



*The Monthly Newsletter
of the First Friday
Breakfast Club, Inc.*

*COVER: Trump "Theology"
by Jonathan Wilson*

Inside This Month

*August's Speaker,
Shadley Grei
By Bruce Carr*

Briefs and Shorts

*The McCoy Report
by Sen. Matt McCoy*

*A Mere Speculation
by Jonathan Wilson*

*Gay Naturist Gatherings
by Gary Kaufman*

*Angry, Old and White
by Steve Person*

*Tribute to Jeffrey
Campbell by Jonathan
Wilson*

First Friday News & Views

September 2016

Volume 21

Issue 9

Trump "Theology"

By Jonathan Wilson

Evangelical self-described "Christians" are at the core of Donald Trump's support base. Perhaps the surest sign that Trump is in trouble is the fact that he and his advisors found it necessary to name an evangelical ideologue like Mike Pence as his running mate. He clearly didn't want to do that and after the choice had been made public, Trump was still making calls prior to the official announcement to see if the choice could be changed. The fact remained that he needed Pence to shore up his evangelical bona fides. That would have been the point in time to "pivot" to a general election mode and appeal to the undecided middle with a more moderate running mate. Didn't happen. Couldn't happen.

It's no wonder that Trump's support from evangelicals needed to be reinforced. Trump, for example, famously said that he'd never found it necessary to ask God's forgiveness for anything -- something anathema to his evangelical base. They never tire of berating themselves and others with Romans 3:23, that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and need forgiveness.

Beyond that, Trump said the Bible is the greatest of all books, but couldn't manage to say that without marketing his book **The Art of the Deal** as the second best book of all time. In August 2015, in an interview touting the Bible as his favorite book, he wouldn't or couldn't name a favorite verse, deflecting, "I wouldn't want to get into it, because to me, that's very personal." In what should have been an alarming dog whistle to die-hard evangelicals, in a speech at Liberty University, he mentioned a verse from "Two Corinthians" that his audience would universally call "Second Corinthians."

By the time of an interview on April 14, 2016, on WHAM-1180 radio in Rochester, New York, Trump's qualms about naming a favorite scripture had softened, and he named the beneficial influence of "an eye for an eye" as a guiding moral principle. Exodus 21: 23-25. But he didn't even believe in that civilizing principle of proportionality, as revealed in another interview that same month with Greta Van Susteren on Fox News Channel. In that interview Trump said, repeatedly, that if someone is perceived to have hit him, he will "hit them back harder." He's said the same on many other occasions, and his behavior has demonstrated that he really believes it, even to the extent of killing innocent members of terrorists' families as a means of defeating ISIS.

▼ The next FFBC Meeting is 7:00am, Friday, September 2, 2016, at Hoyt Sherman Place, 15th & Woodland, Des Moines, IA

▼ RSVP by August 30 to JonathanWilson@davisbrownlaw.com, or phone 515-288-2500

And that is where Trump's theology is betrayed. While Jesus, in the New Testament, specifically renounced the Old Testament admonition of "an eye for an eye," that admonition was at least a civilizing improvement over what went before. "An eye for an eye" calls for proportionality; calls for retribution commensurate with and never greater than the injury that has been sustained. Christians subscribe to the call the disproportionality of compassion and forgiveness. Trump's theology is, therefore, both pre-Christian and even pre-old Testament! Khir Khan, Muslim father of a fallen US soldier, said that "Trump lacks a moral compass." Not exactly true; Trump has a moral compass; it's just pointed in the wrong direction by his own admission and demonstrated behavior. His moral compass, such as it is, points to the uncivilized law of the jungle. It is, therefore, the height of paradox that the core of Trump's support lies with evangelical self-described "Christians," and it's no wonder that Trump was forced to choose Mike Pence as his running mate.

I think it's too late, however, for Trump to avoid another scriptural admonition with which he may not be familiar. Proverbs 16:18. Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

A Mere Speculation

By Jonathan Wilson

The fact that Trump has not yet spent *any* campaign money on advertising is not just unconventional; there may be method to his madness. Recall if you will that the vast majority of Trump's money used in the campaign has been loaned to the campaign. He's said he plans to forgive those loans, but there's been no indication that he has actually done so. He's said a bunch of things that are opposite from things he's said before. This could easily be another example.

At this point multiple things are happening when it comes to money and the Trump campaign. First, the campaign is renting the Trump plane and space in various Trump owned properties; both are legal and both are income to Trump and available for him to loan to the

Briefs & Shorts

Be sure to RSVP by August 31 for the September 2, 2016, meeting by calling 515-288-2500, or on line at: JonathanWilson@DavisBrownLaw.com. Our speaker on September 2 will be Jack Schuler-Cruz, a transgender male who teaches English at Lincoln High School.

Thanks to Joe Raetz for the introduction of our August speaker, Shadley Grei, film maker, author, and performance artist.

Thanks to Allen VanderLinden and Michael Thompson for hosting the party in July sponsored by PROS and FFBC.

Be sure to peruse the front table for a book you might like to read.

Book donations are always welcome.

Thanks to Scott Kuknyo for helping coordinate the book exchange.



Consider a tax deductible contribution to the FFBC scholarship fund, or a tax exempt testamentary gift, or both. Contact Jonathan Wilson for details.

Thanks to Brad Holland and Joe Raetz who have "seeded" an account at the Greater Des Moines Community Foundation with a \$10,000 gift to benefit FFBC. Consider joining them.

Also consider joining with 29 others in donating \$100 so that we can match the most recent scholarship fund contribution of David Hurd. If 30 of us contribute \$100 apiece, we can match his contribution and award a full scholarship next year in his memory. Send your \$100 check to Jonathan Wilson or bring it to the next meeting with Hurd mentioned in the MEMO line. We just need 4 more to meet that memorial challenge.



A Remarkable Life's Story

by Bruce Carr

Our guest speaker on Friday morning, August 5, 2016, was Shadley Grei (pronounced “gray”), an actor, director, producer, screenwriter, singer and songwriter who grew up weird in Des Moines. Ankeny to be specific – not a safe place to be weird – where he graduated from high school and fled, looking for a writer’s life on both coasts.

Shadley Grei was back home to present and publicize “Welcome to the Grei Area,” which features the one-man performance he premiered at the Hollywood Fringe last June, along with “The Father, the Son and the Holy Sh!t” – which chronicles Grei’s “strange journey” into and out of his own father’s life. Grei’s parents divorced about the time he was born, and Grei was pretty much ignored by his father until 2005. They did develop a relationship, but in 2012 “a single conversation closed the chapter of my life with my father in it.” “I fought my way into my father’s life and then took myself out of it,” he says.

Anyone who saw Grei’s Stoner Theater performance here will agree with his Hollywood reviewer: “Grei has pulled off an inspiring play that gives all of us kids who were ignored, bullied or hurt in any way, a big, fat understanding hug. You’re left with an unlikely sense of belonging, and a powerful belief in one of the truest statements of the play: ‘Fiction needs nuance, reality just wants to fuck with you.’”

Almost as an afterthought, Shadley Grei talked to us a bit also about the Film Biz – a mean ugly industry, he called it – and nevertheless made a pitch for a renewal of something like the Iowa tax-credit program which ended so badly in 2009. We’re just a lot nicer here, he said, and so many services – which can be provided here just as well as on the coast – are so much less expensive....

=====

Shadley Grei was born in 1971 and grew up in Ankeny. Here’s part of his current résumé: “Hey there. I’m a writer-producer-actor-singer-director-booze baker [He co-founded the Moonshine Bakehouse, which launched in 2008 with booze-themed cupcakes at the first 80/35 music festival] living in Hollywood, chasing the dream. I have several scripts in various stages of development for film, television and stage, as well as other works for music and publishing. I can comfortably write in just about any genre and for all budget types. My favorite genre is ensemble dramedy (*This Is Where I Leave You*, *Steel Magnolias*, *The Family Stone*). Grei now works for ABC Studios and can be reached at <www.shadleygrei.com>.

P o m d e r T h i s

What you think; you become. What you feel; you attract. What you imagine; you create.

For what it’s worth, it’s never too late to be whoever you want to be. I hope you live a life you’re proud of, and if you find that you’re not, I hope you have the strength to start over. F. Scott Fitzgerald

“Stewardesses” is the longest word typed with only the left hand. And “lollipop” is the longest word typed with your right hand. Two things that aren’t worth knowing.

Our eyes are always the same size from birth; but our nose and ears never stop growing.

If the population of China walked past you 8 abreast, the line would never end because of the rate of reproduction -- unless of course everyone was in line and walking.

God gives us coffee to change the things we can, and wine to accept the things we can’t.

Living on earth is expensive, but it does come with a free trip around the sun annually.

No matter what shape you’re in, if you want to feel good about yourself, go to the Iowa State Fair.



VIGILANCE NEEDED WITH PRIVATE MEDICAID

Senate Democrats are listening and remain committed to addressing the difficulties private Medicaid has created for patients, health care providers and caregivers. We tried to prevent these problems when a bipartisan Senate majority voted to stop the transition to private Medicaid ([SF 2125](#)), but the Republican-controlled House refused to consider the bill.

Instead, we continue to hear from Iowans struggling to cut through the Medicaid red tape. Legislative Democrats have held help sessions in communities across the state to ensure Iowans get the assistance and answers they need.

At these forums, Iowans with disabilities, caregivers, patient advocates and health care providers shared their frustrations with Governor Branstad's privatized Medicaid.

The forums prepared legislators for a recent meeting of the Senate Human Resources Committee, where the Iowa Department of Human Services and Managed Care Organizations were asked what they're doing to fix the ongoing Medicaid problems.

We must be vigilant about holding them accountable and insisting they do better by Iowa patients, health care providers and taxpayers. We will expect further updates and progress when the Health Policy Oversight Committee meets August 29 at the Statehouse.

Bipartisan Medicaid oversight legislation, approved as part of this year's Health & Human Services Budget ([HF 2460](#)), will help in the push for improvements. It sets standards for Medicaid services to ensure patients get the care they need, and calls for expanded reporting on consumer protections, health outcomes and program integrity.

You can follow our efforts, find out about upcoming meetings and subscribe to Medicaid updates at www.senate.iowa.gov/democrats/Medicaid.

Additional information

This is a legislative update from Senator Matt McCoy, representing the west part of Des Moines, portions of West Des Moines and northwest Warren County.

For newsletters, photos and further information, go to www.senate.iowa.gov/senator/mccoy or www.matt-mccoy.com. Follow Senator McCoy on Facebook at www.facebook.com/senatormccoy.

To contact Senator McCoy during the week, call the Senate Switchboard at 515-281-3371. Otherwise he can be reached at home at 515-274-0561. E-mail him at matt.mccoy@legis.iowa.gov.



Senator McCoy is an Assistant Senate Majority Leader, chair of the Transportation & Infrastructure Budget Subcommittee, and vice-chair of the Commerce Committee. He also serves on the Appropriations, State Government, Transportation and Ways & Means committees.

Tribute to Jeffrey Campbell

by Jonathan Wilson

In August, with the death of FFBC member Jeffrey Lenn Campbell at age 52, our community lost a dear friend. Incredibly, his demise was triggered by merely stubbing his toe -- well, actually, stubbing his toe twice in the course of a couple of days on the same leg of the same piece of furniture in his own home. He was living with that constant vulnerability because blood circulation to his extremities had been compromised by more than 14 years of dialysis. It seemed like the guy was always cold. No wonder.

Despite that vulnerability, he managed to live life to the fullest. He was actively entrepreneurial; he was active in our community and the larger community; he was a confidant and mentor to lots of closeted gay men on their journey out of the closet; he was accomplished in the performing arts; he was a fitness instructor; he was committed to his long-term relationship with his partner, Friedhelm Brinkhaus; and he was a tenacious competitor, whether in tennis or bridge.

Life is like a relay race, and we are called upon in the time that each of us has, to carry the baton received from a prior generation, carry it as best we can and, in the end, to surrender it to a new generation. Jeffrey Lenn Campbell fulfilled that calling.

A Mere Speculation, Continued from Page 2

campaign. Second, some small contributors have been sending money to the campaign and, collectively, that amounts to multiple millions of dollars. Third, any money left in the campaign coffers after a November loss in the presidential election can lawfully be used to repay loans Trump has made to the campaign, presumably with interest. If you think it's been difficult getting candidate Trump to make good on his charitable giving pledges, imagine getting him post-election to make good on promised loan forgiveness.

Politically Trump may be --is-- an apprentice, but what he is very good at is conning folks out of their money or stiffing them. That may not be what he's up to with his campaign, but it has become my operating assumption.

Gay Nativist Gatherings

by Gary Kaufman

With my retirement December 31st, I have taken advantage of there being no required work days to attend a number of gay nativist (nude) gatherings. They happen throughout the warm months all across the United States. One is clothing-optional; the others are strictly nude except during inclement weather or one of the many costume contests and happy hours (which usually have a theme). There is nude body painting, workshops, oil wrestling, with a happy hour each day. The best body painting is at MMNG (Midwest Men's Nativist Gathering); the best costumes for happy hours are at GNI (Gay Nativist International); the least expensive is Man-Camp (clothing optional at Camp NCN – reviewed last year); and the best slip-and-slide and dance music is at I-MEN (International Men Enjoying Nativism). I unfortunately was unable to attend C-MEN (California Men Enjoying Nativism) as registration was already closed, but I'll make it next year!

All of these gatherings are with meals included and sometimes they are exceedingly good. MMNG features a "Death By Chocolate" night that allows some of the local gourmet chefs to strut their stuff in all things chocolate.

If this type of vacation appeals to you, here is a convenient listing of the sites where you can learn more:

MMNG (mmng.org), I-MEN (Imen4allmen.org), C-MEN (Cmen.org), GNI (Cmen.org), and MAN-CAMP (MAN-CAMP). Gay Nativist Gatherings by Gary Kaufman

Real Headlines from Real Papers:

Despite the high cost of living, demand for it remains high.

Retirement: half the money and twice the spouse.

Man Struck By Lightning Faces Battery Charge

Bridge Held Up By Red Tape

Kids Make Nutritious Snacks



FFBC

*First Friday
News & Views*

Des Moines, Iowa

September, 2016

*First Friday
Breakfast Club*

In Service

Board of Directors

KENT DONALDSON	210-0466
RYAN CRANE	515-414-9860
KEN HANSON	233-0656
BRAD HOLLAND	707-3494
BYRON HUFF	371-6117
SCOTT KUKNYO	284-0880
RICK MILLER	274-5518
GARY MOORE	988-8490
TIM SCHRECK	422-6496
BRIAN TAYLOR CARLSON	971-2254
PHIL WILLIAMS	418-1937
JONATHAN WILSON	288-2500

Officers

KENT DONALDSON, TREASURER
BYRON HUFF, VICE PRESIDENT
JONATHAN WILSON, SECRETARY & PRESIDENT

Newsletter

BRUCE SANDERS LEHNERTZ,
PRODUCTION EDITOR
ARTHUR BRUER, WEBMASTER

WEBSITE: WWW.FFBCIOWA.ORG

PUBLISHER, FFBC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
©2016 FIRST FRIDAY BREAKFAST CLUB, INC

ANGRY, OLD, AND WHITE

By Steve Person

I am an angry old white guy. According to the talking heads of CNN, MSNBC, FNN (that's Fox NOT News), and other news outlets, I am in the demographic that is most supportive of Donald Trump. For the first time in sixteen years, a presidential candidate has come along that I can finally vote FOR with enthusiasm. The last time that happened was the election of 2000. In 2004, 2008, and 2012, I simply gifted my votes to people who were not as awful as those running on the other side; candidates who were, I suppose, OK, but hardly what I considered to be of what it takes to be President of the United States of America. The person I support with no reservations whatsoever is Hillary Clinton.

It makes me angry that the pundits emphasize that Hillary is perceived as dishonest, a liar, and untrustworthy. If you've sat across the table from her as I did in 2007 at a meeting for those of us who held house parties to encourage caucus participation, you would see what an experienced, skillful, honest, and humorous person she is. Her negative persona is one perpetrated by right-wing talk radio show hosts like Rush Limbaugh and glib television personalities such as Bill O'Reilly. It angers me even further that whenever Donald Trump opens his mouth, he spews lies, innuendos, name-calling, and threats, and the various news media let him get away with it by calling his speech hyperbole, jokes, or sarcasm. Such reporting is, I believe, biased and sexist in a profession dominated by men. The only national reporter I have seen who called Trump out for making threats against his opponent was CNN's Don Lemon. The news profession could use more like him. Where is Edward R. Murrow when we need him?

It makes me angry when a person such as Donald Trump throws around words such as "rigged," "crooked," and "cheating" when he finds he is not getting his way. It makes me even angrier that no one has insisted that this man be forced to undergo a psychiatric evaluation. He is nothing more than a seventy-year-old man with the emotional growth of a ten-year-old—if that. He needs an intervention.

It makes me angry when the governor of this state compares Donald Trump to Harry Truman! Not only does that show Branstad's lack of knowledge of history but also his uncritical support for a candidate who is racist, sexist, and unqualified. Harry Truman was certainly plain spoken, but he also was a politician of honesty and integrity. To compare Donald Trump to him is nothing short of stupidity! It slanders Harry Truman. It never ceases to amaze me that the people of Iowa continue to support a governor who is, at best, mediocre.

It makes me angry to be considered to be in the same category as the Duck Dynasty crowd. It saddens me to see these unsuspecting dupes support a candidate who has never done anything for them and exists only to enhance his own skewed self-image and pocketbook.

It makes me happy to see someone like Elizabeth Warren call Trump out for what he is: a thin-skinned bully. She makes my anger palatable.