

The Fortnightly Rant

The Cuckoo Coup

In a sane country it wouldn't have even been a contest, but we live in Freedomland.

A quarter of a million people are dead, killed by a plague the incumbent treated as a political opportunity rather than a threat to national health. The infection rate and the Dow Jones are soaring, even as Main Street is collapsing. Despite all that, the election was so close it took four days to get a clear result.

That's OK, it could have been worse. At least, in the end, the challenger beat the incumbent—never an easy trick for that office—and did it by six million votes. He even defied the long-dead slaveholders who invented the Electoral College.

A new stick has been thrust into the spokes of democracy, though: following the convenient trail of breadcrumbs left by his most recent Republican predecessor, the incumbent is attempting to overturn the results of the election by judicial means.

The Party of Lincoln, the sober-sided "adults in the room" who could formerly be relied upon to strike a pose of Constitutional seriousness, are backing his play, as the mobsters say. That gurgling noise is coming not from a swamp that is draining, but the dregs of Republican ethics disappearing down the sewer.

At least this sordid process clarifies why they've gone to such lengths to pack every court in the nation. When your party's survival depends on having a friendly thumb on the scale of justice, there is no such thing as too many judges. Despite having this home-court advantage though, the Golfer-in-Chief's odds don't

look good.

A law degree represents a tremendous investment in time and money; this must be so, otherwise the poor would be able to defend themselves. No top-notch talent is going to jeopardize a lucrative career on crackpot cases like those the Executive Branch is putting forward. Hence, the Four Seasons Total Landscaping press conference, starring Rudy Giuliani.

Did someone say, "first time tragedy, second time farce?" Saturday, November 7th, 2020 will also live in infamy.

Around noon on that day, the Associated Press finally called Pennsylvania—and hence the election—for Joe Biden. In Portsmouth, people flooded Market Square and began celebrating deliriously; in Philadelphia, representatives of the President of the United States gathered to hold a press conference in a parking lot conveniently located between a smut shop and a crematorium.

New Hampshire's own Corey Lewandowski was among those present. The President's senior campaign advisor lent gravitas to the event by accusing a dead woman of having voted. For religious reasons—he's a devout Republican—Lewandowski spoke without a mask. News reports a few days later said the President's lackey had tested positive for the coronavirus. The health status of journalists exposed to his barking is unrecorded, due to insignificance.

Future presidential historians, assuming humanity is lucky enough to survive past Inauguration Day, will find the details of this historic occasion archived on their very own *Wikipedia* page.



BREAKING NEWS—We regret to report that the odds are turning against any such future historians; Rudy held another press conference Thursday, and we're dialing back our aspirations accordingly. Never mind Inauguration Day, we'll be lucky if this country doesn't fall apart—or worse—before December 14th.

That's the date when, according to the Congressional Research Service—a legitimate branch of the Library of Congress, not some loose cabal of loonies squatting in a vacant shopping mall—the Electoral College phase of our "peaceful transfer of power" kicks in.

The Library's explanatory document on this matter is all very quaint, citing U.S. Code (3 U.S.C. §6), and "Certificates of Ascertainment of the vote," and blah, blah, blah. Guess what? Rudy Giuliani lights his stogies with 3 U.S.C. §6.

Typecast, frankly, for this role in the unholy Hail Mary in history, Rudy has been pushing coffins full of lifeless lawsuits through the courts, as part of a scheme to spare the Miscreant-in-Chief an awkward

move from the White House to the Big House.

DemocracyDocket reported late Thursday that the President's lawyers "are now 1-32 in post-election litigation"—which would be encouraging, if one were so simple as to think that the parties to this relentless farce had any intention of abiding by the law.

As @BlogsofWar put it, "The GOP is basically filing Sovereign Citizen quality lawsuits." In one suit filed in Bucks County, Pa., the President's lawyers even put it in writing: "there exists no evidence of any fraud, misconduct, or any impropriety with respect to the challenged ballots."

The lawsuits don't need to win legal arguments in court. Their purpose is to stall for time and kick dust in the eyes of the referees. This being a democracy, of course, ultimately the referees are The People—specifically, those stalwart men and women who care enough about freedom, democracy, and the Constitution—and the flags in which they've draped themselves, in viola-

tion of the Flag Code—to turn up at Trump rallies and yell without a mask.

Rudy's crazed utterances enflame the passions of red shirts, hoping to raise enough of a ruckus to derail the Electoral College. If that vestigial organ of democracy fails to vote on December 14th, then bingo—that much-mocked map of red and blue states suddenly switches from ridiculous to ominous: the election goes to the House of Representatives.

Cows don't vote, and neither does land—or it wouldn't, if not for our Founding Geniuses.

When the House votes for President, each state gets a single vote. California, population 40 million, gets one vote. Wyoming, population 600,000, gets one vote, too.

We fervently hope, in the not too distant future, to apologize for being too amped up on this matter.

In other news, though, two days before the election, NBC News reported that work crews were about to "build a 'non-scalable' fence to secure the [White House] complex, Ellipse and Lafayette Square."

The Alleged News®

The Winter of our Dissolution?

We ought to be inured by now to this recurring political cycle. After all, it's been going on for nearly a century. Even our legendary level of ironic distance, though, fails to provide an adequate level of psychic insulation.

In short, this is too damn much.

We cannot put a stop to it, but, by god, we can describe it.

One party forces the country to accept some dubious policy choice. This choice is invariably made in service to Moloch, or capitalism, or whatever you want to call the human face of concentrated financial power. By its failure—which was, more likely than not, predicted by a class of people we might as well call the perpetually ignored—that policy wreaks some form of havoc.

The other party—the permanently-designated cleanup crew—then meekly comes along and attempts to repair enough of the damage for the party of the first part to start the hellish cycle all over again. Hear us out.

Roosevelt followed Hoover, to grapple with a depression brought on by flim-flamming stockjobbers, and exacerbated by idiotic *laissez-faire* dogma.

Kennedy followed Eisenhower, to cope with an arms race that threatened global annihilation, in order to stave off the perceived threat posed by our own erstwhile ally, whose casualties had dwarfed ours in a global war against fascism.

Carter followed Nixon, to struggle against a broken economy and internal divisions, both caused by a war against nationalist peasants a world away who somehow presented a threat to members of the Chamber of Commerce.

Clinton followed Reagan, to repair the chimera known as the federal budget deficit at the expense of a subset of the population which had been effectively prevented by federal law from owning homes, then blamed for the consequences.

Obama followed Bush the Sec-

ond, and we're right back where we began with Roosevelt: trying to resuscitate an economy nearly destroyed by Wall Street goons.

Now comes Joe Biden, following this troglodytic cretin, whose name has become so loathsome to us that we will go to almost any length to avoid its use.

[Go ahead. Cite that abusive language, and accuse us of bias. Don't forget to ask, though, if we give a damn. How do you think that we as a nation got into this abysmal predicament? There is a direct link, we would argue, between our national daily death toll, and the practice, among our unbiased colleagues in the profit-making branch of the news racket, of treating amoral morons as if they were statesmen who hold valid but opposing views. — The Ed.]

[One more thing: another factor dooming us to this hideous, pointless cycle is our national tradition of plurality voting. Under this system, according to Wikipedia, "each voter is allowed

to vote for only one candidate, and the candidate who polls more than any other counterpart (a plurality) is elected." According to the widely-accepted Duverger's Law, such single-ballot, plurality-rule elections, coupled with single-member districts, makes a two-party system virtually inevitable. The results alone should be enough to condemn this method. A look at where it's being used would confirm that conviction. Besides the U.S., the only places on Earth masochistic enough to suffer its results are Britain, for the House of Commons, Canada, and India—that is to say, the husk of one not-too-bright Empire, and its former victims. FairVote.org is onto this problem, and is working to solve it by promoting Ranked Choice Voting. — The Ed.]

Ahem. Where were we? Ah, yes. Our 46th President, the task which awaits him....

The phrase "American Carnage" was being used with great abandon not so long ago. In recent years it seems to have dropped out of favor.

Will "American Carnage" see a resurgence, now that it's no longer a metaphor? Our guess is probably not. The plain truth has always been more than most Americans can bear to hear.

In an article headlined, "How Many Americans Are About to Die?," *The Atlantic's* Alexis C. Madrigal and Whet Moser write that the U.S. health-care system "has not reduced the deadliness of the coronavirus since July.... Instead, the virus has, with ruthless regularity, killed at least 1.5 percent of all Americans diagnosed with COVID-19, over the past four months."

With the number of infections rising exponentially, we could soon be adding 2,000 names a week to the list of the quarter million dead already.

There is good news: Columbia Medical Center has developed a nasal spray that has successfully protected ferrets from the coronavirus.

So, there is that.

MLK's Poor People's Campaign Revived State House Caravan on Monday
The New Hampshire Poor People's Campaign [PPC] has announced it will join nationwide Moral Monday caravans in a day of action on November 23rd, demanding appropriate response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

As Covid-19 cases rise exponentially across the nation and in New Hampshire, the PPC wants to raise awareness of the need for transparency from the state and hospitals regarding their standard of care guidelines. "Our state leadership's failure to solicit the thoughts and ideas of people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups in developing the crisis standard plan may lead to direct and indirect discrimination against people with disabilities and other impacted groups," the statement says. "It is essential that the voices of those living with special needs, disabilities and underlying health issues, communities of color, and low-income communities are heard. All are welcome to join our caravan in support of healthcare equality, transparency, and accountability.

"The Covid-19 crisis feeds on the fissures of inequality already felt by the 140 million people who were living in poverty before the pandemic, or who were one emergency away from poverty. As of November 19, according to State of New Hampshire records, the state has 15,749 cases and 504 deaths." To urge the Governor to take action to ensure that people living with disabilities, communities of color, and low-income communities are guaranteed the same quality of care as everyone else, the PPC will drive caravan-style around the State House beginning at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, November 23, 2020. In addition, the caravan will mourn the quarter-million Americans who have died from Covid-19, and demand a smooth and open transition of power that lifts up the moral policies we need immediately. Participants will meet at 1:15 pm in the Staples/Books-a-Million parking lot, 76 Fort Eddy Rd, Concord, N.H. to put signs and memorials on cars before heading to the N.H. State House at 107 N. Main St, Concord, N.H. Caravans have been organized in two dozen states. Reports from



Mere photographs cannot do justice to the pandemonium that was Market Square on the afternoon of Saturday, November 7th. The networks having announced the incumbent's defeat, both sides of Congress Street were lined by jubilant revelers. On the south side, supporters held huge red plywood letters spelling out "Harris," the name of our incoming Vice President.



each participating state capitol will be found at the website <https://vote.poorpeoplescampaign.org>. In 1968, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and many others called for a "revolution of values" in America. They sought to build a broad, fusion movement that could unite poor and impacted communities across the country. Their name was a direct cry from the underside of history: The Poor People's Campaign. Today, the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival has picked up this unfinished work. From Alaska to Arkansas, the Bronx to the border, people are coming together to confront the interlocking evils of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism and the war economy, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism. We understand that as a nation we are at a critical juncture — that we need a movement that will shift the moral narrative, impact policies and elections at every level of government, and build lasting power for poor and impacted people.

Progressive Groups Lobby Against Corporate Cabinet, Release List of Insiders Biden Should Reject Friday, November 20, 2020, Washington, D.C.—Today, five progressive organizations led by the Demand Progress and the Revolving Door Project launched the "No Corporate Cabinet" campaign, dedicated to keeping corporate insiders out of the Biden administration. Partners include Climate Investigations Center, Documented, and True North Research. The website will serve as a central hub for information and activism related to the Biden transition, with a trove of information on corporate insiders shortlisted for Biden administration posts. It also offers tools through which people can take action and contact key decision makers, which are expected to be used by tens of thousands of people. The website is, necorporatecabinet.com. Yesterday, a distinct parallel campaign launched in partnership between Daily Kos, Demand Progress,

and more than 20 other progressive and good governance organizations, including MPower Change, Public Citizen, Presente, Ultraviolet, and the Working Families Party. The groups are asking activists to email, call, and tweet at the Biden transition and Senate Democrats to urge them "to appoint public-minded progressives instead of corporate lobbyists and executives for key roles" in the Biden administration. The Persons of Interest page on the "No Corporate Cabinet" website will single out key corporate-friendly insiders in Biden's orbit who must be stopped—including one who has already been announced this week—and details their troubling pasts. At this time they're calling for the rejection of the following Persons of Interest, with more to be added based on news reports and other intel about who is under consideration. Brian Deese: After advising Obama on climate policy (defending the production of fossil fuels and necessity of oil and gas), Deese took a job as the chief greenwasher at the

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The Fechheimer Building, one of the finest examples of a cast-iron facade in Portland, Oregon, was built in 1885. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, it was restored in 1981 by Russell Fellows Properties, the principals of which enjoy a subscription to this newspaper.

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— Joe Keefe

world's largest investor in fossil fuels: BlackRock.

Larry Fink: Larry Fink is the CEO of BlackRock, which is the fossil fuel industry's top banker and quietly exerts massive influence over the U.S. government and economy.

Mark Gitenstein: While working as a corporate lobbyist, Mark Gitenstein listed many successes including weakening whistleblower laws and packing federal courts with business-friendly judges.

Tony James: Tony James has taken it upon himself to improve private equity's well-deserved poor public image, all the while being credibly accused of market-rigging and collusion.

Ernest Moniz: Even though he believes that climate change is real, Ernest Moniz has maintained unusually close ties with the fossil fuel industry throughout his career in public life, refusing to adopt climate policies which might anger his friends in coal, oil, and gas.

Gina Raimondo: Gina Raimondo has been a steadfast ally of Wall Street and corporate America throughout her time in politics, selling out pensioners to hedge funds, slashing social services, and making enemies of labor unions.

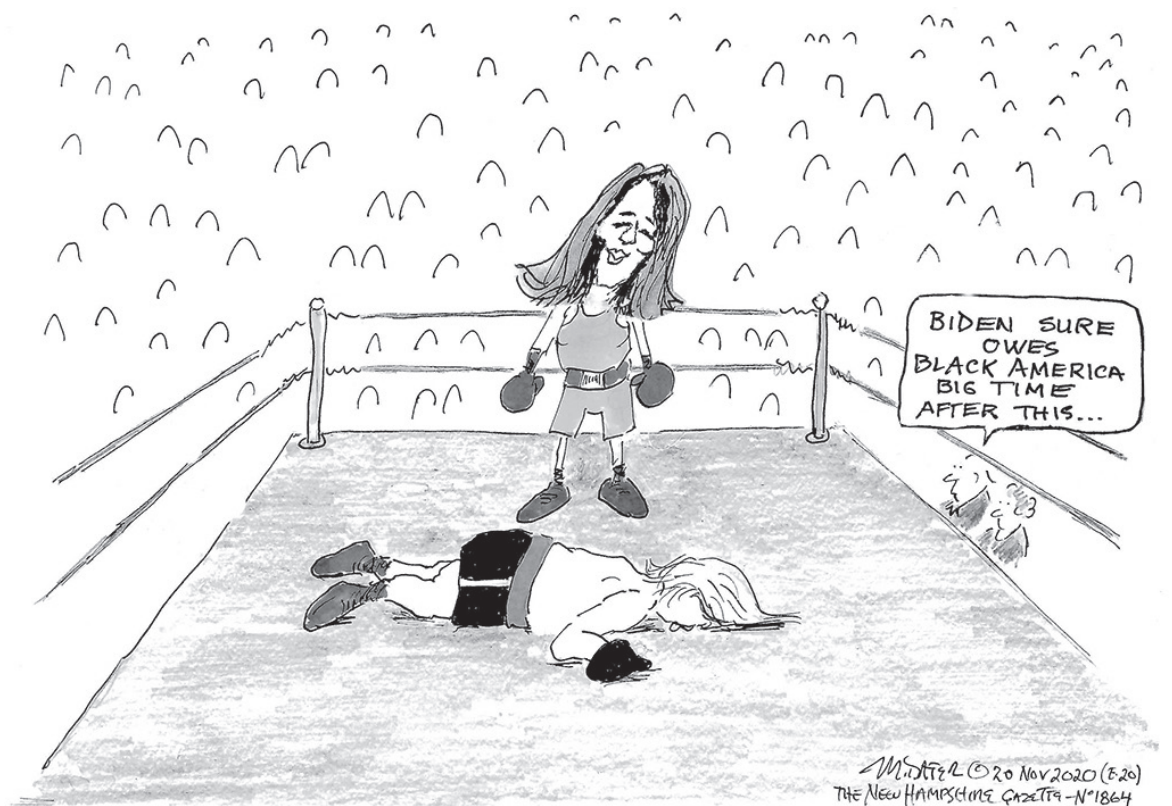
Bruce Reed: Bruce Reed was a key intellectual architect of the Democratic Party's turn toward neoliberal economic policy and conservative social policy.

Steve Ricchetti: Steve Ricchetti has spent his entire career shuffling through the revolving door, lobbying on behalf of corporate interests from both K Street and within the halls of government—which is why it's deeply disappointing and dangerous that he's in line to serve as senior counselor to the president in Biden's administration.

Heather Zichal: Heather Zichal served as the Obama White House's actions "chief ambassador to oil and gas companies" before leveraging her relationships into a job with a natural gas company.

Jason Bordoff: Jason Bordoff rarely sees a fossil fuel project he doesn't support, which isn't surprising because nearly all of his professional positions are currently funded by fossil fuel corporations.

"President-elect Biden is assembling this administration after four years of egregious corruption under the Trump administration and in the depths of a historic crisis," David Segal, Demand Progress Executive Director, said. "If Biden is serious



about 'building back better' in a way that remedies the longstanding ills of the country, his administration must be run by people dedicated to working in service of the general welfare. Our message is clear: Joe Biden should not let corporate interests run the government—and, if needed, senators must hold him accountable."

"The Biden administration has a daunting task ahead, to both undo the corruption of the Trump years and guide the country out of interlinked crises of health, economics, racial injustice, and climate change," Jeff Hauser, Revolving Door Project Executive Director said. "None of that can happen if Biden appoints to his government the same corporate leaders whose profits skyrocketed under Trump, and whose influence over the last four decades generally has led to surging inequality and a crisis of faith in government. If Democrats fail to take back the Senate, executive-branch powers will be one of Biden's only ways of tangibly improving Americans' lives. He cannot trust corporate America

if he hopes to do that."

"Americans are exhausted. We have spent the last four years watching the Trump administration repeatedly put the interests of big businesses and corporate lobbyists over the well-being of everyday people, causing untold suffering—especially during the Covid-19 pandemic," Carolyn Fiddler, the Communications Director of Daily Kos said. "That's why it is imperative that the Biden administration appoint a cabinet that puts the American people's interests over corporate agendas. Now more than ever, we need leadership that is experienced in corporate accountability and will check the interests of big corporations while advocating for policies that center the health and success of all Americans, especially Americans of color."

"There are a finite number of cabinet positions. Any cabinet post given to a recent corporate lobbyist is one less seat that could be filled by a well-qualified person whose record demonstrates a deep commitment to advancing public good rather

than private gain," said Lisa Graves, executive director of True North Research, a partner on the No Corporate Cabinet initiative. "Especially after the massive financial conflicts in the Trump cabinet, the new administration should take extra steps to avoid the conflicts of interests that have made the revolving door so lucrative to the distinct disadvantage of the real needs of Americans whose lives are in tumult due to the pandemic and callous indifference of a Senate majority led by Mitch McConnell. Personnel is policy and We the People deserve a better cabinet in the Biden Administration, one that reflects the true needs of the American people rather than greed of huge corporations."

This new website comes just a week after Demand Progress and The Revolving Door Project led a group of 50+ organizations in sending letters to President-elect Joe Biden as well as Democratic senators and senators-elect, urging them to reject corporate insiders for cabinet positions.

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On the north side of the street, big blue letters spelled out "Biden," in honor of our incoming 46th President—whether the MAGA-hatters like it or not. The sound of cheers and car horns was deafening and constant—the first sign of joy we've seen here since late last winter.

Murph's Fortnightly Quote

"@realDonaldTrump has made a habit of firing those who are highly competent [and] have integrity and courage..."

— John Mitnick,
former General Counsel, Dept. of Homeland Security

"One must think like a hero to behave like a merely decent human being."

— May Sarton

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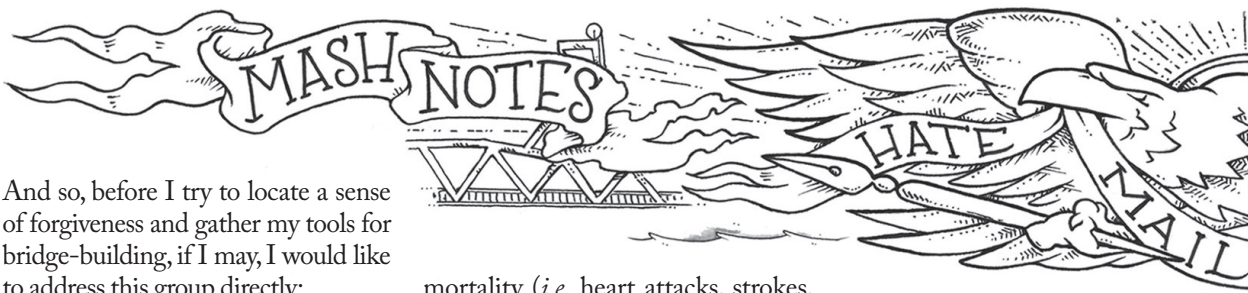
Lebanon Public Library, 9 E. Park St.

A One-Time Aberration
Dear Mr. Fowle,
Within this email I have written a mammoth letter. I hope you will forgive me for any headaches or eye sore-ness induced if you humor me and read it. I started writing and did not, and frankly could not, stop. Then I edited, and rather than excising content like any good editor would, I added even more. A previous letter in your paper by a self-proclaimed “doctor” about the ineffectiveness of mask-wearing combined with recent reports of conspiracies, fraud, and violence from little boys who call themselves “proud,” triggered a flurry of words and emotions that I, for whatever reason, felt compelled to send your way.

I in no way expect to be printed in your wonderful paper, given my letter’s colossal-ness, cursing, and sentiment. Nevertheless, I am truly appreciative for your time and do hope my introduction doesn’t frighten you off.
With many thanks and my wishes for the safety, support, and happiness of you and your loved ones. Thank you for all that you do for and give to this community.
Warmly,
Molly Simon

Dear Editor,
Two catchphrases have emerged in my day-to-day when reeling from the throes of this year: “for f*ck’s sake!” and “AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!” the latter howled and muffled into my rather emotionally traumatized pillow.
When embarking to compose a tangle of sentences with which to reflect on the events and people of 2020, I have found myself feeling overwhelmed and exhausted before even considering the first word. There is simply too much, too many problems and words, too much pain, ignorance, hate, anxiety, and uncertainty, too many subgroups within each category, and subgroups within the subgroups. Foremost on my mind of late, however, amidst a third and most horrific spike in Covid-19 cases and deaths nationwide, is the pure, intractable anger and exasperation I feel toward a particular “strain” of person

that encompasses personal philosophies and dispositions of selfishness, ignorance, malice, apathy, and outrageous entitlement: self-proclaimed “anti-maskers,” inflamed racist liberty bells, manager-seekers, and conspiracy theorists—commonly lumped together and referred to as Trump supporters. Of course monsters walk among every social group, but particular ire is due to this Klan. My employment of name-calling may read a tad hypocritical, however I am disinclined to feel any degree of hesitation or sympathy toward a group of individuals who applaud the separation of families at the border and the caging of children, call for and engage in racially-motivated discrimination and violence, threaten horrific acts of terrorism when they feel “triggered,” place personal preference and gain over the greater good, willfully maim our nation’s core tenets of democracy, are complicit in the deaths of over 230,000 Americans, and, least importantly, told me my “dumba*s libtard tears” tasted delicious back in 2016. I could scan the catacombs of my mind for every “naughty word” that made me giggle as a child, and the resulting aggregation would be far too charitable.
As those of us with intact and functional consciences contemplate the demand to “build bridges” with such bigoted, barbaric, truth-depraved narcissists—who beneath my verbal cheapshots are really just the reification of terrified, confused, misinformed children—I do not yet feel ready nor willing to forgive. Frankly, I am furious, and tired of the abominable nonsense they verbally and digitally vomit that distracts from, and ultimately hinders, much-needed efforts to curb this pandemic (among other terrifically pressing social needs) and save lives. I have read letters to the editor containing baseless claims of election fraud, ironic statements about how the “democRATS” have politicized this virus, harmful untruths about mask efficacy, vaccine conspiracies, complaints of “obstructed liberties,” and other “opinions,” all of which qualify as free speech, but ultimately distill to petulant whining.



And so, before I try to locate a sense of forgiveness and gather my tools for bridge-building, if I may, I would like to address this group directly:
Dear Douche-Canoes:
For F*ck’s Sake.

Over 230,000 Americans have succumbed to Covid-19 in less than a year. Around a quarter of a million people. The equivalent of more than five baseball stadiums. A majority of that figure died isolated from their loved ones, breathing their final choked breath over a Facetime call. Current models are predicting over 280,000 lives lost by December, which is just weeks away, and over 400,000 by March. Refrigerated trucks are arriving at morgues and hospitals to tackle the overflow of bodies. Some hospitals have begun to contemplate turning away patients whom they deem have little chance of survival.

Does this sound like “just another flu,” which takes an average of 12,000-60,000 lives per year, has well-known and effective treatment protocols and an extant and readily modifiable vaccine of varying annual efficacy? Disturbingly, individuals young and old, those with preexisting conditions and those without, suffering from Covid can experience Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS), cardiac, lung, kidney, and liver injury, blood clots, septic shock, and Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in children, to name a few. And the complications are still unfolding. A frighteningly high number of individuals who are fortunate enough to recover endure a “long haul syndrome” that can occasion memory loss, cardiac damage, and breathing difficulties. Some patients as young as their early twenties now require lung transplants.

Care professionals were already overworked, overrun, and under-appreciated prior to this pandemic; now they courageously battle existing causes of severe sickness and

mortality (i.e. heart attacks, strokes, influenza and other infectious diseases, chronic illnesses, accidents, &c.) and a novel pathogen that has yet to be fully understood. In some capacity-breached hospitals, nurses are being asked to work while actively sick and symptomatic with Covid. And they were woefully under-protected from month one, most given only one N-95 that they have to look after like it is a godd*mn black opal. They are risking their lives every single day, and still, nationwide, people continue to possess the audacity to protest the simple acts of wearing a mask and maintaining physical distance, acting as if they are being forced to donate an organ.

Each time a surgery team dons PPE before a procedure, it is not for sh*t’s and giggles. Since the late 1800s, we have known such measures to be effective in protecting both professionals and patients alike from opportunistic microbial agents. Now we as the general public have been called upon to demonstrate similar consideration, education, and altruism through the basic, cost-effective, unintrusive actions of mask-wearing and distancing, minor inconveniences at most and both holding the potential to drastically reduce the spread of and deaths from Covid (a fact confirmed time and again by countless peer-reviewed studies). And still, *still*, people refuse, cross their arms, take to social media, and shout “what about my rights?” in an unconscionable and utterly embarrassing display of arrogance and selfishness tied together with a bow of counterfactuals stated with nausea-inducing conviction. And you fail to stop at your loud refusals and threats of bad Yelp reviews or *gasp* the loss of your precious patronage, no, that would be far too generous; you also escalate, insulting and physically threatening

those asking you to show an atom of empathy. All this over a face covering that would save hundreds of thousands of lives.
Now let’s pivot to politicizing biology. You want to get political? Fine. Let’s talk about what politicizing a virus looks like. It looks like the President back in the early days of Covid infections in the U.S. calling the virus a “Democrat hoax,” his dismantling of the Obama-era pandemic response protocol out of spite, his using the virus to propagate and encourage xenophobia, his balking at and failure to



“Exclusive, expensive, and private at Palm Beach club,” Inigo Thomas wrote for August 30, 2018. “The architect was Mar-a-Lago’s dining room is an imitation of Rome—the one Mussolini turned into. At Mar-a-Lago it was known as the N longer someone you’d name anything at

readily engage the Defense Production Act which would have expedited and expanded production of PPE and ventilators early on, his ridicule and dismissal of mask-wearing, his nonsensical statements aimed at downplaying the virus, touting that it is “just the flu” and will “disappear on its own,” his declarations that if we stopped/

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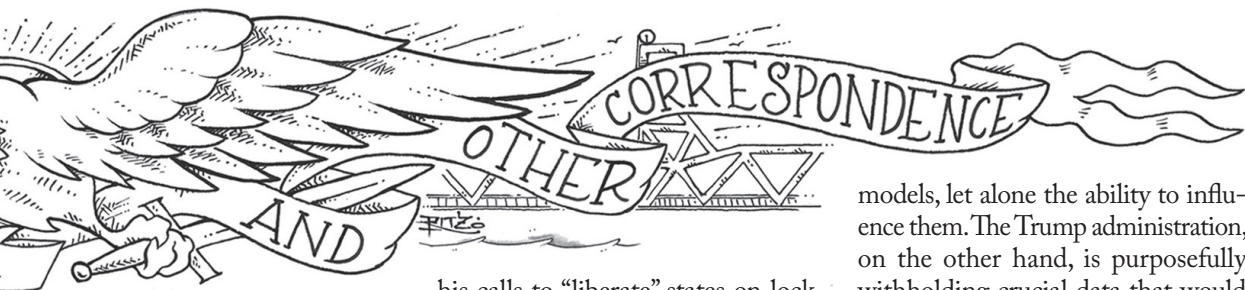
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slowed testing or if we “didn’t count the blue states” we would have the “lowest number of cases and deaths” and be doing “the best,” his attempts to force misleading and non-factual guidelines upon and gag and re-route crucial hospital data from the CDC, his departure from the WHO, his shameless attempts to promote a drug (hydroxychloroquine) that had not been approved for use in Covid patients and has since been found to be ineffective and in some cases harmful, his failure to produce an adequate and regular economic stimulus package



define Mar-a-Lago, Donald Trump’s in The London Review of Books Joseph Urban, an Austrian emigré... of a room in the Chiugi Palace in his own office after he assumed power. Mussolini Room, until the Duce was no after.”

to the working class (while inordinate sums and “personal favors” were distributed to large corporations and CEOs), his baseless promises for a vaccine “ready before election day” that contradicted the timelines of every active research team, his withholding of aid from and abhorrent insulting of “blue run” states hit hard by the virus,

his calls to “liberate” states on lockdown and encouragement of the sort of rhetoric that led to the terrorist plot against the governor of Michigan, his allegation that doctors “greedily” profit off of Covid-related deaths, his contracting the virus, receiving immediate, free (aka “socialized medicine”), groundbreaking, and publicly inaccessible treatment, and then, once recovered, using his privilege of position to downplay the pandemic’s severity again, the list goes on. This copious and incomplete inventory represents but one facet of the many failures of his presidency.

Allow me now to home in on the vaccine. To even suggest a vaccine is being withheld by Democrats like some partisan game of keep-away until Biden takes office, a theory propagated over both the dark boneyards and favored vistas of the web, would be laughable were it not so dangerous and morally repugnant. Vaccines take, on average, 12 months for R&D. Although research teams have made ground-breaking progress in record time for a potential Covid vaccine, since the beginning they have consistently projected, as has Dr. Fauci (who was appointed by President Trump and is a leading infectious disease expert), that a safe and efficacious vaccine will not be ready for public distribution until early 2021, and at the very earliest and luckiest, late 2020. The company heading the recent announcement, Pfizer, is not politically affiliated on either side and immediately spoke out against the President’s claims that a vaccine would be ready for public distribution before Election Day. Most companies and teams are still wrapping up phase three trials. Additionally, President-Elect Biden’s camp does not have access to current vaccine research data or production

models, let alone the ability to influence them. The Trump administration, on the other hand, is purposefully withholding crucial data that would afford a well-informed, safe, and smooth presidential transition—an unprecedented, tantrum-esque, and wholly authoritarian move.

A virus does not care if you politically align red or blue, nor does it discriminate on the basis of social demographics. People do, particularly the people who weave and sustain our social and institutional fabrics. President Trump’s actions and inaction, and those of his followers, government and public alike, have further lanced an already gaping wound in this nation. And what is our “esteemed” POTUS doing now? As states are forced to shut down yet again, hospitals overflow, and scores of people suffer and succumb? He abandons his post to continue to sling baseless and debunked conspiracy theories of election fraud on Twitter and hurl frivolous lawsuits at any lawyer willing to debase their careers and accept them. And to golf. He has never been nor will he ever be anything that even slightly resembles a true, decent, democratic, compassionate, and intelligent leader. He knew from the beginning this was not “just another flu.” Moreover, its havoc was preventable. This outcome, these lives lost and those forever altered, it was all preventable. Had we had leadership committed to action and unity, who cared about the wellbeing of the people and not personal acclaim or profit, provided economic support that would have enabled proper lockdown procedures, engaged the necessary manufacturing to provide protection for our first responders, encouraged basic public health consensus and education surrounding mask-wearing and distancing, acknowledged and addressed social disparities in healthcare (among other institutions), engaged the necessary supports to ensure more

families do not fall victim to hunger or homelessness, had they led by example, with integrity, transparency, and compassion, more than 100,000 lives need not have been lost, nor our country be on the brink of social, biological, and economic ruin.

Now for a more personal note. My immune system is, for lack of a better word, eccentric. I suppose the more appropriate word is “compromised.” Thus, I have fallen just short of digging out and living in my own little hobbit hole these past eight months. Beloved members of my family are also considered “high-risk” in the face of Covid, and not a day goes by in which I am not paralyzed with fear for them, praying, despite my atheistic belief systems, that they will neither encounter nor contract this horrid virus, and remain in good health. A hope I extend to everyone, including you callous, conspiracy-shouting pr*cks. We are all some combination of exhausted, strained, scared, depressed, angry, sad, frustrated, lonely, and anxious. All imperfect with no one solution or salve in sight. This is uncharted territory for those of us (most of us) who did not live through past health crises, such as that of 1918. Still, the confusion and uncertainty, emotions felt, emergent longings and preferences for normalcy expressed, do not, under any circumstances, justify risking lives to sate. Now is not the time to cry conspiracy or freedom infringement, it is a time for basic care, empathy, education, unity, and action. I am sorry if you feel personally threatened by the results of the election (the irony), I am sorry if you are hurting, but that which you expel as “fact,” is anything but, and your self-perceived “oppression” and subsequent refusal when asked to cover your mouth and nose are in actuality willful acts of apathy and abuse toward yourselves and your family, friends, and communities. I implore you to instead consider channeling your loud voices toward the efforts to quell this pandemic—encourage loved ones to wear masks, to abstain from holiday gatherings, to keep their distance so that everyone might have the chance to embrace their families

and friends when this has passed. And that is the key: it will pass. This is temporary, these actions for the sake of public health momentary, and how we choose to act will ultimately decide the historical record of this pivotal fleck on our species’ chronology. We have the power to curtail this virus’s timeline, to limit suffering and mortality, this potential a monumental gift. The rebuffing of such a capacity will be a phenomenon historians will spend ages trying to understand, ultimately failing to locate an answer that truly does not exist.

So here we are at the third peak and final paragraph that should never have come to be. As nationwide we approach the “point of no return,” the power of choice endures. You can remain loud, aggressive douche canoes masquerading as “patriots,” or you can embody what true patriotism can be, making conscientious sacrifices and choices for the sake of the people, loved and beloved, whose smiles, voices, identities, experiences, talents, passions, memories, and bonds, now fill those five+ baseball stadiums, and those who remain fighting on. You are the first group to vividly and passionately detail how you would die for your country, willing to bear arms and take to the hills to protect the America you love. In this delusional and feral fantasyland, you are asked to kill, an idea you approach with disturbing ease. In reality, you are simply asked to be kind. And toward this you shatter like glass over and over and over. Your freedoms are very much alive and well, it is your hearts that have been challenged and atrophied.

I close with a final plea: May a conscience be cultivable, may each of you experience the kindness, humility, safety, and support you fail to extend to others, and may we all, somehow, claw and crawl our way out of and douse the dumpster fire that is 2020.

Sincerely and with lingering threads of hope,

Molly Simon
Newmarket, N.H.

Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.
to page six

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Death of Democracy?

by Jean Stimmell

Richard Rorty, a prominent 20th-century philosopher and public intellectual, wrote an obscure book in 1998, *Achieving Our Country*, looking back on America from a vantage point 100 years in the future. Defying belief, he correctly predicted the election of a strongman in our country in 2014, missing by only two years the rise of Trump.

Rorty based his prophecy on a trend that he saw already developing because Democrats were abandoning working-class interests. Check out, in his own words, how dead-on his predictions were:

“It’s dawning on working folks that their government is not even trying to prevent wages from sinking or to prevent jobs from being exported. Around the same time, they will realize that suburban white-collar workers—themselves desperately afraid of being downsized—are not going to let themselves be taxed to provide social benefits for anyone else.”

“At that point, something will crack. The nonsuburban electorate will decide that the system has

failed and start looking around for a strongman to vote for—someone willing to assure them that, once he is elected, the smug bureaucrats, tricky lawyers, overpaid bond salesmen, and postmodernist professors will no longer be calling the shots.”

Rorty correctly foresaw that this betrayal by the Democrats would have momentous consequences, resulting in an explosive release of bottled-up rage by “poorly educated Americans having their manners dictated to them by college graduates.”

At the time his book was published, he was roundly criticized from both the left and right, including a *New York Times* critic who called his warnings about our vulnerability to the charms of an autocrat “a form of intellectual bullying.”

Rorty was renowned for having controversial ideas and for thinking outside the box. Although some issues have changed since his death in 2007, we can still profit from what he wrote about ways to strengthen our democracy.

Perhaps the most crucial fix, he would say, is to rescue the working class from the increasing income in-

equality they face. He would agree with Bernie Sanders that the working class is now in the worst shape since the Great Depression, and that’s why we need to pass a progressive agenda that creates jobs, raises wages, provides universal healthcare, affordable education, among other things.

A second related issue is globalization. He would have agreed with Bernie (and Trump) that, thanks to globalization, economic instability and inequality are increasing. Rorty bluntly predicted that “This world economy will soon be owned by a cosmopolitan upper class which has no more sense of community with any workers anywhere than the great American capitalists of the year 1900.”

Third, he doesn’t mince words in criticizing the Democratic left, calling it unpatriotic for its behavior in the wake of our Vietnam war debacle: “In the name of ‘the politics of difference,’ it refuses to rejoice in the country it inhabits. It repudiates the idea of a national identity, and the emotion of national pride.”
 He writes that this repudiation is the difference between traditional

American pluralism, a community of communities, and multiculturalism which “is turning into the attempt to keep these communities at odds with one another.”

Rorty doesn’t deny that identity politics has been beneficial for minorities, but points out how, at the same time, it has been a stick-in-the-eye to working folks, who feel ignored as they slip from the middle class into poverty. Sadly, it took almost 20 years for a democratic leader to respond, as Bernie Sanders did, bursting on the scene in 2016 to “channel the mounting rage of the newly dispossessed.”

Part of the problem, Rorty says, is our obsession with rights, a free-for-all where every identity group demands complete freedom to exercise their rights, even if it hurts other groups—or society as a whole. A family would disintegrate if each member insisted on their own agenda, based on the supremacy of individual rights, and refused to compromise with others. As it is for families, so it is for our country. What we need, Rorty says, is a shift from our total emphasis on defending individual rights to more talk

about fraternity:
 For Rorty, “Fraternity is an inclination of the heart, one that produces a sense of shame at having much when others have little. It is not the sort of thing that anybody can have a theory about or that people can be argued into having.”
 That’s because, as I see it, the ability to open our hearts goes beyond politics, requiring a spiritual awakening.
 Rorty, iconoclast that he was, gives us much to think about in these tumultuous times.

—==—
 1 <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/21/books/richard-rortys-1998-book-suggested-election-2016-was-coming.html>
 2 *ibid*
 3 Richard Rorty, *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America*
 4 Rorty, Richard. *Philosophy and Social Hope* (p. 252). Penguin Books Ltd. Kindle Edition.
 5 *ibid*
 6 Rorty, Richard. *Philosophy and Social Hope* (p. 248). Penguin Books Ltd. Kindle Edition
 —==—

from page five

Dear Molly:

Thank you, from the heart, for this remarkable letter. Under ordinary circumstances we might have asked you to re-write this, cutting it down in the process from 2,000 words to about one-third that number. As you have gone to great and entertaining lengths to establish, however, present circumstances are, to be brief, rather bizarre.

However, reading your letter we were reminded of times when, walking through the Square, we have been stopped in our tracks. Sometimes a musician—on a piano, a saxophone, a musical saw, once—simply must be heard.

Furthermore, with our history, we feel a certain responsibility to the future, such as it might be. Many of these

facets and angles you have eloquently compiled could easily be lost, like tears in rain. If we are so fortunate as to be read, years from now—an increasingly dicey proposition, to be sure—your letter will give readers a fuller picture of this time than anything else we have to offer them.

Besides, as you say, we did more or less provoke your response.
 The Editor

Dear Editor:

In the 1980s we had a made-for-TV movie, “The Day After,” about nuclear exchange between Russia



and the U.S. Now we are at the day after the 2020 election. Out-of-whack President Trump is making up and distorting what happens with a democracy’s election. He wants vote counting stopped in some states but continued in others, depending on whether that would help him stay in our White House for another term. That nuclear exchange movie woke up a lot of people, though we still maintain, with the other nuclear nations, such destructive power that our planet could not survive.

“Wake up, America.” This time wake up about an ill President break-

ing all the rules, like a bull trapped in a china shop. I’m also today thinking of the 1995 movie, “The Madness of King George,” when that British king with whom we parted ways in our American Revolution had porphyria, a disease affecting his blood and turning his urine blue, while making him insane. Our President has the appearance of insanity, and the many who are of the ilk to take advantage of his condition overlook it. They don’t care what happens to our very diverse population, even in this pandemic time, or to our economy, or to our school-aged children (including my grandchildren). They

want only to keep power and make money. A sick Trump sets them up.
 Lynn Rudmin Chong
 Sanbornton, N.H.
 Lynn:
 We remember those days. (We remember a lot of days.) “The Day After” aired on November 20th, 1983—37 years ago exactly. Back then it was still possible to imagine that some Republicans were still acting in good faith—wrongly, but in good faith. Newton Leroy Gingrich put an end to that fantasy about a year later.
 The Editor

A Mash Note to the Flag Police
 To the Editor:
 After watching a several minutes long tribute to veterans on WWE’s Monday Night Raw, it occurred to

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The Democratic Party Has One Last Chance

by W.D. Ehrhart

I have been feeling increasingly bleak and anxious ever since last March. And these past couple of weeks, as the presidential election has loomed larger and larger, have left me almost dysfunctional. The thought of another four years of this Monster in the White House left me wallowing in the depths of despair because suicide is not a viable option, and I'm too old and not rich enough to emigrate to any country I'd be willing to spend my last years in, but I have felt that I could not endure another four years of this Monster. Some of the fantasies I've been having lately have been so vivid that they have frightened me.

And then Friday morning, November 6th, my cat caught me in an unguarded moment, and I realized that she had no idea what is going on, and moreover could care less. She is happy with food, warmth, and attention. And it made me think hard about the frame of mind I'd worked myself into lately. I ended up writing this poem:

Beanie the Cat, November 6th, 2020

Anne and I have been holding our breath
for three days, trying not to think,
or feel, or contemplate the implications
of another four years of madness
if our current president should win,
astounded it should be so close
we still don't know who won.
What kind of country could this be
to have so many voters ready
to return to office such a man?
Dishonest, criminal, amoral,
pathologically narcissistic,
ignorant, uncaring, vile. A grifter.
One struggles to avoid despair.

But then there's Beanie, curled up
beside my wife, sound asleep. She's
had her breakfast, asked and gotten
some attention, belly scratched, ears
massaged, green eyes almost iridescent,
happy, I suppose, at least content
if purring signifies contentment.
What goes on behind those glowing eyes
we'll never know, but she's not worried
in the least about elections, this
or any other. She's got us. Moreover,
we've got her. Reason enough, perhaps,
to face whatever's coming next.

Only 24 hours later, Biden finally collected Pennsylvania's Electoral College votes, giving him 273 and the election, and the circumstances that gave rise to my poem disappeared. The magnitude of my relief has so far been beyond expression.

Of course, we still have the problem of some 70,000,000 fellow citizens who—is there a polite way to say this—have their heads so far up their backsides that they can see daylight. Already I am trying not to think about 2024, knowing that Trump may be vanquished, but the Trumpsters and Trumperdom are here to stay. Since most of them are aging white men, however, I hope we can outlast them. Well, not me, actually—I'm as aged as they are—but my daughter and the generations who still have a future ahead of them. They may live long enough to see the demographics of this country change enough to leave aggrieved white men and their benighted partners politically irrelevant.

But this is no time to sit back and gloat, or even bask in the relief so many of us are feeling, as if we are

finally out of the woods. Our task now is to put pressure on a Biden Administration to keep its promises and act on progressive issues like climate change, health care, racial justice, and income inequality.

My own daughter voted for Biden only with extreme reluctance, believing—rightly so, in my opinion—that Biden represents the kind of politics-as-usual that led to the election of Donald Trump in the first place. The Democratic Party has this one last chance to make itself worthy of my daughter's vote.

As fervently as I wished for the defeat of Donald Trump, I hope Joe Biden and his party understand this and act accordingly.

—==—

W. D. Ehrhart has voted in every election—general, primary, and special—since he first became eligible to vote in 1972 (he was not allowed to vote during his time in the U.S. Marine Corps because the voting age was then 21: old enough to kill, not old enough to vote—yet people think it was the antiwar crowd who disrespected returning veterans).

from page six

me that yahoos who parade around in camo toting assault weapons are disrespecting military veterans who wear that garb and carry those weapons into combat. One wonders how many flag wavers think that's all there is to patriotism, and how many who wear the flag are aware that they're in violation of the Flag Code and thus disrespecting the flag. A tip of my civilian hat, and a curtsy, to the Flag Police for their unremitting vigilance. One wonders if the Flag Police t-shirts might one day be reissued (mine is wearing thin).

Stay safe and well all,
John Simon
Portsmouth, N.H.
John,
You know what might cause those would-be warriors to burn their cammies? The ability to read the minds of veterans, gazing upon them in their macho man get-ups.

Speaking of stylish haberdashery, we



would never say never about a re-issue, but currently there are no plans. Sgt. Krupke recommends wearing your current issue on special occasions only—January 20th, for example.

The Editor

—==—

Incompetence and Negligence at the Top Dear Sir:

In a recent interview regarding the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, Governor Sununu said, "The State could be looking at 500 to 1,000 new daily cases by the end of the month." He further stated, "I am assuming we're beginning the phase of a very aggressive spike." Dr. Benjamin Chan, the New Hampshire State Epidemiologist warned, "This is a virus that likes to take advantage of crowds, groups of people gathering in close contact and indoor spaces, and it's these settings which are going to pose a challenge as we enter

the colder months."

Clearly, the Governor and Dr. Chan understand the coming tsunami of Covid-19 that will soon strike New Hampshire. One would think that with the knowledge of what is coming, and having had an ample warning, the Governor would take the necessary preventive measures now to limit the toll of disease and death coming our way. And since Dr. Chan has told us where the greatest risks are, one would think that the Governor would put in place public health measures now to protect the people of New Hampshire. Unfortunately, the old adage forewarned is forearmed is not being employed by our Governor. We are the only New England State without a mandatory mask order in place. Even as the science clearly demonstrates that mask orders prevent disease transmission

and deaths, the Governor refuses to do what is in the best interest of New Hampshire.

It is one thing to suffer from a disaster when little or nothing could be done to prevent or lessen its consequences. However, when you have ample warning, and you have the knowledge of what can and should be done to prevent or lessen the consequences of a disaster, and still do not take these actions, that represents gross incompetence and negligence.

Unfortunately, New Hampshire will experience many preventable cases and deaths from Covid-19 over the coming months. Failure to take the necessary and responsible steps now will have lasting effects on our health, economy and our society.

Rich DiPentima, MPH
Portsmouth, N.H.

—==—

Rich:

For a while it seemed impossible to turn on NHPR without hearing Governor Sununu the Lesser talking ad nauseam about what he'd allegedly been doing. Either he's cut back on that, or we've been leaving the Philco turned off to avoid him.

As you point out, what he has not been doing is leading. That would require the courage to buck not only the lunatic clinging to the White House, but his death cult followers here in the Granite State.

The Editor

—==—

Forest ranger at Yosemite National Park, explaining why it is hard to design the perfect garbage bin to keep bears from breaking into it: "There is considerable overlap between the intelligence of the smartest bears and the dumbest tourists."

— @mathematicsprof

—==—

Learning, n. The kind of ignorance distinguishing the studious.

— Ambrose Bierce

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ADMIRAL FOWLE’S PISCATAQUA RIVER TIDAL GUIDE (NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES)

Portsmouth, arguably the first town in this country not founded by religious extremists, is bounded on the north and east by the Piscataqua River, the second, third, or fourth fastest-flowing navigable river in the country, depending on

whom you choose to believe. The Piscataqua’s ferocious current is caused by the tide, which, in turn, is caused by the moon. The other player is a vast sunken valley — Great Bay — about ten miles upriver. Twice a day, the moon

drags about seventeen billion gallons of seawater — enough to fill 2,125,000 tanker trucks — up the river and into Great Bay. This creates a roving hydraulic conflict, as incoming sea and the outgoing river collide. The skirmish line

moves from the mouth of the river, up past New Castle, around the bend by the old Naval Prison, under Memorial Bridge, past the tugboats, and on into Great Bay. This can best be seen when the tide is rising.

Twice a day, too, the moon lets all that water go. All the seawater that just fought its way upstream goes back home to the ocean. This is when the Piscataqua earns its title for xth fastest current. Look for the red buoy, at the upstream end of

Badger’s Island, bobbing around in the current. It weighs several tons, and it bobs and bounces in the current like a cork. The river also has its placid moments, around high and low tides. When the river rests, its tugboats

and bridges work their hardest. Ships coming in laden with coal, oil, and salt do so at high tide, for more clearance under their keels. They leave empty, riding high in the water, at low tide, to squeeze under Memorial Bridge.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22	MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23	TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24	WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25	THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26	FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27	SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28
2000—Two dozen well-dressed ho- ligans, many on the GOP’s payroll, intimidate Miami election officials into shutting down a Presidential recount. 1975—<i>U.S.S. John F. Kennedy</i> and <i>U.S.S. Belknap</i> collide in the night near Sicily. A two-hour fire aboard the <i>Belknap</i> stops 30 feet short of the nuclear weapons magazine. 1963—In Dallas, Texas, President John F. Kennedy is assassinated; at whose bidding is a matter of dispute. 1963—In Paris, a CIA man hands a lethal pen to a Cuban for use on Fidel Castro, at the behest of Bobby Kennedy. 1963—Don B. Reynolds’ testimony to a secret Senate committee, that LBJ took bribes, is halted by assassination. 1941—Germany’s top fighter pilot, Werner Mölders, dies as a passenger in a plane crash on his way to the funeral of the Luftwaffe’s Generaloberst Ernst Udet, a suicide. 1930—Prophet Elijah Mohammed founds the Nation of Islam. 1909—Tired of talk from male labor leaders, Clara Lemlich, 23, moves that garment workers strike. Next day, 20,000 women walk off the job; they win shorter hours, higher pay, and better working conditions. 1887—White militiamen put down a sugar cane strike by killing 35 to 300 Black workers in Thibodaux, La. 1865—Mississippi adopts the nation’s first “Black Codes,” to “confer Civil Rights on Freedmen”—by denying them those rights, apparently.	1986—Two men escape from a maximum-security prison in Rome in a hijacked helicopter. 1981—R. Reagan signs a secret directive creating the [illegal] Contras. 1976—Jerry Lee Lewis is arrested outside Graceland for waving a pistol and demanding to see Elvis. 1970—A Lithuanian radio operator jumps from a Russian tawler onto the deck of the Coast Guard cutter <i>Vigilant</i>. Commander Ralph Eustis allows Soviet sailors to board the cutter and seize the radioman. 1958—On TV: Ron & Nancy Reagan in “A Turkey for the President.” 1946—To teach “a severe lesson”—namely, that Vietnam is ruled by the French—the cruiser <i>Suffren</i> shells the hell out of Haiphong, killing 6,000. So began the First Indochina War. 1936—In San Antonio, bluesman Robert Johnson begins a legendary three-day recording session. 1918—In Scotland’s Scapa Flow, the German submarine <i>U-18</i> is sunk by the fishing trawler <i>Dorothy Gray</i>. 1903—Colo. Gov. James Peabody sends militia to Cripple Creek, and suspends <i>habeas corpus</i>, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly, all to crush the Western Federation of Miners. He ends up inspiring the IWW. 1899—The first jukebox plays in a San Francisco saloon. 1876—After a year on the lam in Cuba and Spain, Tammany Hall’s “Boss” Tweed is jailed in NYC.	2006—“The only way we can win [in Iraq],” says George W.[MD] Bush, “is to leave before the job is done.” 1979—The U.S. admits troops in ‘Nam were hit by Agent Orange. 1976—Steven B. Williams rams a White House gate with his pickup truck at 25 mph. It doesn’t budge. 1971—Toting \$200,000 in ransom cash, “D.B. Cooper” parachutes from a hijacked 727 over Washington State, into oblivion and America’s heart. 1965—<i>The New York Times</i> runs a full-page ad signed by 500 WW II and Korean War vets protesting escalation of the Vietnam War. 1963—Strip joint proprietor Jack Ruby, to spare Jackie Kennedy’s feelings, shoots Lee Harvey Oswald under the watchful eye of the Dallas Police Department and the TV cameras. 1961—An overheated electric motor in Colorado cuts off all communications between SAC and NORAD. 1953—Sen. Joe McCarthy (R-Wisc.) claims the Truman administration is “crawling with Communists.” 1947—All but 17 Congressmen vote to cite the Hollywood Ten for contempt after they take the 5th. 1922—Erskine Childers, a Brit supporter of Irish independence charged with carrying a pistol, is executed while his case is on appeal. He says to his firing squad, “Take a step forward, lads. It will be easier that way.” 1759—Tobias Smollet is guilty of libeling an admiral, gets three months.	1997—In Plymouth, Mass., police serve Native American demonstrators a generous helping of pepper-spray. 1986—As Ed “Meese is a Pig” Meese confesses that profits from illegal arms sales to Iran went to Nicaraguan <i>contras</i>, a reluctant Ronald Reagan fires Lt. Col. Oliver North. 1974—Britain outlaws the IRA after two bombs kill 21 and injure over 100 in Birmingham. 1968—Death of Upton Sinclair, writer and media critic. 1955—The ICC bans racial segregation in interstate bus transportation; the ban is ignored, though, until Freedom Riders force the issue in 1961. 1950—Great Appalachian Storm winds hit 110 mph in Concord, N.H. 1947—For refusing to rat out their friends to Congress, the Hollywood Ten are fired by studio bosses. 1915—William J. Simmons burns a cross at Stone Mountain, Ga., founding the new, improved Ku Klux Klan: it hates Catholics and Jews, too. 1864—Confederate arsonists set more than twenty fires, attempting to destroy New York City. 1783—Redcoats evacuate New York as General Washington and the victorious Continental Army arrive. 1120—King Henry’s only heir William Adelin sails for England aboard the <i>White Ship</i>. The ship’s crew, drunk, is told to make haste; hitting a rock, it capsizes. All down but a butcher. England is in chaos for decades.	2000—Katherine Harris, Florida’s Secretary of State and, coincidentally, the Bush campaign’s state co-chair, declares Dubya the winner. 1975—George Gainous, son of a hero-oin importer, climbs the White House fence to ask for his father’s pardon. Arrested 90 minutes later while chatting with President Ford’s daughter Susan, he later says, “If [Ford] can pardon Nixon he can pardon my father.” 1973—Rose Mary Woods takes the fall for the 18½ minute gap. 1933—Thomas H. Thurmond and John M. Holmes are lynched in San Jose, Calif. Jackie Coogan—“Uncle Fester,” 30 years later—helps ready a rope. Judge Timothy Fitzpatrick says in his personal opinion, the mob “did a damned good job.” Gov. “Sonny Jim” Rolph vows to pardon anyone convicted, but no one is even charged. 1932—In his newspaper column, Will Rogers mocks Herbert Hoover’s theory of “trickle-down economics.” 1922—Howard Carter and his employer Lord Carnarvon desecrate the tomb of King Tutankhamun. 1921—Former Lt. Col. Charles W. Whittlesey, 37, commander of the “Lost Battalion” and a pallbearer for the Unknown Soldier, leaps from a ship and drowns in the Atlantic. 1910—Six workers burn to death and 19 die jumping from the fourth floor of a Newark textile shop. “Misadventure and accident” said the coroner’s jury; penalty for the owner: \$0.00.	2002—Donald Rumsfeld signs off on “Category III” interrogation techniques—namely, torture. 2001—Gen. Tommy Franks, working on catching Osama bin Laden, is told by Donald Rumsfeld to drop that and revise plans to attack Iraq. 1997—In New York, a lampost fatally stabs Macy’s Barney the Dinosaur balloon. Meanwhile, the Cat in the Hat knocks over a lampost, which then falls on two women, putting one in a month-long coma. 1969—At the 71st Evacuation Hospital in Pleiku, 100 soldiers fast on Thanksgiving to protest the war. 1965—The first Acid Test. 1953—“I knew it,” says 65 year-old Eugene O’Neill. “Born in a goddamn hotel room, dying in a hotel room.” 1932—Edward Marshall, future beat poet, is born in Chichester, N.H. 1900—To convince a Filipino town’s president he should rat out local rebels, U.S. troops force salt water down his throat and burn down his town. 1868—In the Battle of the Washita, General George A. Custer and his troops massacre Black Kettle and 102 other Cheyenne survivors of the Sand Creek Massacre. 1729—The Natchez people repay decades of haughty brutality by massacring 230 Frenchmen. Women and enslaved Africans are spared. 1095—Pope Urban II launches the Crusades, promising salvation for those who die slaying pagans. Jihad?	2014—Cards Against Humanity, to express its disdain for consumerism on Black Friday, removes all products but one from its online store: a \$6 box of “literal feces, from an actual bull.” 2008—At a Long Island Wal-Mart, shoppers literally bust doors and trample Jimmytai Damour, 34, to death. 2005—Ex-Rep. Randy “Duke” Cunningham (R-Calif.) pleads guilty to selling votes and dodging taxes. 1979—Bogus data from HQ sends Air New Zealand Flight 901 into Antarctica’s Mount Erebus; 257 perish. HQ’s “orchestrated litany of lies” eventually fails, and HQ’s busted. 1945—“As I understand it from the doctors,” Gen. Leslie R. Groves tells a Senate committee, radiation poisoning “is a very pleasant way to die.” 1942—The Cocoanut Grove in Boston burns; 492 die, 172 are injured. 1936—Basil Zaharoff, the world’s fifth richest man, dies in bed at 87—four times older than those who died using the weapons he sold to all sides. 1925—The American Legion’s “Americanism” honcho says communists have no right to free speech. 1919—N.H.-born Maj. Gen. Leonard Wood—on active duty—says of radicals, “Ship ‘em or shoot ‘em.” 1858—The luxury yacht <i>Wanderer</i>, sleek, fast, and refitted for a trade outlawed 50 years earlier, docks at Jekyll Island, Georgia. The 409 enslaved Africans who survived the passage are the next-to-last such cargo to arrive.
4:51 5:06	5:54 6:11	6:52 7:12	7:45 8:08	8:32 8:57	9:14 9:42	9:53 10:23
10:45 11:26	11:52	12:25 12:56	1:20 1:53	2:09 2:42	2:54 3:27	3:34 4:07
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29	MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30	TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1	WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2	THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3	FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4	SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5

2015—Professing concern about the lives of fetuses, Robert L. Dear murders three adults and wounds nine more as he shoots up a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado.

2011—Ex-Arapahoe County (Colo.) Sheriff Patrick Sullivan, arrested for exchanging methamphetamine for sex with a male informant, is incarcerated in an eponymous jail.

1976—After Jerry Lee Lewis accidentally plugs his bass player in the chest twice with a .357 magnum, he’s charged with discharging a firearm within city limits.

1963—LBJ sets up the Warren Commission to rule out a conspiracy in the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

1960—On learning that, thanks to the CIA, the Congo’s Patrice Lumumba had been arrested, genial old Ike orders that to heighten its efforts to assassinate Fidel Castro.

1947—French soldiers massacre over 300 civilians, mostly women and children, halving the population of My Trach, in Vietnam.

1864—Ignoring a truce flag, Col. (& ex-minister) John Chivington leads a Colorado militia in the slaughter and mutilation of 150 Cheyenne women, children, and old men at Sand Creek. A local paper says the soldiers had “covered themselves in glory” (a typo).

1781—His ship *Zong* low on water, captain Luke Collingwood orders 133 enslaved souls thrown overboard live, to stick underwriters with the loss.

2016—Trump spokesperson Scottie Nell Hughes—pro-gun despite her brother having been shot dead at eight by a 12-year-old—tells NPR’s Diane Rehm, “There’s no such thing, unfortunately, anymore, of facts.” [sic]

1999—A WTO meeting in Seattle is called off due to anarchists.

1974—Rep. Wilbur Mills (D-Ark.) appears onstage at Boston’s Pilgrim Theater with stripper Fanne Foxe.

1972—Nixon spokesperson Ron Zeigler says with only 27,000 Americans left risking their lives in Vietnam, the White House is done updating the nation on withdrawals.

1965—Defense Secretary Robert Strange McNamara offers LBJ two Vietnam options: get out now, or go all-in, suffering 1,000 KIAs per month and perhaps losing anyway.

1954—Failing to clear the summit by 500 feet, a DC-3 crashes on N.H.’s Mount Success. All seven aboard survive the crash, but only five survive two freezing nights at the crash site.

1954—Liz Hodges of Sylacauga, Ala. is bruised by an eight-pound meteorite that busts through her roof.

1835—A “a hack writer,” in William Faulkner’s view, “who would not have been considered fourth rate in Europe,” is born: Samuel L. Clemens.

1812—Troops under the bombastic and disorganized General Alexander “Apocalypse” Smyth disobey his orders to invade Canada and turn their weapons on his tent. He flees.

2017—One-time Trump National Security Advisor and ex-general Michael Flynn does the perp walk.

2007—Presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani, at Federal Cigar in Portsmouth, refuses to autograph a *New Hampshire Gazette* for counterman Dave McNicholas, but agrees to sign a photo of himself—which he takes with him when he leaves.

2003—Howard Dean, leading the pack in polling, tells Chris Matthews he’ll “break up the giant media enterprises;” giant media enterprises soon label Dean “unelectable.”

1969—The U.S. Selective Service guts the anti-war movement by holding a draft lottery.

1968—The Walker Commission reports that the Chicago PD rioted during the Democratic Convention.

1964—In J. Edgar Hoover’s FBI office, purportedly for a reconciliation, the Director reveals information to Martin Luther King, Jr., demonstrating that he’s under illegal surveillance.

1955—On a bus in Montgomery, Ala, Rosa Parks changes the world.

1842—Secretary of War John C. Spencer’s son Philip, 19, a midshipman aboard the *U.S.S. Somers*, along with two sailors, and without benefit of court martial, is hanged for mutiny.

1777—Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben lands in Portsmouth, N.H. from France, *en route* to Valley Forge, where he will turn Washington’s rabble into a trained army.

1986—Pres. Ronald Reagan says he can’t remember what he knew about Iran-Contra, or when he knew it.

1984—Union Carbide’s Bhopal, India plant springs a leak. It’s a corporation, though, so, no consequences—other than up to 16,000 people dead.

1980—Lyndon LaRouche’s *Executive Intelligence Review* breaks the story of the “October Surprise.”

1980—U.S.-backed death squads murder four nuns in El Salvador.

1975—Mary Jo Cook, repentant, testifies the FBI paid her to infiltrate Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

1956—*Granma* lands 82 rebels in Cuba. Only 12 make it to the Sierra Maestra, but that was enough.

1954—The Senate votes to “condemn” Joe McCarthy. N.H. Senator Styles Bridges is one of 22 “No” votes.

1949—The U.S.A.F. asks GE workers at Hanford, Wash. to turn off air filters for a test. Oops—twice the intended amount of radiation gets out.

1946—Oakland, Calif. comes to a halt as 100,000 workers go on a General Strike. Two days later Teamster boss Dave Beck sells them out.

1943—The *U.S.S. Sailfish*, formerly the *Squalus*, sinks the Japanese carrier *Chuyo* near Truk. Aboard *Chuyo* are 21 survivors from the *U.S.S. Sculpin*, which had aided in the 1939 rescue of the *Squalus*; only one of them survives.

1942—Enrico Fermi fires up the first sustainable atomic chain reaction under a Chicago football stadium.

2013—In Londonderry, N.H., failed Senate nominee Scott Brown says “I don’t think I ever said I was thinking about running for president,” 16 weeks after telling the *Boston Herald* he was thinking about running for president.

2004—George W.[MD] Bush nominates Bernard Kerik (later to be known as Federal Inmate 84888-054) to be Secretary of Homeland Security.

1996—A New York company making Medals of Honor is fined \$80,000 for selling 300 bootleg copies.

1983—U.S. Information Agency head Charles Z. Wick says Margaret Thatcher opposed the invasion of Grenada because she’s a woman.

1980—Secretary of State Al Haig says four Maryknoll nuns recently murdered by Salvadoran death squads may have been gun-runners.

1979—Fans stamped at a Who concert in Cincinnati, 11 die.

1969—Protesters destroy files at eight N.Y. draft boards.

1966—The AEC explodes a .38 kiloton A-bomb 10 miles west of Purvis, Miss., inside an underground cavity created by a 5 kiloton A-bomb blast conducted two years earlier.

1964—600 police arrest 800 protesters in Berkeley; 900 faculty members call for amnesty.

1944—In Athens, Greece, 200,000 demonstrate against Churchill’s policy of disarming anti-fascist guerrillas, whom he calls “miserable banditti.” British troops open fire, killing 28.

2016—To free the fictitious child sex slaves of the Democrat Party, Edgar Welch shoots up Comet Ping Pong in Washington D.C. with a real gun.

1993—R.I.P. Frank Zappa.

1982—Returning from a trip to Latin America, President Reagan says, “I learned a lot. You’d be surprised. They’re all individual countries.”

1981—President Reagan OK’s CIA spying on U.S. citizens.

1979—French commandos “convert to Islam,” then help the Saudi military drive rebels from Grand Mosque. The indiscriminate killing by these infidels enrages Osama bin Laden; the CIA concludes the episode is not a sign of widespread Islamic radicalism.

1969—Chicago cops, aided by the CIA, murder Black Panther security guard Mark Clark, then assassinate Fred Hampton, who’s been drugged.

1952—A “Great Smog” so thick moviegoers couldn’t see the screen descends on London. It lasts all winter and kills about 12,000.

1950—In *Feres v. U.S.*, the Supreme Court rules that servicemembers can’t sue the U.S. for injuries.

1947—On orders from genial ol’ Ike, the Attorney General publishes a list of 51 “subversive organizations.”

1837—In the Arkansas State House, Speaker John Wilson and Joseph Anthony debate wolf bounties with the aid of Bowie knives. Wilson, the winner, is later acquitted of murder.

2013—Scott Brown, in N.H., says he’s been helping Republicans “raise awareness as to the issues...here in Massachusetts.”

2002—At a party on Strom Thurmond’s 100th birthday, GOP Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott expresses regret over desegregation.

2001—A B-52, sent the wrong co-ordinates, bombs U.S. Special Forces in Afghanistan, killing three.

1996—Fed Chair Greenspan warns: “irrational exuberance” may have inflated stock prices.

1994—The House of Alleged Representatives elects Newt Gingrich the first Republican Speaker in 40 years.

1988—A Grand Jury in N.C. indicts “holy” man Jim Bakker on charges of fraud and conspiracy.

1965—An A-4 Skyhawk accidentally rolls off the *U.S.S. Ticonderoga* near Japan. Plane, pilot, and one-megaton B43 are still missing.

1960—The Supreme Court rules that restaurants in interstate bus stations can’t be segregated anymore.

1955—The CIO, red-baited into irrelevancy anyway, merges with the AFL.

1955—“Uppity Negroes” in Montgomery, Ala., boycott the municipal mass transit system.

1945—Navy Flight 19—five Avengers, 14 men—goes “poof” off Ft. Lauderdale; 13 searchers vanish, too.

1894—Alabama repeals its child labor laws in a bid to entice a Massachusetts textile corporation. It works.



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