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## A Knuckleheaded Dad's Vow To Do Better



Bart Adams  
 Editor & Publisher

Few 13-year-old boys have toddlers who call them Da Da. But that's what my youngest son, Hayden, 2, calls his big brother (I'm Daddy).

And Kevin, to his credit, wasn't the least bit bothered yesterday when his friends and counselors at Falcon Youth Camp heard the toddler excitedly call for his Da Da on the camp's last day.

Also to his credit, Kevin is a great help with Hayden. I gained a new appreciation for Kevin's helpfulness last week as my wife, Regina, and daughter, Anna Barbara, had just left for Sweden as part of violin teacher Pam Kelly's delegation to that country (Anna Barbara turned 16 on the trip).

So it was just us three guys. Kevin would pick out his brother's clothes and perform other chores that made my 12-day venture as primary caregiver easier for both me and Hayden.

OK, I was blowing smoke on that "primary caregiver" business. Credit for that role goes to our friend Dana Harris who kept the boys during the weekdays. She even gave Hayden his baths.

All I had to do was feed Hayden and change a few diapers. Not a bad gig considering all the extra time I enjoyed with my sons. (While Kevin was at camp all the attention went to the little one.)

If Regina had been home I would have stayed at work later, watched more TV and read fewer children's books. How stupid that would have been.

The great opportunity here, of course, is to keep enjoying my family more even after the girls return home tomorrow; Especially after the girls are home.

Too many of us knuckleheaded guys like to talk about how great our families are, but we fail to back it up by giving them what they want most from us, our time.

OK gang, I promise to do better. And when I don't, you're free to use my words against me.

...

The president of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, or PETA, has said that not even a cure for AIDS could justify the use of animals in research.

So I have no respect for this organization, which is clearly comprised of confused souls who don't understand that human beings have more worth



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## Editorial

Editorials

Record Forum

Sound Off

## Going On Record: A Blog

## Columnists

Bart Adams

Eric Benson

Notes From Coats

John Hood

Lora Kempka

Eva Minter

Scott Mooneyham

Paul O'Conner

Larry Parker: The Old

Master

Greg Phillips

John Prince

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than beasts.

But in the spirit of 18th-century French philosopher Voltaire (who is widely credited with saying, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."), I must now come to PETA's defense.

The Oviedo, Fla., campus of Seminole Community College has forbidden one of its students, Eliana Campos, to distribute PETA literature protesting slaughterhouse brutality.

Ms. Campos wanted to distribute the literature at a table in the public area of the campus café.

Granted, no one in a cafeteria ever wants to read about slaughterhouses. But other campus groups were allowed to set up tables in the same spot.

Even worse, a school administrator told Ms. Campos that she couldn't pass out the literature because PETA "instill[ed] a feeling" in her that she did not like.

It's easy to understand unpleasant feelings about PETA. This is the group that urged its members to "Help Chickens in China," but said nothing about the baby girls starving in Chinese orphanages.

Still, as outrageous and discredited as PETA may be, its sympathizers still deserve the same free-speech protections as every other American.

Sadly, colleges and universities are often among the worst of U.S. institutions in terms of protecting speech. But conservatives are usually the outcasts.

Professors who disagree with liberal campus orthodoxy know to keep their thoughts to themselves if they ever hope to get tenure. And conservative students know their views can jeopardize their grades in certain classes.

Viewpoint discrimination on college campuses is so frequent that examples could fill this column every week. And the target is almost always a conservative.

So it's worth noting when a PETA supporter suffers the same fate.

And a primary watchdog that defends campus freedoms — the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) — is to be commended for coming to the Florida student's defense.

When Ms. Campos complained that she was not being treated fairly, campus administrators referred her to a policy that would restrict her protest to a "free speech zone."

First of all, the existence of a "free speech zone" proves that the campus doesn't respect free expression anywhere else.

Secondly, as FIRE president David French said in a news release, "Public colleges cannot apply different standards to different students based on the content of their message."

Mr. French's group has twice written to Seminole Community College on Ms. Campos' behalf. "SCC's copy of the Bill of Rights must only include the last nine amendments," he wrote.

But only after FIRE made the case public Wednesday did the college finally relent and allow Ms. Campos to distribute her literature as she desired.

In a perfect world a group like FIRE wouldn't be needed. But as long as there are campuses where one's free-speech rights depend on a speaker's message, there will be plenty to keep Mr. French and his colleagues busy for years to come.



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- The government should be allowed to take any property it likes.
- I agree with it, as long as it creates jobs.
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