

Editorial/opinion

Fiegelman says...Scopes Trial still relevant

BY RICH FIEGELMAN
Special to The Post

One of the most heinous examples of prejudicial behavior in United States history occurred in Tennessee approximately 60 years ago. Originally known as the State of Tennessee vs. Scopes, it has been earmarked through time as the Scopes Monkey Trial. Tennessee, with William Jennings Bryan prosecuting, based its premise on the assumption that Scopes, a high school science teacher, was poisoning young minds with teachings contrary to the Biblical Creation Theory. In fact, Scopes was teaching Darwinian Evolutionary Theory, which does not necessarily contradict the teachings of the Old Testament. Clarence Darrow, one of the most brilliant legal minds of the time, conducted a limited, often caustic defense, which in Tennessee at that time was doomed from the start.

NBC broadcast a remake of the original "INHERIT THE WIND" on March 20th. Originally starring Spencer Tracy and Frederick March, the current film starred Kirk Douglas as the frenzied Bryan, and Jason Robards as the whimsical Darrow. This film recalls all of the agonies of the first.

In a battle of zealot vs. liberal thinker, Bryan and Darrow parried and danced in the light of legality, while the shadows of narrow-mindedness crept in the corners of the courtroom. Bryan rallied the simple folk as

Hitler once stirred his constituents, by appealing to their fear of the unknown. Darrow, his defense doomed, attempted to call several scientists to the stand, each time rejected by a judge cowering before Bryan's browbeating. Despite so-called inalienable rights; bigots, charlatans and doomsayers need only the catalyst of complacency to spread their evil ire. Bryan had both complacency and fanaticism on his side. Townspeople rallied outside the court, like at some corrupt carnival, with "Down with Darwin" signs. I doubt if one of them had read this book. America has always been a bandwagon culture. The outer morality of "right-thinkers" is often a front of deficiency; freedom of speech and though a myth.

The saddest part of this fast farce is that one wonders how much America has changed since. We are still inundated with paranoia by our leaders hoping that fear will keep us in check. We have virtually strangled our space program with mismanagement and greed. In a time when this country and the world needs the logic and wonder of science desperately, many people still shroud themselves in the mists of superstition. Scopes and Darrow, both ahead of their time, realized this and spoke out.

Why is it so difficult to believe that Man once came down from the trees and gazed at the stars in awe? Is it such a dishonor to have evolved through the noble corridors of

and superstitions? If nothing else the Constitution guarantees this. Chaos will prevail should the inhibited have their way. The simple fact is that none of us were present at the dawn of time, therefore no one has the right to legislate belief.

The Scopes trial illustrates the ills of complacency toward education. From Darwin; Einstein, Galileo and Copernicus could follow to the fires of the fearful, and Man would slowly return to the slimes from which he emerged. He would return to his feral beginnings, facing eternal twilight.

Beware of those who line up at the book banning window. If you are opposed to a piece of literature, simply don't read it. How dare those who would legislate morality, then spend time in motel rooms with hookers, andrape the unfortunate of their hard-earned dollars. They are the true retardants of progress. The beauty of Man-kind is his diversity of ideas. At the conclusion of the Scopes Monkey Trial, he was found guilty of teaching ideas contrary to Divine Creation. He did not oppose the idea, he opposed the law. Scopes was fined \$100.00. He then turned to Darrow wondering if he had won or lost. Darrow replied, "You don't suppose something like this is ever over, but at least you gave people the guts to stand up." The Bible states, "He that troubleth in his own house shall inherit the wind." For some of us that wind is a breath of fresh air. See you next week...

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Off the top

BY DEBBY HIGGINS
Post Editor

There are few things in this life that money can't buy. Our very existence is sometimes based on money, alone. We can't live without it, and it's often hard to live in spite of having it.

There is one thing, however; one simple pleasure that money cannot buy. And rich, poor, or middle class, this thing exists for any who choose to take advantage of it.

This thing is the reciprocal love between a pet and its family. There is no rhyme or reason to it, it just exists for the sheer meaning of its being.

Everyone, (including most in the scientific community) knows animals are inferior to humans, therefore they cannot show affection, i.e. love. Love is an emotion indicative of higher intelligence. Animals are stupid therefore they are incapable of loving.

Hogwash, nonsense and don't believe a word of it. Anyone who takes a pet into their hearts and homes can testify that an animal is as capable of returning affection - as well as or sometimes better than - some humans. An animal's love for its owner is given - no strings attached.

This week's "The Post asks:" highlights six pet owners and their pets. These six are but a small sampling of millions of people who cannot be convinced that animals do not return affection; scientific theory notwithstanding.

Take the little girl and her 26 year-old, partially blind pony, "Corky". Our little interviewee said "Corky" was her best friend. The 12 year-old who said her parakeer is a good friend to talk to when she's alone, is establishing a bond with an animal that will stay in her memory until she's a grandmother.

On a national level, the value of pets in the lives of lonely senior citizens is evident in the success rate of the wonderful, Therapy Dogs visitation program.

Clinical studies prove adults who own and care for a pet while recovering from an illness, in many cases, help the person to recover faster. What a valuable, rehabilitative tool.

The benefits to our quality of life gained through loving our animals, need not be mentioned to those who truly love their pets.

But what's almost as important, is the need for our children to learn love and respect for other living things.

Why were the cops after Andy Rooney?

BY ANDY ROONEY
Special to The Post

The other night I set out to drive from New York City, to our little town in Connecticut, 40 miles away. It normally takes me an hour and 10 minutes. That's 35 minutes for eight miles of traffic in the city and another 35 for the rest of the trip.

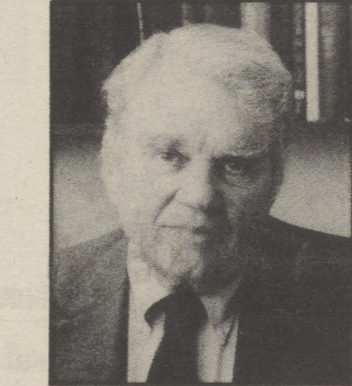
This was not a normal night. The rain was coming down in drops that were heavy as they hit the windshield because they had turned to slush. New York traffic, always terrible, gets worse in bad weather.

After half an hour of stop-and-go traffic on the main road leading to the bridge, I decided on a detour.

As I was stopped for a light, I pulled out of the line of bumper-to-bumper traffic into the lane for oncoming traffic. There were no cars oncoming because the light was red. As the light turned, I made a quick left in front of them. I had the feeling I'd made a good move because the street ahead of me was clear.

The good feeling didn't last long. First I heard the sickening, abbreviated siren bursts that New York police use as their "pull over" signal.

I knew what I'd done was



ROONEY

illegal. It wasn't dangerous, it didn't inconvenience anyone and it made sense but it was clearly illegal.

The area I was in, the heart of Harlem, is not one of the garden spots of America. Police cars are wary of everyone and don't like to approach the driver of a car on foot because they never know who's going to have a gun.

The rain was heavier than ever and because cops get wet, too, I quickly decided that the best thing to do was jump out of my car with my hands clearly empty and walk to the patrol car.

"Gee," I said, learning over to look in the open window, and trying to sound friendly and folksy, "that didn't seem like a very bad thing for me to do."

"Lemme see your papers," the cop said, with no suggestion at all in the tone of his voice that he appreciated the fact I was saving him from getting wet.

The cops did their paperwork and were perfectly businesslike and polite. I drove the rest of the way home wet, disgusted with myself and half an hour late for dinner.

This morning I was reading the newspaper.

There had been a murder in New York. There's nothing unusual about that; there are 1,500 a year.

The unusual thing was that the victim was a 22-year-old rookie policeman who had been shot at 3:30 a.m. as he sat in his patrol car guarding the home of a man who had volunteered to testify against drug dealers in his neighborhood.

Four men had been arrested in the killing. Three of them, Scott Cobb, Todd Scott and David Clary, were thought by police to have actually been in the car that drove up behind the squad car. Todd Scott and Clary got out of their car and one pulled the trigger of the .38 that sent three bullets into the policeman's head and ended his young life.

Scott Cobb was paroled in 1981 after a year in prison for robbery and assault. He has been arrested and convicted several times since then.

Todd Scott was sentenced to four months in prison and five years probation for selling cocaine in 1986.

In October, this year, he was arrested for possessing stolen credit cards. He was released and ordered to appear in court in November but never showed up and a warrant was issued for his arrest.

On Dec. 18 he was arrested for possession of narcotics and was released on \$250 bail and told to come back Dec. 24. Lots of luck.

On Dec. 20 an arrest warrant was issued for Todd Scott in Connecticut in connection with the murder of Michelle Garland. Naturally, he never showed up for the Dec. 24 appointment.

My questions are these: Would those two cops have stopped me for making the illegal left turn in the rain have been better spending their time looking for Todd Scott? And, if they had found him, would he have been out on bail the night the young cop was murdered anyway?

The Post asks: "What do you like best about your pet?"



CARRIE MARTIN

Carrie Martin, 4
Idetown
"Corky"
"Because he's my friend. He gives me kisses with his nose and he likes to munch on my hair. I love him."



AMY TATTERSALL

Amy Tattersall, 16
Harveys Lake
"Baby"
"She's my companion, I take her every place I go, except to work."



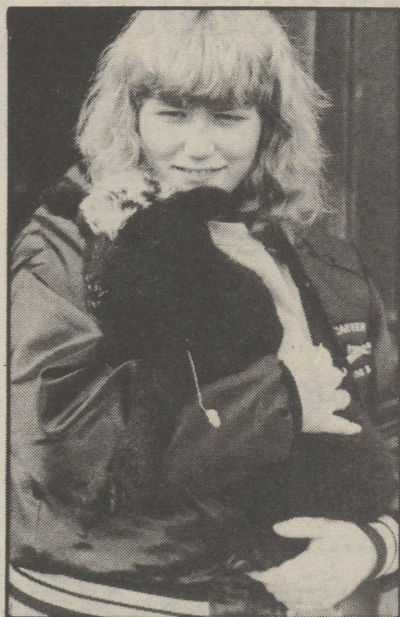
IAN TATTERSALL

Ian Tattersall, 18
Harveys Lake
"Puff"
"She's cute, she loves to bite my toes when I'm playing my guitar."



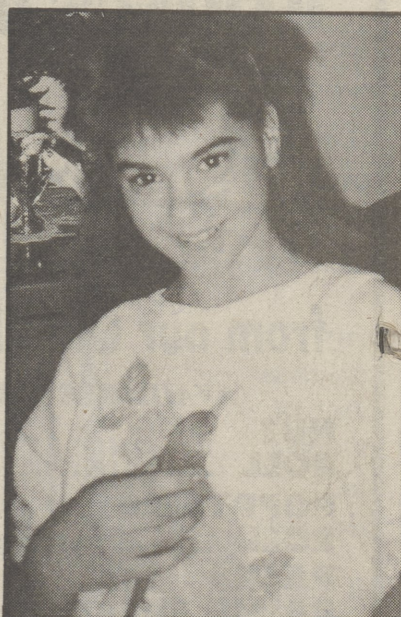
TANYA MARTIN

Tanya Martin, 14
Harveys Lake
"Cleopatra"
"Because she's such a good companion, she's so big, I used to ride her. She's so gentle and friendly and loves children. And my Dad wouldn't know what to do without her."



MYRTLE CHAMBERLAIN

Myrtle Chamberlain, 19
Lehman
"Licorice"
"Sheep are real gentle and not mean, they won't turn on you. They're a one person animal. She was my first black lamb so I think she's my favorite, and she was a surprise, her daddy broke into the mamma's pen and the rest is history."



DONNAMICHELE PHILLIPS

DonnaMichele Phillips, 12
Kingston
"Show-off"
"Because he's blue and he listens to me. He's someone to talk to when I'm alone."