



Readers Write: Cypto mining, H.L. Mencken, abortion, immigration, Indian boarding schools, 'Dilbert'

October 8, 2022

Is noise the biggest issue at the crypto mining site in Glencoe, Minn.? ("Crypto is a headache next door." Oct. 2.) A potentially greater concern appears to be crypto mining's use of energy. From the article: "A new crypto mining operation in Jamestown, N.D., a city of about 16,000 residents, will use twice as much energy as the entire city." Further: Cities and power companies throughout the Upper Midwest "are hoping to cash in on crypto mining," and "for a power utility, a crypto mine can be a gold mine."

Why is there a rush to support a fledgling industry whose contribution to the world is as yet unclear, and meanwhile it drastically increases the production and use of electricity? I saw no mention of renewable sources that will support production of this energy. The science is clear: Our climate crisis, with rapidly increasing temperatures, is fueled, in part by the increased use of energy, most of it generated by fossil fuels.

In the face of the climate crisis, my neighbors and I have been exploring options to reduce our global footprint and the emissions produced from the electricity and other energy we consume. Can someone explain how crypto mining, with its massive increase in production and use of electricity, is a good thing? Could it be a moneymaking scheme to benefit a few at the expense of many?

Susan Sisola, Minneapolis

CHALBERG ON MENCKEN

Let's take this further

John C. "Chuck" Chalberg's screed on public education ("A voice from the past on education and its failings." Opinion Exchange, Oct. 2) might have been better served with a few more quotes from his resident expert, H.L. Mencken, who tersely explained why he chose to write: "I write in order to attain that feeling of tension relieved and function achieved, which a cow enjoys on giving milk."

Considering the merits of the arguments presented, he might have added this gem, "American journalism (like the journalism of any other country) is predominantly paltry and worthless. Its

pretensions are enormous, but its achievements are insignificant." As to why Chalberg chose the newspaper as his medium, Mencken might have remarked, "A newspaper is a device for making the ignorant more ignorant and the crazy crazier."

The fact is that Mencken's scathing wit was meant to titillate, entertain and infuriate — not to convince or persuade.

Al Cleland, Mounds View

ABORTION

The prevailing right

There were two points in the [Oct. 2 letter](#) about abortion that I take exception to.

The first is that a baby's viability outside the womb is a proper standard for determining when a baby's life should be protected. By the laws of nature, the mother's womb is the natural habitat of a fetus, and it isn't any more reasonable to expect the fetus to live outside the womb than to expect any other creature to live outside its habitat.

The second point is that we Christians are imposing our views on people who don't believe as we do. Our country engaged in a civil war because a vast number of people believed it was OK to own slaves. Furthermore, the abolitionists were considered extremists prior to the Civil War.

Our forefathers, in justifying their revolution in the Declaration of Independence, asserted three natural rights: the right to life, the right to liberty and the right to the pursuit of happiness. The abolitionists sought to ensure the right to liberty for the people held as slaves. What we are in conflict about today is the right to life, without which all other rights are meaningless.

What the "pro-choice" position leads to is to concede to every woman the arbitrary power of life and death over another human being. I don't believe that those who take this position have seriously considered their claim.

George Stauner, Minneapolis

IMMIGRATION

The facts about fentanyl

An Oct. 2 letter writer repeats the claim being made by Republicans that the drug fentanyl "is mostly smuggled into the United States along our border with Mexico." This claim is deceptive because it is often used to equate the smuggling of fentanyl with asylum seekers and other immigrants coming over the southern border. It thus associates immigrants, especially those not crossing at regular border checkpoints, with drug addiction.

The conservative Cato Institute released a [study](#) on Sept. 14 that shows this claim to be false (tinyurl.com/cato-fentanyl). Three conclusions from the study:

- "In 2021, U.S. citizens were 86.3 percent of convicted fentanyl drug traffickers—ten times greater than convictions of illegal immigrants for the same offense."

- "Over 90 percent of fentanyl seizures occur at legal crossings points or interior vehicle checkpoints, not on illegal migration routes, so U.S. citizens (who are subject to less scrutiny) when crossing legally are the best smugglers."
- "Just 0.02 percent of the people arrested by Border Patrol for crossing illegally possessed any fentanyl whatsoever."

Anyone making the false claim that southern border immigrants are responsible for fentanyl addiction in the U.S. needs to be called out.

William Beeman, San Jose

'UNMARKED MASS GRAVE'

Conclusions when confirmed

The Oct. 2 Curious Minnesota [article](#) on Indian boarding schools referred to the "discovery of an unmarked mass grave of child students" at a boarding school in Kamloops, British Columbia. There have been no bodies found at the Kamloops site. The story of the presence of a mass grave was based on the results of ground-penetrating radar that would be consistent with the presence of graves but also would be consistent with natural anomalies under the soil. There has been no excavation at Kamloops and no physical evidence of graves.

Mark Jarboe, Minneapolis

'DILBERT' COMIC STRIP

Time's up

It's time to drop Scott Adams' "Dilbert" comic strip from the Sunday lineup. While his barbs about corporate America get mixed reviews, with many seeing them as an apt parody, he is increasingly embedding his offensive racist, sexist and transphobic views front and center — for example, in the [Oct. 2 strip](#). This strip portrays the idea of reparations as being a remedy for being "raised poorly by parents." As background, Adams is well-known to have complained that the awful TV show based on his comic strip was canceled [because](#) he "is a white man."

Adams is also documented to be a sexist and transphobic jerk. He famously wrote that a speech at the Democratic National Convention was causing testosterone levels to drop nationwide. I don't want to dirty my keyboard by repeating more of his garbage spews.

Editors, Adams is daring you to cancel him. He doesn't think there should be consequences for his words, and he thinks he is being coy by having his cartoon characters be the voice-pieces for his offensive views. We aren't fooled.

Erica Klein, Richfield