air Lines Flight 21, a Douglas DC-6B, crashed in British Columbia after the tail separated from the fuselage; all 52 people on board were killed in what authorities said was the result of an apparent bombing.  
In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford announced he would seek a second term of office.

In 1989, Carlos Saul Menem was inaugurated as president of Argentina in the country's first transfer of power from one democratically elected civilian leader to another in six decades.

In 1994, Kim Il Sung, North Korea's communist leader since 1948, died at age 82.

In 2000, Venus Williams beat Lindsay Davenport 6-3, 7-6 (3) for her first Grand Slam title, becoming the first black female champion at Wimbledon since Althea Gibson in 1957-58.

**Ten years ago:** Group of Eight leaders meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland, unveiled a \$50 billion package to help lift Africa from poverty and pledged new joint efforts against terrorism in response to the deadly London bombings the day before. Hurricane Dennis pounded Cuba, resulting in 16 deaths.  
**Five years ago:** The largest spy swap

between the U.S. and Russia since the Cold War unfolded as 10 people accused of spying in suburban America pleaded guilty to conspiracy and were ordered deported to Russia in exchange for the release of four prisoners accused of spying for the West. Violent protests erupted in Oakland, California, after a Los Angeles jury convicted a white former transit officer, Johannes Mehserle, of involuntary manslaughter (instead of murder) in the videotaped fatal shooting of an unarmed black man, Oscar Grant. During an ESPN prime-time special, basketball free agent LeBron James announced he was leaving the Cleveland Cavaliers to join the Miami Heat. A world record tennis crowd in Brussels watched Kim Clijsters beat Wimbledon champion Serena Williams 6-3, 6-2 in an exhibition umpired by Martina Navratilova.

**One year ago:** President Barack Obama appealed to Congress for \$3.7 billion in emergency spending to deal with the immigration crisis on the nation's southern border, where unaccompanied children were showing up by the thousands. (Republican lawmakers rejected the request). Washington became the second state to allow people to buy marijuana legally in the U.S. without a doctor's note. Germany handed Brazil its heaviest World Cup loss ever with a 7-1 rout in the semifinals that stunned the host nation.

**Today's Birthdays:** Singer Steve Lawrence is 80. Actor Jeffrey Tambor is 71. Ballerina Cynthia Gregory is 69. Actress Kim Darby is 68. Children's performer Raffi is 67. Celebrity chef Wolfgang Puck is 66. Actress Anjelica Huston is 64. Writer Anna Quindlen is 63. Actor Kevin Bacon is 57. Actor Robert Knepper is 56. Rock musician Andy Fletcher (Depeche Mode) is 54. Country singer Toby Keith is 54. Rock musician Graham Jones (Haircut 100) is 54. Rock singer Joan Osborne is 53. Writer-producer Rob Burnett is 53. Actor Rocky Carroll is 52. Actor Corey Parker is 50. Actor Lee Tergesen is 50. Actor Billy Crudup is 47. Actor Michael Weatherly is 47. Singer Beck is 45. Country singer Drew Womack (Sons of the Desert) is 45. Comedian Sebastian Maniscalco is 42. Actress Kathleen Robertson is 42. Christian rock musician Stephen Mason (Jars of Clay) is 40. Actor Milo Ventimiglia is 38. Rock musician Tavis Werts is 38. Singer Ben Jelen is 36. Actor Lance Gross is 34. Actress Sophia Bush is 33. Rock musician Jamie Cook (Arctic Monkeys) is 30. Actor Jake McDorman is 29. Actor Jaden Smith is 17.

**Thought for Today:** "History must stay open, it is all humanity." — William Carlos Williams, American author and poet (1883-1963).

FROM THE BIBLE

You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God. 1 Peter 1:23. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Diving Safety

**James B. MacDougall, MD, Aberdeen**  
*President, S.D. State Orthopedic Society*

People are eager to cool off during hot summer months, making trips and memories at local lakes and other bodies of water. However, some divers plunge head first into rocky and/or shallow waters, placing them at risk of serious injury, paralysis or even death.

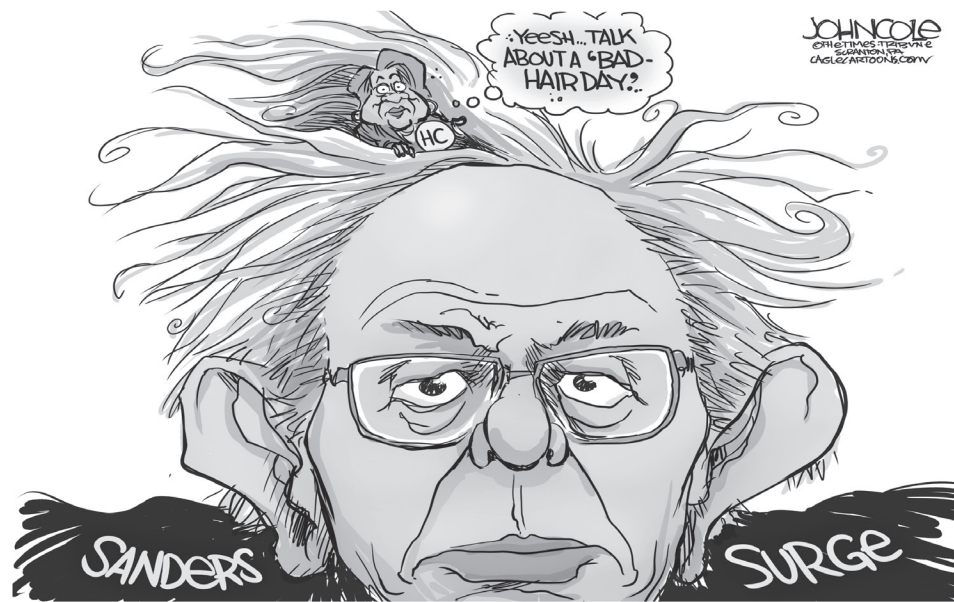
Nearly 26,000 individuals are treated in emergency departments, doctors' offices and clinics for diving-related injuries in the U.S. each year, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

That's why the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), in conjunction with the Cervical Spine Research

Society (CSRS) and the American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA), developed the following diving safety tips to minimize permanent neck and spine injuries.

- If you have any doubt about water depth, enter the water feet first.
- Never dive into above-ground pools.
- Never dive into water that is not clear, where sand bars or objects below the surface may be obstructed or not visible.
- Only one person at a time should stand on a diving board. Swim away from the board immediately afterward to make room for the next diver.

Orthopaedic surgeons put bones and spines back together after diving injuries. We want people to know the risks associated with diving. Make smart decisions this summer. Don't wreck your neck!



## The Don Vs. The Bern

BY KATHLEEN PARKER  
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WASHINGTON — Stranger things have happened in American politics, but the sudden surge of Democratic/Populist Bernie Sanders and Republican/Populist Donald Trump puts one in mind of alternate universes.

And I don't mean Miss Universes. Both men are holding second place in some polls behind Hillary Clinton and Jeb Bush, respectively. And both are steadily ascending in the polls at a greater pace than anyone could have predicted — or imagined.

Sanders, a socialist running on a platform that should send shivers up the spines of most Americans, drew the largest crowd of the season — nearly 10,000 — in Madison, Wisconsin, Wednesday night. The anti-establishment candidate, who wants to break up big banks and redistribute wealth, makes President Obama (and Clinton) look like robber barons by comparison.

Although Madison is a liberal college town and Sanders' record crowd could be rationalized accordingly, poll after poll shows him closing the gap with Clinton. A Quinnipiac University poll released Thursday morning put him within 19 points of Clinton among likely Democratic caucus-goers in Iowa. Quinnipiac surveyed 761 likely Iowa Democratic caucus participants, with humans calling cell and land phones, and with a margin of error of 3.6 percentage points.

Meanwhile, A WMUR/CNN Granite State poll put Sanders just eight points below Clinton in New Hampshire.

As Sanders remarked in Madison upon seeing the throng that greeted him, "Whoa."

At the same time Sanders is on the zoom rail, mysterious things are happening around the candidacy of the Trumpster. Some of you may recognize him as the cartoon character eternally lost in a game of Monopoly, sort of the way Beetlejuice was confined to miniature quarters in the movie of the same name. (No matter what happens, do not say "Trump!" thrice in a row.)

He is otherwise known for: the buildings he has named after himself; a couple of TV shows he has hosted, the names of which escape me now; his hair, which he recently averred is his own; his vast fortune, about which he can't stop bragging — and a proportionately small mouth for someone famous for having such a big one.

To wit: His recent commentaries about Mexican immigrants as rapists, drug runners and

criminals. And, he added, "some, I assume, are good people."

Why, there's a good one right over there — mowing Trump's Palm Beach Mar-a-Lago estate lawn. *Hola, Paco, que tal?*

Trump's insulting tirade has had the dual effect of getting him fired from NB-Universal, Univision, Macy's (and counting) for comments unbecoming an icon and getting him feted as The Iconoclast that Republicans have been waiting for. If you're a member of the Republican base, a candidate can't be too anti-immigration, too anti-Common Core — or too rich, apparently.

Even as Trump's various enterprises are vanishing — and support among I dunno, let's call them "sane Americans" is waning — he has doubled down on comments that could as easily have been retracted with an apology. Here's a sample for future reference: "Of course, I didn't mean that all Mexicans are rapists. I was upset by some of the statistics I've read and just mouthed off without more carefully considering the full impact my words could have on others. I'm sorry." (Warning: Do not add: Some of my best friends are Mexican.)

But no. Instead, commenting on a 2014 Fusion story about Latin-American women being raped as they traveled to the U.S. across Mexico, "Well, somebody's doing the raping, Don!" he retorted when CNN anchor Don Lemon gave him a chance to think things through. "I mean, somebody's doing it!" Trump said. "Who's doing the raping? Who's doing the raping?"

Trump has a point there. Someone is doing the raping, assuming the Fusion story is true. And the same Fusion story that claimed that 80 percent of Central American women and girls are raped as they cross through Mexico to the U.S. also answered Trump's question: "Perpetrators can be coyotes, other migrants, bandits, or even government authorities."

Hmmm, so not necessarily those who then funnel into North America?

See? Logic isn't so hard, but rant over reason is so much more effective in attracting attention.

Trump's fans say they like his blunt talk, that he says what they're thinking. He's BOLD! Indeed. But bold and blunt wear thin after a while. And America, though keen to hear fresh voices and ideas, isn't ready for either a Robin Hood or a King John in the White House.

Enjoy the show, everybody. But rest assured: This too — and these two — shall pass.

## Remember When Divorce Was Deemed Immoral?

BY RANDALL BALMER  
© 2015, Los Angeles Times

Amid all of the overheated rhetoric surrounding the Supreme Court's decision legalizing same-sex marriages across the nation, evangelicals have alternated between defiance and a kind of martyrdom.

"It's time to be a light in these dark times," Jim Daly, president of Focus on the Family, said. Franklin Graham declared that the court was "endorsing sin" and that God's "decisions are not subject to review or revision by any man-made court."

Echoing many other conservatives, Graham went on to say that churches and others who oppose same-sex marriage would be subject to discrimination and persecution. A Fox commentator declared that gay rights now trump religious liberty. And R. Albert Mohler of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary warned that "the majority in this decision has placed every religious institution in legal jeopardy if that institution intends to uphold its theological convictions limiting marriage to the union of a man and a woman."

Evangelicals like to present their position as biblical and therefore immutable. They want us to believe that they have never before adjusted to shifting public sentiments on sexuality and marriage. That is not so.

Divorce — and especially divorce and remarriage — was once such an issue, an issue about which evangelicals would brook no compromise. But evangelicals eventually reconfigured their preaching and adapted just fine to changing historical circumstances.

When I was growing up within the evangelical subculture in the 1960s, divorce was roundly condemned by evangelicals. Jesus, after all, was pretty clear on the issue. "And I say to you," he told the Pharisees, "whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

Anyone who was divorced was ostracized in evangelical circles. In some congregations, membership was rescinded, and at the very least the divorcee felt marginalized. Any evangelical leader who divorced his spouse could expect to look for a different job.

Evangelical culture began to change in the mid- to late 1970s, when the divorce rate among evangelicals approached that of the larger population. Some studies even suggested that the divorce rate among evangelicals was higher than average, although that claim was a trifle misleading since evangelicals were more likely to marry in the first place.

The ringing denunciations of divorce emanating from evangelical pulpits abated. No one outright supported divorce, but it became less and less of an issue as pastors found it more and more difficult to judge individuals within their own congregations — or their own families.

Forced to acknowledge the reality of divorce close to home, pastors responded with compassion rather than condemnation; the words of Jesus were treated as an ideal rather than a mandate. Mega-churches provided support groups for divorcees and then, later, those groups functioned for many as the evangelical equivalent of singles clubs.

Although evangelical attitudes changed incrementally over many years, it's possible to identify the real turning point with a fair amount of accuracy: 1980.

Not long ago I surveyed the pages of *Christianity Today*, the flagship magazine of evangelicalism and a bellwether of evangelical sentiments. Condemnations of divorce, which had been a regular feature in the 1970s, ceased almost entirely after 1980.

More telling, the "family values" movement, which took off in 1980, largely ignored this once crucial subject. Jerry Falwell and other conservative preachers attacked abortion, feminism and homosexuality, but they rarely mentioned divorce.

What happened? In a word (or two words): Ronald Reagan. When leaders of the religious right decided to embrace Reagan as their political messiah, they had to swallow hard.

Not only was Reagan divorced, he was divorced and remarried, a clear violation of biblical teaching.

As governor of California, moreover, Reagan signed the nation's first no-fault divorce law in 1969. Having cast their lot with Reagan in the 1980 election, evangelical denunciations of divorce all but disappeared.

If evangelicals can alter their attitudes toward divorce, they can do likewise with homosexuality and same-sex marriage. Indeed, views may soften as LGBT evangelicals come out of the closet and, like divorcees, make their communities confront their existence.

Censure is much easier to pull off in the abstract than face to face. Time and again throughout his ministry, Jesus dealt with people one on one, and demonstrated the principle that love always trumps law, that acceptance is superior to condemnation. That is the radical — and transformative — power of the gospel.

If Graham, Mohler and other evangelical leaders want to articulate biblical principles relating to sexuality and marriage, they should probably focus on divorce; Jesus was much clearer on that issue than he was about homosexuality, about which he said nothing whatsoever.

If, however, they truly seek to follow the bible in the much broader sense of following Jesus, I invite them to exercise the Christian ethic of unstinting love. Should they require a proof text, allow me to suggest Matthew 7:1, from the Sermon on the Mount: "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

Randall Balmer, an Episcopal priest, is a professor of religion at Dartmouth College. His most recent book is "Redeemer: The Life of Jimmy Carter." He wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.