

The Fortnightly Rant

Strangely Predictable

The *Union Leader** revealed on Sunday that its former publisher William Loeb sexually abused his daughter and his step-daughter. Ordinarily we try to avoid clichés, but this is a special occasion: yes, we are shocked, but no, we are not surprised.

Readers under a certain age may not appreciate the magnitude of this revelation. In recent decades the statewide daily has been but a shadow of its former self. For more than thirty years, though, beginning in 1946, the *Union Leader* was New Hampshire's *Pravda* and Bill Loeb was its Stalin. His vitriolic editorials ran on the front page, thundering against anyone who dared to deviate from his party line. Democratic politicians could perhaps afford to criticize Loeb, but few of them had any power. Republicans generally held their tongues.

For a sense of his journalistic style, let us turn to a 1971 profile of Loeb in the *New York Times*. The following message, addressed to those taking part in the Moratorium To End The War In Vietnam, ran across the top of the front page on October 15, 1969, much of it in lurid red ink:

"ATTENTION ALL PEACE MARCHERS: Hippies, Yippies, Beatniks, Peaceniks, yellow-bellies, traitors. Commies, and their agents and dupes—HELP KEEP OUR CITY CLEAN! . . . Just By Staying Out of It!—The Editors."

For the record, the hyper-patriotic Loeb was also a chickenhawk. He dodged the draft for WW II—the "Good" War—by aggravating a sup-

posed ulcer with copious amounts of alcohol. His cowardice did not reflect, though, any principled objection to violence. He reportedly once shot the office cat with a semi-automatic pistol habitually kept on his person.

Loeb lifted the paper's motto from Daniel Webster: "There is nothing so powerful as truth." It's a partial quote, actually. Webster went on to say, "...and often nothing so strange." The only thing stranger than Loeb himself—see Kevin Cash's 1975 biography, *Who the Hell IS William Loeb?* for that—is how such a monster could dominate this state for so long.

Because, to a large extent, he still does. When Governor Chris Sununu jabbers on about "The New Hampshire Advantage," he's referring primarily to our regressive tax structure. It was set in stone—granite, of course—by Loeb and his cronies, Governor Meldrim Thomson: no broad-based taxes, period, and especially no income tax. Obviously any putative advantage goes solely to the wealthy.

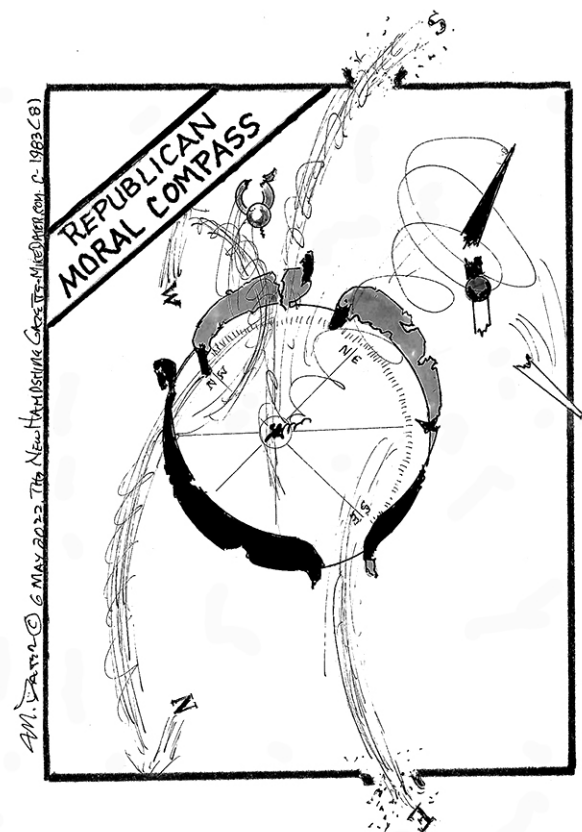
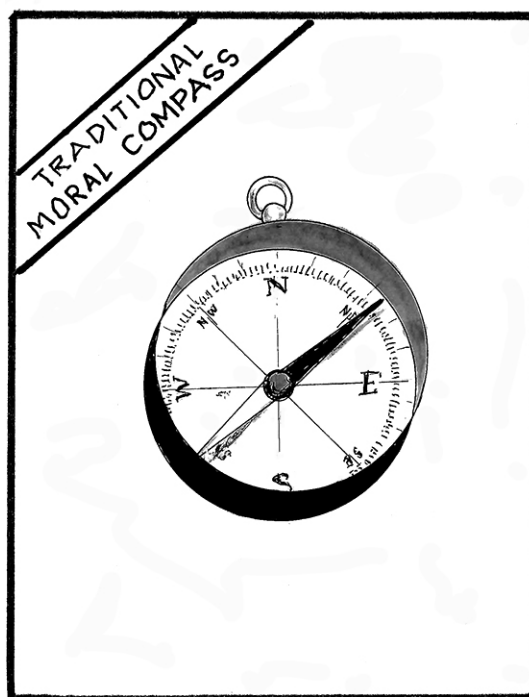
Now, like the name of some discredited pharaoh being chiseled into oblivion, Loeb's name has been stripped from the *Union Leader's* masthead.[†]

Sunday's *Union Leader* bombshell triggered in us a case of *déjà vu*.

In May, 2001, the *Union Leader's* then-publisher Joe McQuaid ran his second-best piece of journalism ever,[‡] blowing the whistle on his

[†] We denounce this cowardly, ahistorical—indeed, Stalinistic—maneuver. Should we remove the name of Daniel Fowle, our Founder, from our masthead for his enslavement of Primus X? Only by confronting the past honestly can we hope to move forward.

[‡] The best was an editorial published May 14, 2015, which read, in its entirety, "Frank Guinta is a damned liar."



own father, *Union Leader* editor B.J. McQuaid; his grandfather, Commissioner of Motor Vehicles John F. Griffin; and U.S. Senator Styles Bridges—said to have been the most powerful political figure ever to represent New Hampshire in Washington, D.C.

"Dead End," ran the first big headline, "Whose car killed Della Call in 1936? Rumors point to high places in Concord." The short version is this: Bridges, the Governor of New Hampshire and Senator-elect, was at the wheel of a car on November 12, 1936 when Della Call was killed and another woman was injured in a hit-and-run accident in Chichester. Griffin and McQuaid helped cover up the crime.

For those who scoff at "conspiracy theories," here's the math: this one involved dozens of people, kept the truth hidden for 65 years, and was not exposed until all the guilty parties were long dead.

Not that exposure matters all

that much when you're a right wing muckety-muck with the stature of Loeb or Bridges. McQuaid's 2001 article was promptly forgotten. If not for our file copy, retrieved from the New Hampshire Historical Society, we'd wonder if we imagined the whole thing.

Eleven years later there was some talk about stripping Bridges' name from a stretch of I-95 and the New Hampshire Governor's mansion. It was spurred by a 2012 *New Yorker* article which briefly noted that Bridges, an ally of Joe McCarthy, had blackmailed Senator Lester Hunt [D-Wyo.]. Retire, Bridges said, or you'll see your son's arrest for homosexual behavior written up in the papers. Hunt shot himself in his Senate office.

To this day, though, Bridges' name remains on the highway, and on the Governor's mansion—which, in another ignored scandal, he almost certainly bought with under-the-table cash from the China Lobby.

Modern-day conservatism is remarkably paradoxical. While it claims to be clear-cut, straightforward, and unbending, in fact it turns out to be as flexible as a sideshow gymnast.

So what if the public supports abortion rights by a margin of two to one? Forget all that blather you heard about "settled law" at confirmation hearings. Five Supreme Court justices—all appointed by presidents who lost the popular vote—have decided the people are wrong. They're ready to throw out *Roe v. Wade*.

Meanwhile our Hereditary Governor Chris Sununu calls himself "pro-choice...[and] committed to upholding *Roe v. Wade*." Last year, though, he signed the state's first-ever ban on second-trimester abortions.

The law also requires minors made pregnant through incest to notify a parent or guardian before getting an abortion.

The Alleged News®

Virus? What Virus?

Well—we sure are glad that's finally over.

The Covid-19 pandemic, a once-in-a-century pain in the butt, has finally ended. Everyone is free to roam around, inhaling and exhaling at will. Within the next fortnight the acknowledged U.S. death toll is going to top one million, but never mind all that depressing stuff—it's morning in America, again!

At least, so it seems. New Hampshire closed its testing clinics in March, just as winter was beginning to let up. Portsmouth's iconic brick sidewalks are clogged with tourists from all over hell and gone. Some of them fly here, spending hours in a metal tube, sharing the air, unmasked, with who knows who.

There used to be a CDC mandate requiring air travelers to mask up. Certain individuals, though, decided

that masks were the perfect litmus test for our never-ending culture war.

Last month Katherine Mizelle—the youngest Federal judge on the bench, appointed by a traitor and confirmed by a lame duck Senate despite a "not qualified" rating from the American Bar Association—overruled the CDC and threw out the mandate.

The CDC was empowered in 1944 to issue regulations regarding "sanitation" in order to combat infectious diseases. Mizelle decided that the law's wording restricted the CDC's authority to "measures that clean something."

"Wearing a mask cleans nothing. At most, it traps virus droplets. But it neither 'sanitizes' the person wearing the mask nor 'sanitizes' the conveyance."

No, it just prevents the air inside the conveyance from becoming contaminated with a potentially-fatal virus, that's all.

For a more learned rebuttal of Mizelle's rash ruling, let us turn to Steven Lubet, a Professor of Law at Northwestern, who dissected the flimsiness of Mizelle's argument in *The Hill*.

"[Mizelle] cited the 1948 *Funk & Wagnall's Dictionary* ('the removal and neutralization of elements injurious to health') and the 1942 *Webster's New International Dictionary* ('rendering sanitary'), declaring that she had to choose one or the other.

"In fact, Mizelle strategically skipped even likelier, more comprehensive definitions from the very sources she cited. The full definition in the 1942 *Webster's Dictionary* is 'a rendering sanitary; science of

sanitary conditions; use of sanitary measures,' with no restriction to cleaning."

Blatant dishonesty? Or mere incompetence? Alas, that's the perennial question of our era.

No matter, though. By the time the courts knock down Mizelle's ruling, the latest Covid variant will have had plenty of time to knock down a few thousand more hapless Americans.

By the way, did we mention—not that it's at all relevant—that Katherine Mizelle's husband is Chad Mizelle, formerly an assistant counsel to Dolt #45, and since January an employee at Affinity Partners?

Affinity is Jared Kushner's "investment firm," which recently landed \$2 billion from the Saudis.

Affinity for what? Bone saws and dirty money, one supposes.

Montpelier Governing Board Tries Disenfranchising Black Descendants

As everyone knows, or used to know, Montpelier is the name of the grand Virginia estate which was once the home of James Madison. Civics currently being in such a parlous state, we'll note as well that Madison was the Fourth President of these States which, out of sheer momentum, we still insist on calling United.

Montpelier was a plantation, an agricultural enterprise operating according to the market principles in effect at that time—which is to say, nearly all the hard work was done by people who were enslaved. It's estimated that between five and seven generations were held in bondage by the Madisons at Montpelier, about

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from page one

100 at any given time.

Montpelier's last private owner was Marion duPont Scott, great-granddaughter of the gunpowder tycoon Eleuthère Irénée du Pont. It now belongs to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and is managed by a Board of Directors.

Last June the Board announced that it would "share authority equally with descendants of people who were once enslaved there," as the *Washington Post* put it.

In late March, though, the Board reneged, rewriting its bylaws to take away the ability of the Montpelier Descendants Committee [MDC] to name members to the Board.

According to a March 25th article in the *Washington Post*, a "majority of the site's roughly 40 full-time employees wrote an unsigned resolution urging the board not to approve the change...."

"The employees supplied their names to *The Washington Post* but most asked that they not be published for fear of retaliation."

At that time the National Trust

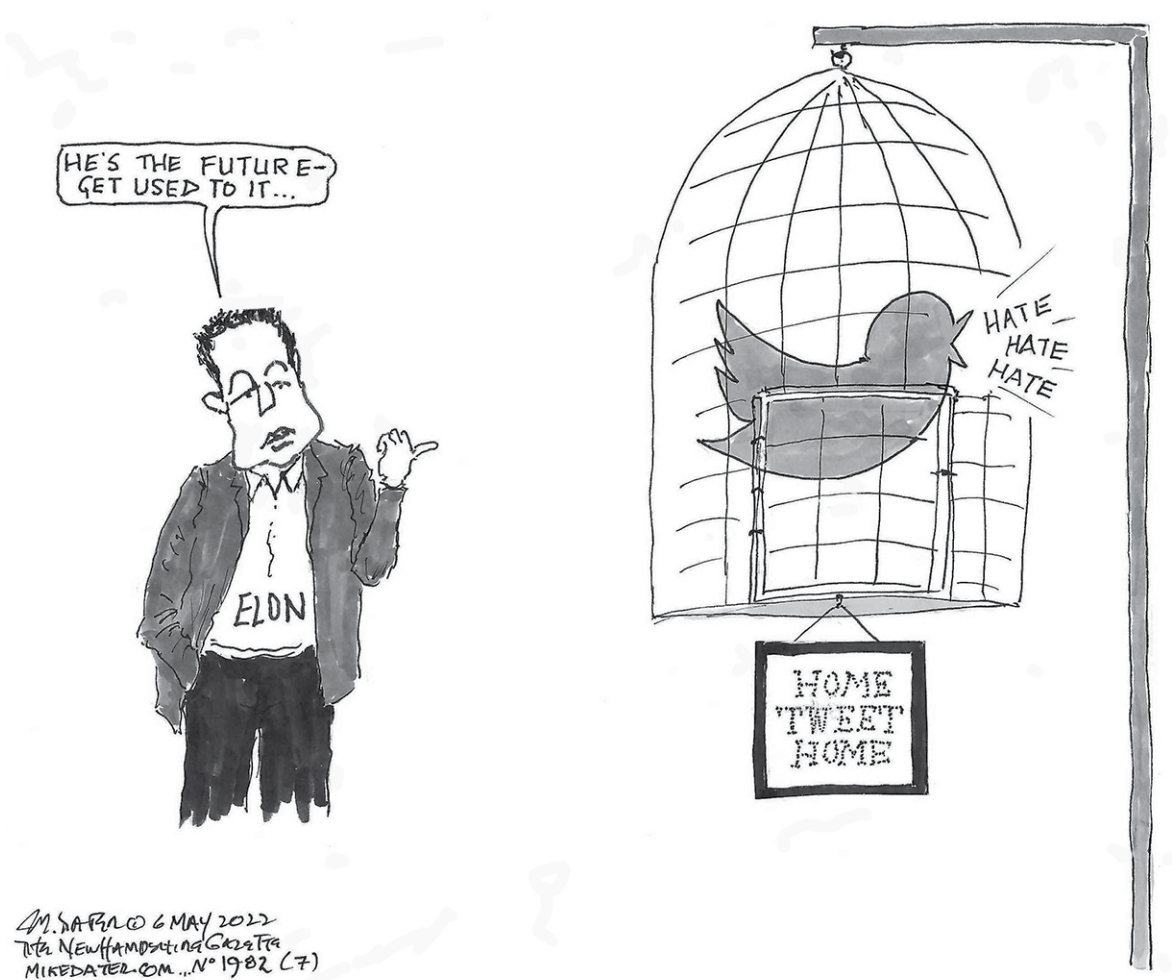
"wrote [Board chair Gene] Hickok," according to the *Post*, "and urged him 'in the strongest possible terms' not to go ahead with changing the bylaws." Last Thursday the Trust went further, releasing a statement supporting the "esteemed slate of recommended nominees" of the MDC.

In a rare instance of racial justice apparently prevailing, the Board announced on Monday that it would "approve the new MDC candidates at its May 16 meeting," according to the *Orange County [Virginia] Review*.

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**Who Bankrolled Ginni Thomas as She Sought to Overthrow the 2020 Presidential Election? And who funded the \$1.5 million ad buy attacking Ketanji Brown Jackson and promoting Justice Thomas?**

by Lisa Graves

On Tuesday of this week, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) is chairing a subcommittee hearing for the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee on judicial ethics and transparency. This interrogation of the outside forces undermining the fairness of



Last November the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire installed a new bronze plaque in this little park at the corner of Church and Porter streets. Now a part of BHTNH's Self-Guided Tour of Portsmouth, the plaque honors Pomp and Candace Spring. In addition to supplying the town with bread and other baked goods, the couple are thought to have played a role in the Underground Railroad.

the U.S. Supreme Court is sorely needed. Respect for the Supreme Court has nose-dived, according to a 2022 Pew poll, with the share of Americans who see the Court in a favorable light reaching the lowest level in nearly four decades. Just 16 percent of Americans surveyed believe the justices do a good job keeping politics out of their decision-making.

The extremism and extreme partisanship of the right-wing faction dominating the Court has been laid bare by the cases they hand-picked out of thousands to rule on this term, which may result in radically reactionary edicts that overturn *Roe v. Wade*, gut the EPA, and push religion further into public schools. Such declarations by the Court that Donald Trump packed with the help of dark money would be starkly at odds with long-standing legal precedents and the views of most

Americans.

The expanding scandal surrounding Justice Clarence Thomas and his wife Ginni have deepened the crisis engulfing John Roberts' Court.

One component of the way dark money continues to pervert the Court occurred just last month.

A curious thing happened during the wrangling over Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson's Supreme Court nomination: a secretly-funded \$1.5 million ad launched, focused on... Justice Clarence Thomas. It used Judge Jackson as a hook to promote a fawning biopic on Thomas.

Just one day later, the *Washington Post* and CBS broke the news that Thomas's wife, Ginni, had repeatedly texted Trump's Chief of Staff, Mark Meadows, to overturn the 2020 presidential election. She even told Meadows which lawyer should lead the fight, namely conspiracy theorist Sidney Powell.

As public outcry over the actions of the spouse of a Supreme Court justice was about to explode, the ad was unveiled, polishing her husband's image. That's crisis management 101, and it amounts to a massive gift to the Thomases.

The front group behind the ad calls itself the Judicial Crisis Network (JCN), but who wrote the check?

JCN is no impartial party. It's the signature group of the Thomases' long-time ally, Leonard Leo, who sits at the center of a court capture network that spent millions in dark money to put three new allies for Clarence Thomas on the Court: Justices Coney Barrett, Kavanaugh, and Gorsuch.

In 2019, the *Washington Post* reported Leo had raised \$250 million since 2014, which True North Research updated to nearly \$600 million, not including recent funds

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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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raised to oppose Judge Jackson.

Ginni praised Leo when she gave him an award she created a few years ago:

"I also love...Leonard Leo. [He] has single-handedly changed the face of the judiciary under the auspices of...the Federalist Society... He has many hats, that isn't even all he does. He doesn't really tell all that he does, but I know enough to know the man is a force of nature."

Like Leo, Ginni Thomas also wears many hats. As journalist Jane Mayer detailed in *The New Yorker*, Ginni has been in the thick of highly political activities, including paid consulting for FedUp PAC, backing Roy Moore's 2017 Senate bid, and Frank Gaffney's anti-Muslim group, Center for Security Policy, which has participated in Supreme Court litigation from which Justice Thomas did not recuse himself.

New revelations show Ginni Thomas wore another hat: trying to dictate whom the Trump administration hired.

With each new revelation, new questions arise. Who was paying

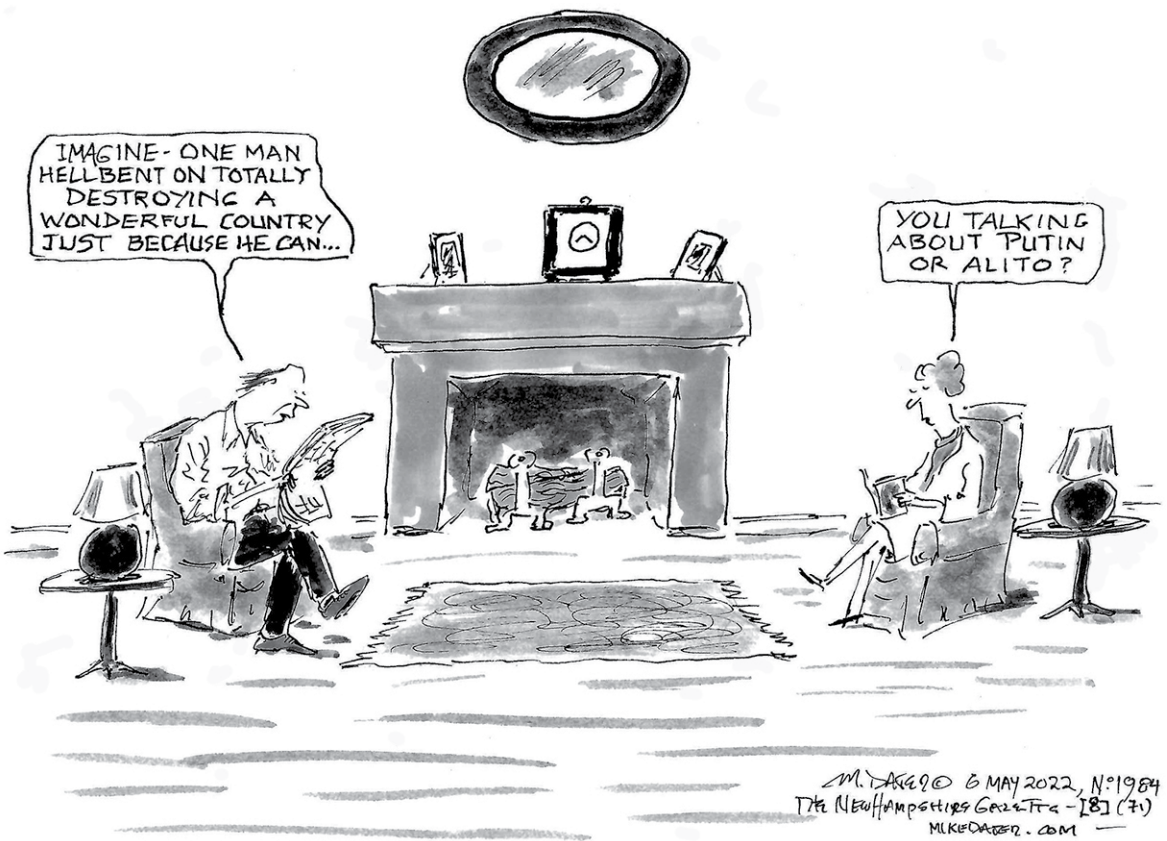
Thomas's consulting fees when she sought to install people who fit her political agenda—and purge those who did not—in the White House?

Did Thomas receive any consulting payments while she demanded the White House stop counting Americans' votes in exchanges with Meadows in November 2020. Was she acting on behalf of a client or in concert with other groups or funders?

Notably, weeks of communications between Ginni and Meadows remain missing. We do know she promoted and attended the event on the Mall that launched the bloody insurrection, but we are entirely in the dark about who was paying Thomas at the time.

Nor do we have any understanding of who Thomas was working for when her husband was the sole Justice to vote against ordering Trump to disclose White House materials related to January 6th to Congress—materials that include communications by his wife.

The financial disclosure filed by Justice Thomas does not reveal how



A sunny Sunday saw another diverse afternoon of self-expression in Market Square. Ukrainian flags, perhaps a dozen of them, constituted the middle of the bell-shaped curve. On the far left, as viewed from across the street, was a lone outlier on the political far right. His red, white, and blue signs asserted that the President is demented, called the Vice President a whore, and said "God bless Ivanka Trump." Meanwhile, a black-clad masked man in an "Antifa All Stars" shirt held a black and red flag bearing a snake and the slogan, "We Will Tread Where There Is Inequality."

much Ginni was paid in recent years, let alone the identities of her biggest clients or their funders. That's outrageous and demonstrates that disclosure rules must be reformed.

We the People have a moral right to know who is feathering the nest of a Justice sitting in judgment of cases that reach the Supreme Court. We have a right to know if they have cases before the Court or are funding groups trying to reverse legal precedents and people's rights.

The American people also have a right to know who bankrolled the PR campaign to promote Justice Thomas as the controversy over Ginni's activities became public.

From the little that we know already, however, one thing is clear: Justice Thomas should resign; his wife sought to subvert our very democracy.

If he does not, Chief Justice John Roberts should insist that Thomas retire—immediately—rather than let this corruption continue to tar the Court.

The House should initiate Thom-

as' impeachment. The January 6th Committee should hold Ginni Thomas to account if she refuses to turn over the complete records.

Finally, Congress must pass the DISCLOSE Act and AMIC-US Act, as Senators Whitehouse, Bloom, and others have implored, in order to prevent something like this from ever happening again.

Americans deserve a fair and honest Supreme Court, above reproach and devoted to the highest standard of ethics—rather than the lowest of the low with Clarence Thomas on the bench.

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Lisa Graves is executive director of True North Research. Previously, she was Deputy Assistant Attorney General at the U.S. Department of Justice in the Office of Legal Policy/Policy Development and served as Chief Counsel for Nominations for the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee for Senator Patrick Leahy. This work is licensed under Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0). Feel free to republish and share widely.

**Yes, Time Does Fly—We Checked**

It has now been 23 years since we resumed regularly-scheduled publication, here in the town of our founding. Consulting *TimeAndDate.com*, we see that from Saturday, May 1, 1999 to today is 1201 weeks. That odd number is the result of a hiccup back in the mid-oughts: a hard drive failed just a day or two before our press deadline; that edition ate up three weeks instead of two.

Rounding down to 1,200 weeks would make this our 600th consecutive more-or-less regularly scheduled issue under the current alleged management.

But—26 issues a year x 23 years only comes up with 598. Frankly we're baffled, but of this we are sure: we are forever indebted to the stalwart volunteers, past and present, whose names have graced our masthead. We are likewise grateful to our advertisers—bold enough to link their fortunes, such as they are, with ours. And, last but not least, we extend our thanks to our readers, without whom we are nothing.

**Murph's Fortnightly Quote**

"This is the nature of war: it turns us into enemies. People who have never met kill each other out of fear."

— Thich Nhat Hanh (1926-2022)  
from *Creating True Peace*

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— Edith Nesbit

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— Richard Rorty (1931-2007)  
American philosopher

— *Not-So-Random Thoughts from an Oregon Subscriber*

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Rupert's Raiders

To the Editor:

Why the lovefest between Fox's propaganda mill and Putin's Russia?

Some suggest it's coerced because Putin has "the goods" on Murdoch, compliments of ex-wife Wendi Deng. Other say the family is protecting a heavy investment in Russia's advertising market. A few even suggest it might be payback for an FBI probe into the family's business practices. More likely, it is none of the above.

In fact, the motive driving Murdoch's interest in Russia is hiding in plain sight. Fox's nightly flirtation with sedition and Tucker Carlson's meteoric ascent to stardom are happening only because Rupert Murdoch and his family smell money.

A lot of money.

Think about it. The Fox propaganda machine has proven so politically expedient and deliciously profitable here in the U.S., why wouldn't the Murdoch family jump at the opportunity to duplicate its success Russia? And, more important, why wouldn't Vladimir Putin welcome the influx of professional help to bolster his own sagging domestic disinformation campaign?

If you watch Fox, keep in mind Tucker Carlson isn't generating editorial content to benefit American viewers, he's demonstrating a lucrative product to Vladimir Putin, the richest man on the face of the earth.

Rick Littlefield  
Barrington, N.H.

Rick:

*Thanks. We weren't paranoid enough.*  
The Editor

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The Republican Party Today

Dear New Hampshire Gazette,

What is the matter with America (or rather nearly half of America)? It is troubling to realize there is no bottom to the awfulness of the Republican Party. As the party embraces fascism—yes, fascism—and its elected leaders sink further into a Trumpian web of lies, stupidity, hatred, and corruption, the American people (nearly half of them) do not seem to care.

Putin-lover Marjorie Taylor Green; Matt Gaetz, seducer of underage girls;

Josh Hawley, cheerleader for the January 6th insurrection; Lindsay Graham; Ted Cruz; Ron Johnson; gun-fetishist Lauren Boebert; Kevin McCarthy, whose lies were just captured on tape; book banner Ron DeSantis; wife abuser Hershel Walker; the imbecilic Sarah Palin; Mitch McConnell (Really, can you imagine a bigger hypocrite?). The list of despicable characters goes on and on and on. This is the Republican Party today.

A people gets the government it deserves. But what about Democrats and those Independents who still expect decency, honesty, and competence in our public officials? Those of us who still believe in democracy.

Michael Behrendt  
Durham, N.H.

Michael:

*It becomes increasingly clear that if we want good government we're going to have to fight for it like rabid wolverines to get it.*

The Editor

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Climate Change, Only Our Most Recent Global Challenge

To the Editor:

Yes, Climate Change is our most recent global challenge. However, for more than 70 years the world has been living with an even more devastating climate threat: nuclear weapons. These weapons, if launched accidentally or on purpose, would change our global climate to a nuclear winter. They are on trigger-alert status and can change our climate in 10 days, not 10 years.

But the threat from climate change is real and it is an urgent environmental challenge. Previous generations of citizens and scientists have made significant contributions to protect our health and the environment that we all currently benefit from.

Some of the contributions in the period from 1970 to 2015 are worth remembering:

- 1970 First Earth Day—official recognition promoted by Sen. Gaylord Nelson.
- 1970 Establishment of the EPA, by President Nixon.
- 1970 Clean Air Act, protection of air from pollutants.



- 1972 Clean Water Act, protecting waterways and drinking water sources.
- 1972 Ban on DDT, stopping use of pesticide linked to cancer and harm to environment.
- 1975 CAFE (Corporate Average Fuel Economy) standards for fuel efficiency of cars.
- 1978 Ban on Lead Paint, linked to brain damage.
- 1973-1980s Ban on Leaded Gasoline, linked to adverse health effects.
- 1987 Montreal Protocol, banning the use of CFCs (Chlorofluorocarbons) which were causing depletion of Ozone layer (protecting us from cancer-causing UV radiation), that Ozone hole finally closed in 2021.
- 1995 EPA rules introduce acid rain reduction trading in Sulfur Dioxide (SO2) allowances.
- 2010-2015 CAFE standard strengthened, further reducing vehicle pollution.
- 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, attempting to unite the globe to combat ongoing climate changes.

These are significant environmental improvements and protections that many countries are now copying. Environmental protection used to be a bipartisan issue. We should not allow the difficult challenges of Climate Change to stop us from continuing to unite the global community and all political parties behind this new challenge of our generation. And we should also reduce the nuclear threat on our global human community and the climate by removing nuclear weapons from trigger alert status.

Rep. Peter Somssich, Member, House Science Technology & Energy Committee  
Portsmouth, N.H.

Peter:

*Thank you. It's reassuring to be reminded that the human race has been confronted with, and actually met, some global challenges before.*

The Editor

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Always Look On The Bright Side Of Life

Dear Editor,

In 2021, President Biden successfully promoted, and Congressional Democrats passed, the American Rescue Plan, which put cash money into nearly everyone's bank account. While stores, offices, and factories were shutting down due to Covid, Biden's plan covered our lack of paychecks. Unfortunately, boosting consumer demand while production was down has caused inflation. But the alternative of people having no money for food and losing their homes would have been far worse.

Yes, the cost of gasoline is too high, thanks in part to price gouging by oil companies and Russia's war in Ukraine, but Americans should stop whining about inflation and appreciate how Biden saved us from a Covid disaster that would have been far worse without his Rescue Plan.

Republicans continue to criticize without offering a positive alternative, while Democrats are working to solve our problems despite Republican obstruction.

Bruce Joffe  
Piedmont, Calif.

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Are We Even Civilized?

Dear Editor:

Guns have become the leading cause of death for children and adolescents in the United States, surpassing car crashes, according to the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

A research letter in the medical journal examined mortality data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It found there were more than 4,300 firearm-related deaths among people under 19 in the U.S. in 2020. That is a 29 percent increase from 2019, NBC News reports.

Jason Goldstick, co-author of the letter, said that "in the last 40 years,

and almost certainly before that, this is the first time that firearm injuries have surpassed motor vehicle crashes among kids." [NBC News, *The Week*]

The United States is the only so-called "civilized" nation that can claim such a horribly disgusting, violent claim to shame. Yes, some of these deaths are due to suicide, but evidence shows that suicide attempts are more likely to result in death when a gun is used. The truth is that most of these deaths would be preventable if we had reasonable gun safety laws. The scourge of gun violence in America continues to grow uncontrollably.

Imagine if another product was responsible for causing the greatest number of deaths among children? Politicians would be tripping over themselves to pass laws to stop the carnage. But, when the cause is guns, they just run and hide behind the gun lobby's Second Amendment lunacy.

Many of the cowards who refuse to take any common sense constitutional actions to help prevent gun violence call themselves "pro life." The only life they are pro is their own political life that is supported by financial contributions from the gun lobby.

Rich DiPentima, LTC, USAF, Ret.  
Portsmouth, N.H.

Rich:

*But...but...depriving gun manufacturers of their right to make a profit from all those deaths would be a violation of the commerce clause!*

The Editor

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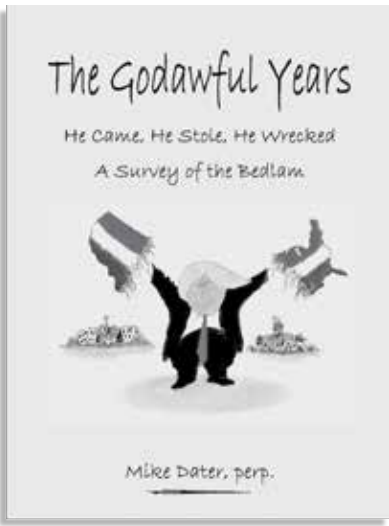
This Is Unbiased Justice?

Dear Editor:

Already, not even in summer? Roe V. Wade is scrapped? I'm a grandmother with a granddaughter, like many other women. As a UNH freshman (1963), I knew a woman in my dorm who had a non-medical abortion. She close to

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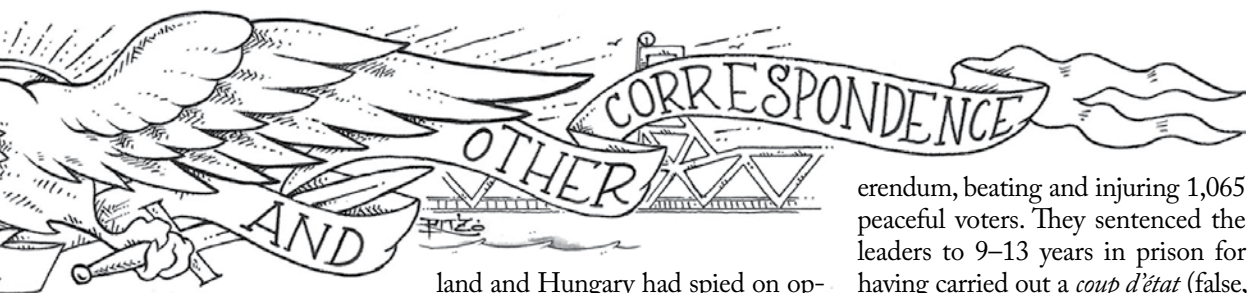
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bleed out in her bed, post the illegal procedure. Luckily someone found her. Finally, along came abortion rights, via the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973. What happened regarding health care in this most stressful situation—an unwanted pregnancy—to how many girls and women between 1963 and 1973?

But health care regarding reproduction choices became, close to 50 years ago, the legal norm. Legalizing being the right thing to do. A trained medical professional, not a person with some tool kit including coat hangers, did the procedure and was responsible for after-care. Thank you to *Roe v. Wade* decision. My granddaughter and her peers—they now are thrown to the wolves in a time of need, should that come to pass? They can be mishandled, and trust to luck to be saved? Even in the event of rape? No access to the abortion pill? What politics are these justices practicing in what should be an unbiased arena?

Lynn Rudmin Chong  
Sanbornton, N.H.

=====

#### #CATALANGATE

To the Editor:

On the 18th April, *The New Yorker* uncovered in an extensive report [1] on the biggest case of espionage in an EU country. The Canadian organisation Citizen Lab had documented [2] the spying on 65 pro-independence Catalans with the Pegasus and Candiru programmes. The case was dubbed #Catalangate.

Dictatorships spy. The *Washington Post* estimates that, worldwide, some 50,000 mobile phones have been victims of Pegasus. But this cannot be an acceptable practice in countries that claim to be democratic and respect rights and freedoms. That is why it came as a shock to discover that Po-

land and Hungary had spied on opponents with the flagship programme of the Israeli company NSO Group, which claims it only sells it to states to fight terrorism and crime.

Now it shocks the EU that Spain (what other state could it be?) has illegally spied on a large number of its citizens since 2017. And it has not done so because of the threat of terrorism or criminality, but because it has violated the privacy of people who are part of a political movement that is entirely legitimate, non-violent and democratic, albeit contrary to the interests of Spanish nationalism.

There are 65 documented cases (MEPs, members of the Spanish Congress and the Catalan Parliament, lawyers, journalists, activists...), but many more could be affected. In fact, I myself, who am no one important, suspect that my mobile phone was infected because, in August 2019, it did strange things, such as recording phone conversations and even sent a message, which I did not write, to a relative.

In reality, we Catalans are not surprised to have been spied on, nor is it the most serious thing that has been done to us. The Catalan conflict has driven Spanish nationalism crazy—Spanish nationalism permeates the structures of the State and is not even considering a democratic solution. They are using the force and levers of the state to try to find their solution: to destroy our political movement. In the 1980s against ETA, Spain created the terrorist group GAL to murder Basques, as the courts proved years later, with convictions and subsequent pardons for the guilty. Against Catalan independence, a peaceful and democratic movement, they are equally resorting to a dirty war.

They sent 10,000 riot police officers to Catalonia to prevent the 2017 ref-

erendum, beating and injuring 1,065 peaceful voters. They sentenced the leaders to 9–13 years in prison for having carried out a *coup d'état* (false, because if, with 2,300,000 activists, we had attempted a *coup d'état*, there would have been deaths and we would possibly be independent, but we are a democratic and peaceful movement). After four years, they had to pardon those imprisoned because the case would not have withstood the appeals to the EU Justice. Likewise, more than 3,500 activists who have pending sentences have been prosecuted. And, on the basis of hypothetical embezzlement, the Court of Auditors demanded bail of €9M from some forty pro-independence activists, which has now been reduced to €5.6m. This will also end up being shelved before the case reaches EU justice, because they could not prove embezzlement, but above all because the aim was not to investigate anything but to destroy the pro-independence activists economically with these exorbitant bails.

So we were sure that they would also attack our privacy. The millions of pro-independence activists have lived knowing that our privacy could be violated. Not only to obtain evidence against those under investigation or to learn about plans and strategies, but possibly for a more unspeakable crime: to obtain compromising information about the leaders, in order to blackmail them and curb the movement.

But the most disturbing aspect of Catalangate has been the reaction of the Spanish press, which from day one hid the information. And when they could no longer hide it, they did not present it as something serious, but as something normal and acceptable against a movement that they interpret as a threat to Spain. Moreover, they took for granted the Spanish government's statements denying having anything to do with the matter. In short, the media and politicians follow the line of hiding and justifying, to

the Spanish population, all the abuses they have been perpetrating against the Catalans, this becoming a dehumanisation typical of regimes of other times. In this way it seems impossible for Spanish citizens to understand the seriousness of the matter and demand accountability.

Until now the EU has been looking the other way and has allowed Spain to do all this, always repeating the mantra that you cannot interfere in the internal affairs of a member state. Now that this illegal espionage is shocking the Western world, we will pull the thread to bring out all the foul play that Spain has been practising—totally contrary to EU standards—and to make it clear that, by invoking the “just cause,” the Catalan national minority has the right to free itself from this subordination to Spain that plunders and subjugates a modern, pluralistic society with its own way of doing things, such as the people of Catalonia.

Jordi Oriola Folch

Barcelona, Catalonia

[1] *The New Yorker*, Ronan Farrow: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/04/25/how-democracies-spy-on-their-citizens>.

[2] Citizen Lab: <https://citizenlab.ca/2022/04/catalangate-extensive-mercenary-spyware-operation-against-catalans-using-pegasus-candiru/>.

=====

#### Major Gripes

To the Editor:

I have two simple questions for our Congressional “Leaders.”

1. Do you believe the lies that Secretary Mayorkas spewed today alleging that our southern border is secure?

2. Do you support the Presidents proposal to have U.S. taxpayers fund an unlimited piggy bank for Ukraine?

Please keep in mind these **facts**:

Under this administration, millions of unvetted illegals, drugs, criminals, terrorists, trafficked adults and children have broken into our country, with impunity.

Under this administration, our border is no longer secure, and our sovereignty as a country is at risk.

Our GDP is declining, while Congress continues to spend money we

don't have.

You refuse to complete the paid for U.S. border wall, but you are allocating unlimited funds to a foreign country, so they can defend their border and maintain their sovereignty.

You were not elected to open our borders to the world.

You were not elected to serve and protect the population of the world, while bankrupting our country.

You were elected to serve and protect the American people, period.

Please, **do your job!**

Sincerely,

Michael Petruzzello

Major, USMC (Ret.)

Wolfeboro, N.H.

Major Mike:

*Ah, yes, the old “command voice.” How well we remember... We can imagine there would be at least one positive development if the U.S. were to institute universal military service. Everyone would have a better basic understanding of the term “class warfare.”*

*You have our sympathy. It must be hard to lose an environment in which your rank gave you the right to order almost everybody around.*

The Editor

=====

#### From An Unrepentant Insurrectionist and GOP Congressional Candidate

Dear N.H. Gazette,

Every time a Capitol Stormer expresses remorse a Founding Father rolls over in his grave. Most rioters have experienced death threats, strained relationships, and accusations of high treason and terrorism.

It's easy to forget that a year ago my way of life was under attack by the government. Private businesses were forced to close their doors, curfews, travel restrictions, and mask mandates left Americans feeling angry and unsure where to direct their rage.

Had I known entering the capitol would label me an insurrectionist I'd laugh. It's an insult to insurrectionists but I appreciate the insinuation. I would have loved to see the criminals running our country forcibly removed

**Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.**

to page six

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What do we choose to remember with memorial markers, buildings and community projects?

Legends  
May is NH Preservation Month  
Union Cemetery added to NH Register of Historic Resources

To learn more about memorials and what else we choose to remember go to [PortsmouthGenome.org](http://PortsmouthGenome.org)  
Join the conversation.  
*A Portsmouth Peace Treaty Forum project.*

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from page five

from office, and should it happen in the future I'll celebrate again.

The United States government isn't getting toppled by a handful of right-wing vandals with zip ties. If we want the insider traders currently in office gone, we must go after the only thing they care about, money.

I will take that lesson into office [*Riddle is running in the Republican primary for the Second District. — The Ed.*] by proposing a 50 percent reduction in salary for Congress and donate half of my earnings to help battle the ongoing opioid epidemic. I will use the power of the office to force the governor to legalize marijuana. This will generate millions in tax revenue that currently flows to illegal drug dealers or worse, Massachusetts and Vermont.

Before heading off to jail I wanted to offer the people of New Hampshire an apology. I'm sorry our insurrection failed, hopefully it goes better next time.

Sincerely,  
Jason Riddle  
Keene, N.H.

Jason:  
*We see that you filled out Ballotpedia's Candidate Survey:*

*"Q—What is something that has been a struggle in your life?"*

*"A—Mental health but I don't let it keep me down."*

*Who knows? If you can get over your urge to be honest, you may do well in the GOP primary.*

The Editor

=====

**We Live In Dangerous Times**

Dear Editor:

Martin Luther King Jr. always believed "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." Half a century later, would he be as convinced? I'm not so sure.

America's tolerance of dishonesty, lying and unethical behavior over several decades has been exceeded only by our willingness to plunge ever deeper into the abyss of stomach-churning, abhorrent practices.

It's no longer deniable that the



United States has squandered its long-held reputation as the world's foremost constitutional government and become (unmistakably) an anocracy. Anocracies are governments neither entirely democratic or autocratic; they're something in between. Referred to sometimes as "partial democracies" or "illiberal democracies," it's in anocracies that most civil wars occur.

Barbara Walter (professor of political science, University of California, San Diego) states, "The January 6th, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol was a window into what has been brewing beneath the surface of the United States for years."

Over a year ago, former President Donald Trump called Georgia Secretary of State (Brad Raffensperger) and brazenly asked him to "find 11,780 votes" and give him Georgia's electoral votes. That phone conversation became public knowledge, we all heard it with our own ears.

Also over a year has passed and the former president hasn't been held accountable for his improprieties. In a strong, healthy democracy, a government is transparent and is also well-conditioned to be accountable to its citizens and has the ability to manage a change in administrations without experiencing civil unrest.

The reason the U.S. is on the verge of becoming a full-blown dictatorship is because we have lost the will to abide by our own Constitution, to follow fundamental rules of law and the basic tenets which define democracies; commitment to the people's welfare, to govern by consensus, and to maintain a high regard for solidarity among our citizens.

Instead we indulged a president who led an insurrection against his own government, incited a deadly attack on our Congress and our Capitol with the clear intent to overturn an election and, all the while, seeking help from a foreign

government (an adversary), and with the blessing of the Grand Old Party, attempted to block the legitimate constitutional transfer of power.

We may well be the world's most powerful nation, but with men like Donald Trump, Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) and numerous other Republicans willing to feed off Trump's "Big Lie," we are burdened with an inept, dysfunctional Congress and look, to the world, very much like a banana republic.

We are living in dangerous times. Countries least expected to experience a civil war—such as the United States and the United Kingdom—are showing unambiguous signs of unrest.

To regain the trust of the American people in government and institutions, policies enacted in state capitols and Washington, D.C. have to ensure all Americans are allowed to vote and that all votes count. Americans also need the assurance government serves and represents all of us, not just the rich, the powerful and the famous.

David L. Snell  
Franklin, N.C.

David:  
*You correctly identify what this country needs. Unfortunately, that's exactly what the GOP is determined to thwart.*

The Editor

=====

**The Disenfranchised Right**

To the Editor:

I read with interest the gun control article in April 26th *Portsmouth Herald*, page 9A. The writer accuses "pro life" people of *not* wanting to "help prevent gun violence." All the "pro life" people I know support a government and police that are supposed to punish criminal behavior, not law abiding citizens that own guns. In case you are wondering why we have a 2nd Amendment, all

you have to do is see the April 14th *Herald*, page 9A. There is a picture of Gov. Abbott of Texas dressed in a Hitler uniform coming to arrest parents simply because they "love there [sic] trans Kid." If you actually believe this propaganda, you would be the first one in line to buy a gun and a case of ammo. Now try to imagine if the sign on the wall said "I love my kids, that's why I'm not going to let them O.D. on sex hormones and mutilate their genitals": now who's going to show up dressed as Hitler? Actually no one will show up! To claim otherwise would be resorting to the same stupid propaganda that the Left uses. You may wonder why conservatives cling to the 2nd amendment. Consider that we have little or no access to the 1st amendment. We are banned on Face Book, Twitter, U-Tube [sic], Public Radio, Public TV, the Public Schools, (none of which are "Public," but are just privately run "Brain Pumping Machines"), all State run colleges, CNN, NBC, ABC, the entire entertainment industry, even music and art. Look what happened to folk singer Joan Baez [sic] when she dared to denounce the slaughter of women and children by the communists Vietnamese: the Chicago 7 went on the David Frost Show and called her a traitor. What happened to Seales and Crofts when they released a song that was "pro-life," and Bob Dylan when he made a conversion to Christianity, and Abby Hoffman when he grabbed the mike at Woodstock and told the crowd the truth about the corrupt Government we're living under, only to have his neck broken when he was hit from behind by the butt of a guitar (don't say it never happened! I was standing ten feet away when it happened). If you can deny your own people 1st amendment access, what chance does a conservative have? The article mentions suicide among our youth. Maybe they wouldn't be

killing themselves and each other if we, as a nation, stopped lying to them and telling them they're racist because their skin-tone is lighter than someone else's, or how America is a hate filled country that oppresses minorities. If we stop lying to our kids, maybe they'll put down the guns.

Francis Cormier  
Portsmouth N.H.

Francis:  
*If you're being censored, how did your letter get into our paper?*

The Editor

=====

**Boxers or Briefs?**

To the Editor:

Why aren't Americans making more babies? It might be because young couples are starting life saddled with so much debt that child-rearing is unaffordable. Or, according to Tucker Carlson, it could be due to low sperm count, the result of mass emasculation caused by liberal thinking.

By now we've all heard about Carlson's red-light cure-all for male infertility. What he fails to mention is that red light is devoid of penetrating ultra-violet radiation and tans nothing. To discover what red light does best, go to McDonalds in the middle of the afternoon and order the fries.

In fact, scientists tell us bathing one's "self" in any form of heat is the worst thing we could do to revitalize the swim team. It seems our 98.6° core temperature is already too warm to sustain robust sperm production, which explains why Mother Nature has configured us in the precarious way she has. So, despite its promise, Carlson's red-light therapy turns out to be a shocking blueprint for the slaughter of billions of Republican children who are innocently hanging out and waiting to be born. And they call Putin a barbarian?

Rick Littlefield  
Barrington, N.H.

Rick:  
*Great. Now we must go and rinse our brains with bleach.*

The Editor

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# In Praise of 21st Century Luddism

by W.D. Ehrhart

Believe me, I really do understand that those little handheld electronic pocket-sized gadgets that do everything from making phone calls to taking photos and videos to locating your exact position on the planet are the future, and the future is already here, and there's nothing I can do about it.

But you cannot make me like it, nor can you make me own one of those machines. And though I try to be polite when other people pull out their Smartphones and iPhones, it is often a struggle to refrain from grabbing the device and smashing it under my heel.

Recently, a friend of ours came to visit for the weekend. He and his wife live several states away, so we don't see them that often. The first few hours went just fine. But after dinner, the husband began to tell us about a trip they were planning later this spring: they were going to rent a cabin on Prince Edward Island and go ocean kayaking.

But he didn't just tell us about the trip. He whipped out his little phone thing, and showed me a tiny map of PEI. Then he showed it to my wife. Then he showed me a photo of the cabin they'll be renting. Then he showed it to my wife. Then he showed me a photo of his 22-foot ocean-going kayak. Then he showed it to my wife. Then he showed me a photo of his 22-foot ocean-going kayak with his wife sitting in it. Then he showed it to my wife. Then he showed me a photo of his 22-foot ocean-going kayak with his wife and

himself sitting in it. Then he showed it to my wife. Then he showed me a photo of the bay they'll be paddling in at high tide. Then he showed it to my wife. Then he showed me a photo of the bay they'll be paddling in at low tide. Then he showed it to my wife.

He went on like this for most of the rest of the evening. And each time he introduced a new photo on his tiny screen, he would hold the screen up to my face until I made some suitable verbal acknowledgment that I had absorbed and appreciated the photo. "That's nice." "That's beautiful." "That looks like fun."

The next evening, we went out to dinner. When I mentioned that my wife and I would be visiting the Adirondacks this summer, he gleefully took out his electronic gizmo and called up a map of the Adirondacks and showed us where he'd gone kayaking near where we'd be.

From that moment until we left the restaurant, his little gizmo never left the table except when it was in his hand. He showed us a photo of his son and his son's girlfriend. He showed us a photo of his son and his son's dog. He showed us a photo of his other son and his other son's fiancée. He showed us a photo of him in the new suit his son had helped him pick out for his son's forthcoming wedding. He showed us a photo of the two ties his son had helped him pick out to wear with his new suit.

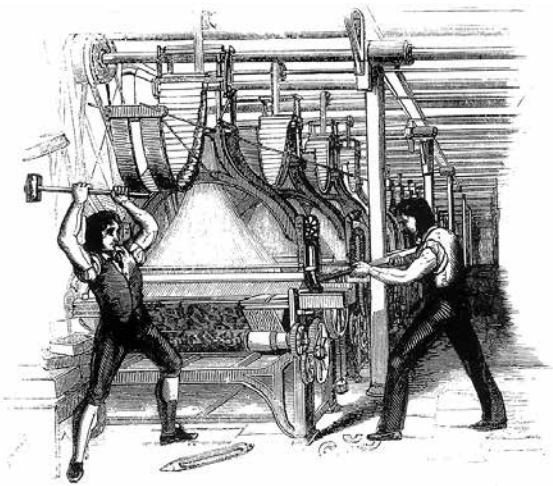
Ties, for crying in a bucket! Not even novelty ties like the ones with the neon hula dancer that say, "I

love my wife, but oh you kid!" Just plain—very plain, in fact—ordinary ties. I'm supposed to get excited about his ties?

Please don't misunderstand me. I've known this man for four decades. I like him. He's intelligent and thoughtful. He's a good guy. But this new technology seems to have taken over his life, giving him the ability to provide in detail an illustrated account of every facet of his life and the belief that everyone else finds it all as fascinating as he does.

I recently retired from teaching high school. One big reason I retired was a rising feeling of helplessness in the face of the mindless assault of technology. Even the best students—and they are relatively rare—could not resist the urge to check in on Facebook or text their girlfriends in the midst of a lesson on Ben Franklin. How does one regulate it? By having the students face away from the teacher so I can see what's on their screens? Talk about cutting off your nose. And I've had students who can send text messages without even taking their phones out of their pockets. Really.

My solution was simply to ban all electronic devices from my classroom. But that didn't sit very well with the administration. Most of my colleagues, by the end of my tenure, had their entire courses posted online. And many of my students struggled to read anything longer than a screen page or write anything longer than 144 characters. "Words" like UR, OMG, and LOL were beginning to show up regularly in for-



Luddites as depicted in the 1840s.

mal academic essays. Really.

Then there was the student lounge just outside my classroom door. As the years passed, it got worse and worse. Long before I finally threw in the towel, it was all too depressingly common to see six or eight kids sitting out there, each one staring at the little screen in front of their faces while saying not one word to the kids on either side of them.

And that's not all. I regularly attend a Twelve Step program, but even in these meetings there are always a few people who sit there monitoring their screens, reading and sending text messages, even though every meeting begins with the admonition, "Please turn off your electronic devices and refrain from using them."

The night I was expected to admire several very ordinary ties, there were four young women seated at the table next to us, each one staring at the little screen in her hands, occasionally pushing the screen into the face of another one of the women. As nearly as I could discern, this

passed for conversation.

I am fully aware that doomsayers in every generation, going back to the Roman poet Horace and beyond, have been convinced that the world is going to Hell in a handbasket, and yet we pathetic little humans are still here. And maybe we'll manage to survive the self-absorbed anti-social scourge of handheld technology that allows one to spend one's life in a bubble even when surrounded by other people.

But I still carry a flip-phone, and I never answer it unless it is my wife or my daughter calling. I use e-mail, but don't use any other so-called social media. I read books printed on paper. And at 73, with most of my life already behind me, I'm glad I won't be around to see if all this wonderful technology at our fingertips is really as wonderful as most people seem to think it is.

W. D. Ehrhart is an ex-Marine sergeant who holds a PhD in American Studies from the University of Wales at Swansea, and taught for many years at the Haverford School for Boys.

# We're Stuck on a Monopoly Merry-Go-Round

by Jim Hightower

The problem with our so-called "free market" is that it's not free for you and me. It's largely controlled by monopolies, which are free to inflate prices just because they can, letting gougers gleefully extract unwarranted monopoly profits from us.

This milking of consumers by tightly consolidated industries is propelling today's surging price

hikes. Brand name corporations claim they're being forced to mark-up price tags just to cover rising costs for raw materials, labor, transportation, etc. But in a competitive marketplace, they'd have to eat much of those increases by taking a bit less in profits. Instead, monopolies are now raising prices simply to squeeze even greater profits from hard-hit consumers—a game of corporate greed that socks America with more

inflation.

Consider diapers. A year ago, Procter & Gamble announced that the pandemic was driving up its production costs, forcing it to raise prices for its Pampers brand. At the time, it had just posted a quarterly profit of \$3.8 billion, so P&G could easily have absorbed a temporary rise in its costs. But instead of holding the price to ease their customers' economic pain, the conglomerate

used a global health crisis to justify upping diaper prices. Six months later, P&G's quarterly profit topped \$5 billion. And—in that same quarter—P&G spent \$3 billion to buy back shares of its own stock, a Wall Street manipulation that artificially bloats the wealth of top execs and other big shareholders. In short, P&G used the excuse of inflation to inflate the price of diapers, then used the extra money it extracted to in-

flate the value of its stock to benefit rich shareholders.

Well, couldn't consumers just switch to Huggies, the brand sold by P&G's main "competitor"? No, for it's a co-monopolist, having also goosed up its prices. Welcome to the monopoly merry-go-round.

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