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A Colorado history lesson for Victor Marx

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Victor Marx, who narrowly won the Republican nomination for governor by one half 1% after boasting of a massive 44-point lead, is just as misguided on Colorado political history.



During the primary, Marx made a clumsy attempt to denigrate his opponent, state Sen. Barbara Kirkmeyer, as a “great candidate for the 1990s” whom he would “easily defeat.”

Apparently, serving as a Weld County commissioner, as executive director of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs under Gov. Bill Owens, and as a Colorado state senator where she served on the powerful Joint Budget Committee are just not relevant to being governor, according to Marx.

Claiming to be an exorcist of demons over the phone; to have “rescued” 45,000 women and children from war-torn countries; to being forced by an abusive stepfather to behead a cat when he was three years old and to killing a person when he was seven years old; and refusing to answer a direct question on how many people he has killed; apparently are much more relevant to being the chief executive of Colorado state government for a “regular fella” like Marx.

It is not known who from his \$800,000 stable of national political consultants came up with the brilliant idea to dismiss Kirkmeyer as a “great candidate for the 1990s” but Marx should learn something about that decade that he discredits.

The late, great U.S. Sen. Bill Armstrong concluded his two terms in the Senate in 1990 after being reelected in 1984 by 65% and winning 60 of 63 counties. He was a successful businessman and broadcaster who was elected as the youngest majority leader in history in the Colorado State Senate before being elected to three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was president of Colorado Christian University from 2006 to 2016.

U.S. Sen. Hank Brown was elected to the Senate after Armstrong did not seek reelection in 1990. Brown was a forward air controller in Vietnam, which had one of the highest combat mortality rates in the

military. He served one term in the state Senate before serving in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1980 to 1990. Brown was the president of the University of Northern Colorado and the University of Colorado after he left the Senate.

U.S. Sen. Wayne Allard was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1996 and reelected in 2002 after serving three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. While serving in the Colorado State Senate from 1982 to 1990, he continued to run his veterinary practice in his hometown of Loveland. During the legislative sessions he would daily drive the 60 miles back to Loveland from the Capitol to treat animals.

Gov. Bill Owens was elected in 1998 as the first Republican governor to be elected in 28 years and he remains the only Republican governor in the past 56 years. Owens served in the state legislature from Aurora from 1982 to 1994 before he was elected state treasurer in 1994.

Owens won competitive primary and general elections in 1998 on a conservative agenda to cut taxes, reform education and improve transportation and he accomplished that agenda in his first term. He was reelected with 65% in 2002 and he left office in 2007 with a 70% approval rating.

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Out of ignorance or arrogance, Marx stumbled into saying something accurate about Kirkmeyer even though he thought he was cleverly insulting her.

Kirkmeyer has much in common with Armstrong, Brown, Allard and Owens who were elected and served in the 1990s.

They were never asked how many people they killed. They never claimed to be exorcists of demons. They never made outlandish claims to have "rescued" 45,000 women and children. They never claimed to have been forced as a 7-year-old to kill someone that law enforcement has no record of.

Instead, Colorado Republicans have nominated a sure loser who will take down other Republican candidates with him in competitive races.

Dick Wadhams is a former Colorado Republican state chairman who worked for U.S. Sen. Bill Armstrong for nine years before managing campaigns for U.S. Sens. Hank Brown and Wayne Allard, and Gov. Bill Owens. He was campaign manager for U.S. Senate Majority Leader John Thune of South Dakota in 2004 when Thune unseated Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle.

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