

Doesn't the Navy have any ships to paint anymore?

Who ever thought Navy Gray or Deck Gray would become the color of choice for public buildings in Cheyenne, Wyoming?

I haven't seen so much gray since my days aboard the USS Jamestown.

Decks and bulkheads and hulls and bridges -- even fire training buildings -- there were no alternatives. One was a light gray and the other a dark gray. The deck force was always painting something or other with one of the two colors.

Dirty? Splash some gray paint on it.

Chipped? Splash some gray paint on it.

Barnacles at the waterline? Splash ...

Just like the gob hats, bell bottom trousers, 13 buttons on dress trousers, jumpers, pea coats, neckerchiefs and sea bags, gray paint is standard issue for a sailor. "If it moves, salute it. If it doesn't, paint it."

But has gray, deck or Navy, become a fashion statement now in Cheyenne? Both the new library on Pioneer and the new Sunrise elementary school in Sun Valley have been liberally splashed with a color formerly reserved to the Navy.

Gray is synonymous with boring. Is that the message we want to send to studious types who patronize the library and school age children who will attend the new elementary school at the end of 13th St.?

Only Michael Vick chose black paint and he was doing that to hide the building used to conduct illegal dog fights.

It's just incredible that two different buildings chose gray as its primary color. Will this new elementary school establish the template to be used throughout Wyoming for all the new schools being paid for with State money?

And what the hell are those mobile home apparatuses on the top of the Sunrise school? If they make a noise corresponding to the one on the new library, the Air Guard will be complaining the noise is drowning out their C130's.

As if the design of the new library building was not ordinary enough, choosing to use so much gray paint on it just amplifies the ordinariness of the structure.

Visitors to Cheyenne will be parking along Pioneer to shoot photos of the library. Not as a remembrance but as proof to their friends at home that there actually is a new building deliberately designed and constructed to look so bad. Tens of millions of dollars were spent to create a building that will be the butt of jokes for generations to come.

Arguments will erupt about what that building houses. "No, it cannot be a library. It must be something agricultural. It has silos - libraries don't have silos."

"Maybe it's something military. Cheyenne has an Air Force base. I'll bet that's what it is. To trick the Russians, they've brought missiles into the downtown." Of course, Pioneer and 22nd is not downtown.

Will the new St. Mary's follow suit? Will the Catholics opt for one of the Navy gray colors? Why not? The colors are not provocative. No one can ever accuse the builder of making the building "too loud." Gray is a whisper kind of color.

Maybe the State can paint the remodeled Supreme Court building gray. Or the Capitol itself. That would get the folks from Iowa to stop for pictures in front of the majestic old building - paint the bricks gray. Or, better yet, the dome.

There's nothing wrong with gray. After awhile, it grows on you to the point you don't notice its grayness. After a few months pitching around on the Jamestown, I didn't notice what color the deck I was trying to remain upright on even was. You become a little more concerned whether the retrofitted Liberty Hull could stay seaworthy during day after day of heavy seas in the Indian Ocean.

Maybe the dedication of these two buildings - or at least one of them - could invite sailors from the USS Cheyenne (SSN 688) nuclear attack submarine or the USS Wyoming (SSBN 742) fleet ballistic missile submarine here to give the buildings the proper recognition.

From the mouth of (a) babe

It was reported elsewhere that a New Hampshire woman asked leading Republican candidate for President, Rudy Giuliani, who has more problems in his personal life than Ted Haggard, how he could "expect the American people to give him loyal fellowship if he was having a hard time getting it from his own family."

She wasn't referring to Giuliani's third wife, Judith Nathan, but rather his two children from his second wife, Donna Hanover. His son, a student at Duke, is remembered for his antics at a Giuliani press conference as a young boy. His daughter, who will enter Harvard this fall, took her mother's surname and has publicly supported Barack Obama for president.

Giuliani's response to the questioner in New Hampshire was to basically tell her, perhaps threaten her might be more accurate, "leave my family alone, just like I'll leave your family alone."

As a former prosecutor, he may still have the contacts to do a background check on the woman with a hyphenated last name(s). And, while New York mayor, he often attempted to stifle free speech and usually lost those attempts.

Because having your own children distance themselves from your campaign is sort of a big story, the questioner had every right to seek an answer.

Some insiders thought her question was "inappropriate." It may present discomfort for Giuliani and his handlers, but it was not inappropriate.

She wondered why the media itself hasn't asked similar questions about Giuliani's personal behavior and past. "I'm very frustrated by the media," she said, "I think maybe they want to maintain access, so maybe they're selling their soul for access and not doing their job."

Bingo! Welcome also to Cheyenne.

It is not only access that restricts certain media types from doing their jobs. It is advertising revenue. The Cheyenne Herald has felt the sting of withdrawn advertising revenue after indirectly criticizing a candidate. Are you reading, Gov?

Combined with accepting seats on boards and commissions from the current governor, editors/publishers of the state's two largest circulation daily newspapers have completely removed themselves from any possible objectivity or lack of bias.

Giuliani joined a law firm after being mayor of New York City and became a named partner. He represents Rupert Murdoch holdings, including the New York Post and Fox News. How do you think they are handling Rudy's foibles? With silence, you guess? Methinks you are right.

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