

DRAWN & QUARTERED



THE PUBLIC FORUM

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Let's not be afraid of words

In The Tribune's recent article about Jordan District removing an article by a student opinion writer for the New York Times, Sen. Dan McCaig calls for an investigation. His logic? "This essay can't fit into the state-approved curriculum because it is about being trans. I'd ask Sen. McCaig to consider that he is, perhaps, not versed in all the academy standards."

The secondary English Language Arts (ELA) standards ask students across reading, writing, speaking, and listening, to engage with texts in an evaluative way. For instance, Standard 9-10.R.19 asks sophomores to "analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structures an author uses in an exposition, argument, or narrative, including whether the structure makes points or events clear, effective, convincing, or engaging."

A student at Hamden High may have, for instance, found the editorial writer to make unconvincing points, and they may have found their writing persuasive. Juniors and seniors may have later employed similar writing standards about subjects of their own choice, writing arguments to support claims in an analysis of complex topics or texts, using logical reasoning and relevant, sufficient evidence, and provide a conclusion that follows from and supports the argument presented.

The essay in the New York Times not only applied to an ELA standard, it applied to many of them. Let's not be afraid of words or teaching students how to evaluate arguments.

Ashley Anderson
Salt Lake City

At the edge of a cliff

For anyone looking forward to living in a country where a dictator calls the shots, silence is their opposition, which includes any news reported or jokes made not favorable to the one destined to rule us. I've got great news!

There are several countries you could relocate to, where all that and more is already set up for your liking, with nothing needed to be overthrown, a veritable serf's paradise.

Please go there, no America can stay what it has always been, in varying degrees. Free. For any on the fence, wondering really, whom to choose. I offer this analogy: stand at the edge of a cliff, then, if you dare, take a step forward, heaven forbid. Getting our democracy back will be as easy as getting to you were before that awful, painful, past.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. You never know what you have until it is irretrievably lost. Vote to keep our democracy! All other issues are smoke screens.

Dan Mylocaire
Salt Lake City

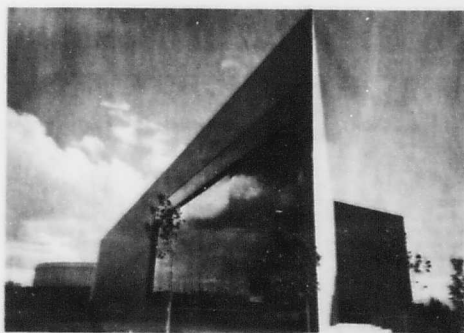
To appear in the Opinion section

The Salt Lake Tribune encourages readers to submit their own commentaries for publication. These essays should address timely topics of general interest and should not exceed 800 words.

Authors should include a recent photograph and a sentence or two of biographical information that includes any experience or expertise in the subject matter addressed. They may be sent to Sara Weber, Voices editor, at sweber@sltrib.com.

Sending text in the body of an email is preferred, as attachments do not always arrive in a usable form. We accept one commentary per person in any 45-day period.

Submissions may also be mailed to: The Salt Lake Tribune, Editorial Dept., 90 South 400 West, Suite 600, Salt Lake City, Utah 84101.



Abraham Hall in 1979.

Like Carnegie Hall, Abraham Hall has adept supporters

When Carnegie Hall was threatened with demolition in the 1960s, the eminent violinist and humanitarian Isaac Stern — like the anonymous Chinese man who defied the tanks in Tiananmen Square, armed only with a bidcase — confronted the developers and politicians. Carnegie Hall was saved.

Though there is no single person of Stern's stature in Utah to stand up for Abraham Hall, there are hundreds of dedicated musicians, thousands of passionate music lovers, and their friends and their families, all of

whom any voters who demand that one of the world's greatest modern concert halls be preserved. Those public officials — mayors, legislators, governors — who are mesmerized by the almighty dollar and support the destruction of Abraham Hall will see their chances of being returned to office in the next election greatly diminished.

Gerald Elias
Former associate concertmaster,
Utah Symphony
Seattle, Washington

Utah GOP convention delegates really outdid themselves

I'm not sure what "qualifications" one needed to be a nominating delegate at the recent Utah Republican Convention, but being full MAGA looks to be pretty high on the list. I'm not enthralled by any of the Republicans running for office, since they all rely on the tired and lazy mantra of "protecting Utah values," but the convention delegates outdid themselves by nominating the worst and least qualified (but most MAGA) candidates.

Let's review their choices: For the U.S. Senate, they took Trent Stages. Stages has all the experience of being the mayor of Utah's 21st largest "city." From that lofty position, he and his supporters deem him qualified to become a U.S. senator. While I don't lose Stages' presumed opponent, John Curtis has been the mayor of Riverton and Curtis has also been the mayor of an actual city. Curtis espouses the predictable platform of being pro-gun, anti-Biden and anti-immigrant, but, hey, Stages was endorsed by Donald Trump and a whole rogues gallery of failed election deniers. MAGA!

For the U.S. House of Representatives, the convention delegates followed the lead of "constitutional scholar" Mike Lee and rejected current Rep. Cole Stealy. What caused Malloy to fall from Lee's grace? Malloy had the audacity to listen to the U.S. intelligence community

rather than some criminal defendant tweeting in all caps, when she recently voted to reauthorize FISA. Lee, of course, listened to the twerfer. He and the delegates don't seem to have much use for intelligence. MAGA!

And finally, there was the delegates' worst nomination. They went Phil Lyman to represent current Utah Gov. Spencer Cox. In his speech to the delegates, Cox noted he had "stopped DEI, ESG and CRT." Cox also stated his support for abortion bans and constitutional (gun) carry. Sorry, Spencer, your occasional support of marginalized groups showed you're weak and not truly MAGA. The delegates would prefer a guy whose claim to fame was previously channeling his inner Cliven Bundy when he organized an unlawful ATV ride through an area containing ancient Pueblo peoples' burial sites, dwellings and artifacts. Lyman's criminal conviction was, of course, rescinded by his fellow "patriot warrior," then-President Donald Trump. MAGA!

Any of these three candidates preferred by the Republican delegates could give Utah's third-year governor Marjorie Taylor Greene. Personally, I would rather elect people interested in actual governing, as opposed to bombastic posturing. In Utah, though, I'm probably in the minority. MAGA!

Rob Greene
Salt Lake City

Invoking antisemitism

It is important we understand the words we use. "Antisemitism" is nonspecific because Arabs are Semites, too. Yet, since the Holocaust we have primarily equated this term with anti-Jewish oppression.

Israel supporters invoke the term to decry resistance to their ever-expanding borders. But I, a white Jewish person, have certainly never been singled out and oppressed for my Semite blood because my white privilege has a lot more cultural power. So to me, antisemitism is a moot point.

I have seen the word used to taint any sort of justified resistance as "unacceptable" because since WWII we can all agree that "antisemitism is evil," even if what we are talking about is "Semite on Semite violence." Similar to the term "terrorism," without needing to understand any sort of context (like the classic, "It's complicated"), we invoke these terms to dehumanize a desperate group of people and justify their annihilation.

Words are powerful, and the Americans that frame this as the Israel-Hamas war are equating a super military power with a small group of militants that do not represent an entire displaced people. Even talking about the Israel-Gaza war erases the rest of Palestine from the picture, taking for granted all of the dispossession that had taken place before Hamas was even created.

It's too easy for the U.S. and Israel to just shout "antisemitic terrorists" and bomb Palestine into submission like they have done so many times already and in so many other regions as well. We need to ask ourselves, does this violence serve? Because from where I'm standing, this is not at all about the oppression our grandmothers faced in WWII, it's about innocent people being forcibly displaced today.

Jake Trimble
Salt Lake City

Democracy's signature bill

It is clear to me that the future of democracy in Utah relies on the preservation of SB4 and the use of signature gathering for candidates to secure a spot on election ballots.

Attending the Utah Republican Convention as a first-time state delegate was an eye-opening experience. The atmosphere was filled with negativity and hostility, with candidates resorting to fear-mongering and baseless attacks rather than offering constructive solutions for the betterment of our state. It was heartening to see moderate candidates being voted down by those seeking to emulate divisive figures like Donald Trump.

It is essential for moderate voices to be heard and represented in our political system. This can only happen if more moderate voters actively participate in the caucus process, become delegates, and help shape the conventions to accurately reflect the diverse range of Republican thought in Utah.

Suzanne Dailey
Salt Lake City

Democracy vs. republic

When I started school in 1940, we started each day with the Pledge of Allegiance, which contains the lines "And to the republic for which it stands." When I took history and civics classes in high school, the teachers went to great lengths to explain our form of government and how it differs from pure democracy. In the meantime, let's just say Pat Bagley is full of bull.

Robert Edwards
West Jordan

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