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## Rough Rants: *On the Way Out*

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Rough Rants (work-in-progress): *Not prose, not poetry. Perhaps literature. Mostly notes-to-self without an audience.*

{<These notes-to-self are ordered chronologically, top down, oldest to newest, for the most part. *Remembering as Walt Whitman put it, "It is a good plan for every young man or woman having literary aspirations to carry a pencil and a piece of paper and constantly jot down striking events in daily life. They thus acquire a vast fund of information. One of the best things you know is habit. Again, the best of reading is not so much in the information it conveys as the thoughts it suggests. Remember this above all. There is no royal road to learning." That plus a smartphone.>*

.....

{Preface}

The NEW Lord's Prayer

"The Lord" was once at the center,
was a useful term to express, beyond
belief the aspirations of exulted aspiration.

It began as homage, loyalty to the land
"owner," the rules maker. And morphed
to be a universal stand in for "a higher power."

But then, again, there is no higher, no lower.
There's only the all of us, standing here
in our unique place, in our sacred space,
holding dear, one another.

.....

{Forward}

The Gestalt of Feeling

[as distinct from 'emotional gestalt' or Gestalt Therapy, a humanistic, holistic, person-centered form of psychotherapy, but rather as the progenitor of First Thoughts.]

The best I can hope for is being honest with myself in trusting my perceptions, honoring the primacy of the instinct, the imminence of raw emotion, the present clarity of sensation, the truth of my feelings.

First Thoughts are the culmination, the gestalt of all feelings ever in this moment. The whole, not the divided, categorized, analyzed, prioritized segments. Not impulsive, not compulsion. But rather the distilled consensus of all time, all experience suggesting: This!

"This!" may be right, may be wrong. Perhaps a mis-take, perhaps a good on the first take. It's an experiment. Let's try This! And then we have a clear basis of an unequivocal contemporaneous trial to base our understanding on.

Steven Pinker, say no, you better stop, reflect, dissect, analyze. The problem is, when you put 'things' in compartmentalized boxes, into categories you limit them to a finite data set for the analysis. Your conclusions can only be constructed in a glass bell jar separate from the whole of your reality. "No, no, you're not thinking; you're just being logical," as Niels Bohr might caution. Without the feelings that mortar the bricks of all your experience across time and place, you are left with a token model of your reductive reasoning.

First Thoughts INCLUDE all feelings. Encoded in your life experience, your DNA, in every vibrant cell in your body. The reasons are their own. How you play with them, your choice.

You can't do a double-blind test for life.
Not your own, much less life itself.
The Gestalt of Feeling suggests,
"Just feel it! Trust it. Whole cloth."

.....

Bees are adapted for feeding on nectar and pollen.
It's what they do.
Bees are the major type of pollinator in ecosystems
that contain flowering plants.
One third of the human food supply
depends on pollination
accomplished by bees. That's the way it is.
Bees do what they do,
we benefit.

.....

Entrepreneur: one who works an 80 hour week,
so as not to have to work a 40 hour one for someone else.

.....

Competition: "You have to break a lot of hearts to make one happy."

.....

<Pantry Poem>

Stop running out of things.

Stock the pantry and keep it that way.
The first scoop
The first slice
The first bite of anything tastes the best.
More like that.
Take your fill, but don't use it up.
There's no more where that came from.
I have laundry
I have the laundry to do...

.....

I'm going to tell you.
I told you.
I told you I was going to tell you.
I can't tell you.
I told you, I can't tell you.
I told you.
I was going to tell you I can't tell you.
I told you I was going to tell you I can't tell you.
Can you tell?

.....

Clinging to my trade secrets
as if they were in the witness
protection program.

.....

How could you know I was coming?

I have no reputation proceeding me.
I tried dabbling in politics, but gained no purchase.
Back down to where I started from,
I won't back down!
Who should I look down on,
if I don't have a reputation
to live up to?

.....

You, first adapters leading the way,
Ha! Wait until the first generation
native born to the technology come to visit.

.....

Team of individualists herding cats
"Do I have to do everything myself?"

.....

She likes to turn heads.
I like to turn phrases.

Words not stuck on the page
ride the air waves to oblivion, the words
trapped in your head turn and turn.
Do they impress anyone but yourself?

That's how money makes money, honey.

.....

The Right to Free Speech is knowing when not to.

.....

We're adapted for consumerism, a social and economic order and ideology that encourages the acquisition of goods and services in ever-greater amounts.
It's what we do.

Driven by media culture values are modified through popular transmission,
often to the point of outright falsehoods. Popular culture is a debased,
trivial culture that voids both the deep realities, in turn come to demand
trivial and comfortable cultural products.
That's the way we are.
We do what they do, who benefits?

Your chef sees a goose as a thing to be cruelly force-fed to provide a fat liver, foie gras. Your building contractor sees the ancient forest as a source of pulp products. To go shopping you burn fossil fuels in your car.
"Pave paradise, put up a parking lot."

Fossil fuels are formed by natural processes such as anaerobic decomposition of buried dead organisms. The age of the organisms and their resulting fossil fuels is typically millions of years, and sometimes exceeds 650 million years.
Maybe we are the Tao of destruction wiping the slate clean, starting over from scratch. Breaking down all of life old and new to its most elemental soup.

We're locked into taking care of our nuclear waste for the next ten-thousand years.
Can we plan to manage our ancient forests for the next thousand?

Impermanence is one of the essential doctrines or three marks of existence in Buddhism. The term expresses the Buddhist notion that all of conditioned existence, without exception, is transient, or in a constant state of flux. Then what is sustainability?

Pay dues where dues are owed.

You lumberjacks unionizing for better pay, better working conditions, do you see yourself as first value added contributors? Look again at the leaves photosynthesizing the energy of the sunlight into wood, bark, flowers and fruit.

What if we reset the calendar to 40,000 BN -- Before Now?

Would that help you remember the perseverance of humans and non-humans alike getting through the last ice age?

What it took? What we're taking now?

What we had, what we lost, what we have, what we're losing?

And what do you have to say about yummy top soil, teaming with a zillion orgasmic organisms? Why flush your top soil down the Mississippi River? Flush full of '-cides': pesticides, herbicides, conviviocides. To kill the life in the Gulf of Mexico? For what? For sterile feed corn and soybeans: to fatten cows and pigs for slaughter, for chips to munch during the ball game?

.....

Today I'm thinking that 'artist' and 'individualist' may actually be the same word.

Tomorrow I might think differently,
that an artist is a community
housed in a confluent singularity.

Then again, tomorrow never comes.

.....

Because my ancestors dominated,
I get to think of myself as ethnic-free.
I'm not one of those minorities
clinging to old world ways.
I'm the universal standard
for being human,
even if I don't act like it.

.....

Backtalk: Our September/October 1996 issue certainly got people talking: Walter Truett Anderson's essay, "*There's No Going Back to Nature*," upset some of our best-known environmental voices, including Gary Snyder and Wendell Berry, while our exposés angered Amway and Freeport-McMoRan. Meanwhile, an essay by Thomas Moore prompted a little soul-searching.

{FOUND: #ProactiveEnvironmentalism | Backtalk > <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/1996/09/theres-no-going-back-nature/>}

.....

Homo Sapiens, the "wise man"

[The species that you and all other living human beings on this planet belong to is Homo sapiens. During a time of dramatic climate change 200,000 years ago, Homo sapiens evolved in Africa. Like other early humans that were living at this time, they gathered and hunted food, and evolved behaviors that helped them respond to the challenges of survival in unstable environments. [\[http://humanorigins.si.edu/evidence/human-fossils/species/homo-sapiens\]](http://humanorigins.si.edu/evidence/human-fossils/species/homo-sapiens)

Homo Consumericus, persons who acquire goods that they clearly do not need

[\[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo_consumericus\]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homo_consumericus) | [\[https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/homo-consumericus\]](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/homo-consumericus)

Hobo Curious, unlike "tramps"—who work only when they are forced to, and "bums"—who do not work at all, "hobos" are itinerant workers of wonder.

Moto Sapiens, a creature separate and entire, midway between the worm and the angel who sacrifices to the Gods of Speed. The major driver of road kill. [<https://rideapart.com/articles/we-are-moto-sapiens> | <http://motosapiens.org/motocamp/>]

Google Sapiens, wisely organizes the world's information and makes it universally accessible and useful. (Google's chief executive Larry Page has admitted that the company has outgrown its mission statement to "organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful" from the launch of the company in 1998, but has said he *doesn't yet know how to redefine it.*)
[<http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/nov/03/larry-page-google-dont-be-evil-sergey-brin>]

.....
MUZZY: unable to think clearly; confused.
.....

"On the whole, it's a bother to keep up relationships with people in this world." ~Yosa Buson
.....

Basho, "My dreams hover over withered fields"
Basho said, "I composed this poem at a temple when I was all alone."
I say, "When I was all alone, I composed this poem *as* a temple."

As I'm none the less for the experience,
I'll keep after it.
.....

Loving what I'm doing too much to be deterred
by those that don't.
.....

Perfection is a lovely guest, but
never stays. However,
Satisfaction can linger long
after a hardy meal.
.....

There are not
too many places
that forgive you
changing your mind
willy nilly.
Art is one.
.....

Regarding the Art of Faith. If it made sense it wouldn't be faith. Faith is liberation.
Only things you think you already know make sense. Faith is climbing out of that box.
Faith is living comfortably in the *'it absolutely makes no sense whatsoever'* and riding the waves.
.....

The older you get
the more time compresses
and the more
you want to milk
every precious moment.
.....

You live in a bubble.
We all do.
Sometimes expanding,
sometimes contracting.
Perhaps colliding or conjoining,
absorbed in others' bubbles.

Whether your bubble lives
merely "within a context"
or within The All Encompassing Bubble
is irrelevant.
You remain contained within the bubble
you are aware of.

I don't want to burst your bubble,
but this is it.

In reaching out to others,
the best you can do
is share
your authentic bits.

.....

June 18, 2015

Saying Hello to my dear,
Carlean Montgomery

When she sang the Gospel,
she stopped my world.

She loved her soaps,
while she ironed.

She let you know
you didn't want to mess
with her pots
when she was cooking.

If she had troubles,
she didn't tell me.

The rock for many.

She had troubles.

You'll never get a better hug.

She called me her white son.
I called her Carlean.
Then she sang the Gospel ...

Sweet rejoicing, now,
she with the Reverend.

Deep abiding love.

.....

The most beautiful, profound, deeply moving painting ever made is one coat away from being obliterated.

{Impermanence: the notion that all of conditioned existence, without exception, is transient, or in a constant state of flux...}

.....
They say
art is purely subjective.
I say
it all is.

It is my subjective opinion:
tomorrow the sun will rise
in the East,
objectively beginning
a new day.
One
that you too
can revel in.

I'm confident in the patterns I sense, even the ones that will break.
.....

In Defense of Anger In his book *"A Force for Good,"* Daniel Goleman quotes the Dalai Lama as saying,

"Like anyone else, I too have anger in me. However, I try to recall that anger is a destructive emotion. I remind myself that scientists now say that anger is bad for our health; it eats into our immune system. So, anger destroys our peace of mind and our physical health. We shouldn't welcome it or think of it as natural or as a friend."

If the Dalai Lama actually said this, he is wrong. Anger IS natural, is our friend and should be welcomed and honored.

When I feel a new physical infection in my body beginning, I take a traditional Chinese immunity-boosting herbal formula called Yin Chiao. It irritates my immune system, which tells it to be on guard and 'disperse wind heat' -- that is, "get angry". The natural purpose of anger is to protect your boundaries and confront injustice. When appropriately expressed, it does its job and restores balance. Anger only "eats into our immune system" when repressed. Both scientists and the Dalai Lama have it backwards saying that anger is bad for our health. Erupting with a force equal to the invasion, meeting it as it is -- is indeed a healthy response. A few timely Yin Chiao tablets nip a full blown infection in the bud and keeps me from becoming contagious. Much of civil society tries to oppress or avoids disruption at all costs. But naturally, appropriately attending to the defense of small trespasses as they happen will overtake the need for huge epidemics or revolutions later.

"A stitch in time saves nine," first recorded in Thomas Fuller's *Gnomologia: A Collection of the Proverbs, Maxims and Adages that inspired Benjamin Franklin and Poor Richard's almanac, 1732"*

.....
I have a checkered past,
but a well-manicured future.
.....

I told my wife,
"I'm so glad
I have someone
such as you
to catch
my kisses.

You are
the treasure
of my chest!"

And on another occasion:

When only right will do,
I think of you!

With Love.

.....

(Ode to **Stanley Kunitz**, through the breath of **Rita Dove**
FROM *The Inspiration of Poets*, a non-serial collection)

If I could sit with you
cheek to cheek, but
for a moment ...
"summer is late,
my love."

True.

Then again
in the muggy heat
steamy love endures
beneath a gunmetal sky ...

elemental desire,
my best friend,
drives my melancholy
to frenzy
and back
against the wall.

I ask you one more time,
"Touch me.
Remind me who I am."

{Stanley Kunitz graduated summa cum laude in 1926 from Harvard College with an English major and a philosophy minor, and then earned a master's degree in English from Harvard the following year. He wanted to continue his studies for a doctorate degree, but was told by the university that the Anglo-Saxon students would not like to be taught by a Jew. Rita Frances Dove is the first African American to have been appointed as Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress.}

.....

Who am I
to speak
for dead poets?
I don't paint
in English
or French
or any symbolic language.

So what
if she grew up
in times when
character mattered
and sacrificed
her self
for the greater good, though

what was good
kept changing
faster than the generations
of fruit flies
eating away
at the labor of her love.

Who am I
to speak
for her? Or
the Renaissance
in Harlem, then
all jazz
and social revolution?

I, no one
pure color
or gender
preference,
am bound, married
to this time,
this comfortable chair,
longing
to do more
than sit and sew ...

looking back
and forward
and wanting,
wanting to want
to be here.

All the more.
who am I
to speak?

Here where the paint
is drying,
knowing
I will never see
the finished picture.

- - -

Who am I
to vote for this
fourteen year old
going blind
before our eyes
on a national TV
talent competition,
dancing his heart out
on the big stage
for a place in ours?

{Benjamin Yonattan - Audition (Americas Got Talent 2015) > <https://youtu.be/entd43nrU2s>}

.....

I like the me
that I am
with you,
you bring me
closer
to the center
of this world.

.....

When we don't have,
we make do.
When we have,
we do make.

.....

Being penniless makes me appreciate things all the more. That deeper gratitude tends to make me more empathetic, and lean into being kind. This kindness draws me closer to others, relationships flourish. Thus, what I lack in collecting busy things, I make up for in richer relationships. Kindness is what's needed for both people and caring for things.

.....

I'm an ordinary man.
Ordinate to the coordinate.

A point uniquely
holding my place,
non-ambiguous in this field.
While the space I hold is finite,
the network is not.

There are higher dimensions, but
I do not aspire to transcend.
There is no beyond I aspire to.

An ordinary man,
I hold my place.
That is enough.

One way to think of me is as one
of a set of points
satisfying certain relationships
and generalize to higher dimensions,
expressible in terms of distance and angle.

"What's your angle?"
"How far from you am I?"

But in translation
every point is shifted
in the same direction,
by the same distance.
And when it is your turn,
by rotation,
every point turns about you
through the same angle.

If one can be transformed

into the other
by some sequence of translations,
rotations and reflections, then
you are the center of happening.
And I too.

For an ordinary man, like me,
the center is everywhere.

.....

Crickets, spiders and moths,
feed on the fluorescent light
making their homes in corners
and crevices near
the front door under
the porch where Phoebes,
the tyrant flycatcher bird
with the flat black head,
come to feed on the moths.

Crickets, spiders and moths,
feed on the fluorescent light
making their homes in corners
and crevices near
the front door under
the porch until
I come along
and sweep them away.

.....

You're coming in too high.
You're out of the strike zone.
You may not want to get hit,
but to play to win,
you've got to get in the ball game.

.....

You're too kind.
I'm just another kid
playing in the mud trying
to keep his white clothes
clean.

.....

On the day before
no more days,
On that day, when
I will see no more days,
I want to see your face.

I want to feel your face
next to mine.

I want to hear you whisper
to me, "Hello!"
A hello that will echo
across all tomorrows.

[From the "When Flirting with Death, say Hello!" series]

.....
You think you're doing this,
then you're doing that.

You're an artist.

{#CreativeProcess}

.....
Light is both
a wave and
a particle.

Love is both
a variable and
a constant.

.....
Why is the past so short and
the future never seems to get here?

.....
Do what's next. Do the next best thing.
(Some seem to think worry is a good thing,
but actually, it's never the next best thing.)

.....
Though I don't believe
It's a mistake
To be a mystic.
It's a hard-ass road,
Not recommended
For pleasure seeking
Missiles.

.....
Looking for the Abbott
I knock on the door and
am met by a silent monk
with a murderous glare.

The Abbott will say,
"Make wise choices."
"Wherever you go
there you are." Yes,
but how do I make a living
doing what I love?

"Make love to what you're doing."
.....

I jumped from the plane
without a parachute,
no clothes on,
landing tippy toe

inside the skin of
the One True Messiah
and led the people
round & round the earth until
we reached world peace.

All before breakfast of
cabbage, almonds and
cheese.

.....
Without you
there is no us.
Thank you
for being us.
Your part,
our whole.

If you didn't have
a dark side,
I couldn't see you
for the light.

.....
How long is a moment?
As long as you can fill
with laughter.

.....
If your last contact was love,
you are gold.
If less than love,
apply alchemy.

.....
You shouldn't let poets lie to you!
You shouldn't let poets lie next to you.
You shouldn't let poets in your head.
But you do.

Here I am.
And I'm aiming for your heart.
I'm getting closer.
Ready?!

[Homage, Bjork talking about her TV: <https://youtu.be/75WFTHpOw8Y>]

.....
A shadow of a butterfly,
not the butterfly itself.
Not the sun casting
the shadow, but
the shadow fluttering
on the pavement --
this way and that.
Not the fluttering,
not the this, not the way,

not the that.
Not the pavement.
The shadow.

The shadow
of what, of who ...
the life you used to be
in mine.

{From "Remembering my Valentine in October, why caterpillars don't die."
Homage to all of those who are no longer with us, but are.}

.....

Chopping onions, tomatoes, avocados
and cheese, "I'm putting these funny things
inside me?!"

Thinking, "This body, not as efficient
as an automobile with gasoline,
not as direct and simple
an energy exchange."

But then again, "Delicious!"

.....

You don't know until you try and
you have to keep trying until you do.

.....

All this pink trying to chase the blues away.

I hope this death wish lasts forever,
it keeps all that living large on its toes.

What's a joke without a laugh?
What's the upside to down?

.....

The good news is you can feel, feel deeply.
The bad news . . . this is what you have to feel.
The kicker is the former could change, and
the later definitely will.

.....

What's that lowland smell,
Gary Snyder?
Tell me more, I've got time.
As "No More Tricks" heads
back to camp, I'm left here,
in the city. Too close to familiarity,
I no longer smell
that lowland smell.

Maybe my neighbor's son, Ryder's ride
down the Oregon coast
will help air it out, cycling through
the water cycles in Spring.

.....

My non-objective abstractions are not of things so much as feelings, experiences, states of mind in the present moment— then and now. They are of the nature of reality, which is the reality of nature. They are reality. Not a depiction, but the actual confluence of what living life is. Life, the thing itself.

Are you
a codicil
to my will?

If my will
be done,
what say you?

Is it true?

If it's true,
will you buy
my art?

At what price?
Let's negotiate.

Contract the distance
between my give
and your ask;
between my dream
and your reality.

In some instances there
is no recognized distinction
between a codicil and a will.

Do you agree?

{If you truly, deeply resonate, my paintings are one price, a thousand times that if you are an investor wanting my signature on it.}
.....

Ode to Dopamine

Dopamine,
Dopamine,
Dopamine!

Dopamine, you are so dope!
Oh, Dopamine...
you make me fly!

Dopamine,
Dopamine,
Dopamine!

Why did you run out on me?

Ah, Dopamine...
you make me cry!
Dopamine, you are such a dope.

{FROM the Post Halloween Sugar Blues}
.....

Fame & fortune are looking for my face.
.....

Big drops,
little showers.
tentative raindrops
are we ready for winter?
that dwindling season

El Nino,
you terrible child -- this year
one of the strongest.
winter schminter
Cold rain pelted
against the window.
Exciting!

Good night
for the garden,
for the reservoirs.

Miserable night
for the homeless.

.....
What I like doesn't come from the udder
of the cow, or even the tenderloins.

What I like is uttered from the young mother
as she peddles her bike to the elementary
school with a stalk of sugar cane slung over
her shoulder. *"We're going to teach the kids
where sugar comes from -- one of the tall
true grasses sensitive to the climate ..."*

{From the Embellished True Stories collection}
.....

He's hard of hearing,
I'm soft of speaking.
Some things must be whispered.

"Why do dogs chase cats,"
he barks, as if
I were the deaf one.

My wry smile will have to serve
as his answer. But,
he made me think.

She doesn't put people or
people made things in
her pictures. Can this
wild raccoon stand in
for all of us undomesticated?
.....

There is no them, only us. (be together)
.....

Turn back the answers,
sharpen the questions.
Cut through the crap.

Nothing can replace an open,
respectful, sincere conversation
in the sunshine. Things get moldy
in the dark silence and fractured
in half roasted hate spewing.

The simple on the far side
of complexity, the harmony
on the other side of discord
are richer and more rewarding.

Make room for all of those messy
interpersonal baked goods. Allow
for irrational grace, throw in
a zinger to any well crafted
sense making.

Cut through the crap
cupcakes.

.....
Life on a water planet.
Situation fluid.
.....

to George O Hawkins:
 snow prints
 the pasture gate
 is open

...

rain drops
the kitchen window
is steamed

Yes!

It's about the people
and the contribution
we all make
to each other
to help us
live our lives.

.....

John M. Bennett | November 30, 2015

porch

the blooded nail the
tripled finger's doubt's
engancements or yr h
ail the wind y h air
~ ~ ~ th r o a
t e d see ms
be mail lost in

flood the dri b bled
c loud sings wo r
ro m ot t om
orro w as wha
t's wri then yr
arm - the rive
red hair - s
wallow yr eyes sw
allow yr h and wol
laws' scripted as
piration str angles "you"
will fall last week

[My RESPONSE]

I too have been level
ing englacement enhancements
to 60 plus on e me rald dri b bled
c loud scripted as
piration str angled d reams,
which a terr i ble pain
dam age out put w as p r a c t i cally
non-exist ent.
Also in r aids,
it is kn own by everyone
that enhance d shaman's dam age
is just crap. UR never in v i ted
to raids or what ever.
But what makes my dam age
even more j unk
r these freaking glanc ing blows
be mail lost.

.....

Thank you
for your loving caring
caring loving.

Again.
Thank you for your loving caring, caring loving.

.....

I'm a perfect human being.
Human beings are not perfect.
Therefore, see my wife.

.....

When I wake up in the morning
and I'm still here,
I praise the lord.

When I open my eyes
and the ceiling isn't spinning,
I sing hallelujah!

.....

Beautiful,
crispy,
Sun
day.

What are you doing
inside me?

What am I doing
inside?

.....

If the presence of pain
is the measure of sanity,
we are all deranged.

We can't hope
for life
without pain.

Pain is inevitable,
suffering a choice?

By faith
we can
end suffering.

This faith is not belief,
but a knowing we commit to
against all odds.

Rearranging against the grain,
the solace of creating
something from nothing.

That, my dear, is the knowing
that keeps us sane
by any measure.

.....

Be good to the people
at the bottom.
They're the only thing
between you and hell.

.....

Removing the cap of your lip balm,
you don't expect, nor are you pleased to see,
flying bugs.

.....

What kind of animal trainer are you?
For the animal that you are,
what are your methods?

.....

<in network>

{Can I have your vote?}
{What is the password?}

<out of network>

beat upbeat downdown & outout of it
</out of network>

{What is your Mother's phone number?
(. . . in case you misbehave)}

</in network>

.....

If I knew the way, I'd take you home.

.....

If Donald Trump can make Mitt Romney make sense, then he certainly makes Bernie Sanders electable.

.....

Before I forget

Before I forget,
thank you for birthing
this body wonderful, and
all the scavenger hunts
and IQ tests to measure
its wonder against this
cracked and crazy world.

Before I forget
what time it is
or whether I'm hungry,
even as I chew on
a baloney sandwich,
let me take this moment
with you.
Let's remember what we shared,
to sparkle on the fullness we felt --
all those explosive savory tastes,
celestial sonic reverberations and
psychedelic light menageries
we called friendship,
before I forget.

Before I forget
how to make things
and invent new options
with marbles, mud and a garden hose,
before I forget to clap when
she sings that aria so beautifully,
breaking into AC/DC's 'Highway To Hell'
or squeal with delight as Lady Gaga pinches
Leonardo DiCaprio's cheeks or cheer wildly
when Jennifer Capriati makes a fierce come back....

Before I forget the comfort

of your warm naked body
next to mine.

Before I forget
how to tell
I love knowing
you know
how so very much
I love you.

{*FOOTNOTE: The reference to "she sings that aria so beautifully, breaking into AC/DC's 'Highway To Hell' "
is Cristina Ramos' performance: https://youtu.be/l3Yf_ErKN_s}

Poetry, my dear, not prose is the future.

SHE: I hope you are keeping notes - along with all your other talents. So where's your notebook?

ME: Haha ha, . . . wouldn't it be grand if we could capture it all in exquisite detail! This life passing by faster and faster, I peddling ferociously fiercer and fiercer to keep up. Overwhelming the flow. Lucky if I can capture the most abstract of impressions to share itty bitty nuggets over lunch. Notebook! What's that? Is that what replaced stone tablets? Ha! This is the Cyber Age, binary bits spewing greater than the grains of sand on all the beaches in all the galaxies in all the cosmos— the digital situation fluid, the actual situation ephemeral at best. The shelf life expired before the virtual print dries. *Poetry, my dear, not prose is the future.* And, if you want it to count, if you want to be heard, look for your audience in other want-to-be poets -- not all those grains of sands stuck between your toes.

{April 8, 2016 > {SERIES: Digital Age #TwoThumbedPoetry}}

College students and Qualcomm engineers
are the most likely to take advantage
of promotional discounts,
and the least likely,
even when going great distances,
to tip the courier.

A waif of a young beggar, cracked
lips bleeding.
I give her
my used lip balm,
SPF 25.

Knowing I couldn't,
they offer to pay my way
to the gathering.
But if I were to accept
their kindness, I might feel
obligated to be
someone special,
and I'm not.

{#theKindnessofStrangers}

{160426}

Don't measure yourself by topography,

you'll never get there. Don't measure
time by planets spinning, orbiting
around stars. The long-haul trucker
isn't impressed with your fancy
maneuvering through rush-hour
traffic. There's a liar in all of us.
Don't kid yourself.

.....

Morning Glory
invasive beauty
grabbing my fancy.
What are fences for?

.....

Moan.
May month pheromone moon.
*(If you want relief from your air-borne allergies,
move above seven thousand feet.)*

.....

We would not have had the benefit of his teachings
if that milkmaid had not kept the ascetic Buddha
alive before he discovered the Middle Way.

.....

Over the Moon

Mars goes direct today.
It has been indirect for far too long --
depleting vitality:
"whoever initiates loses," they said.

Tomorrow is a good time
to start something new.

Who loves you, baby?
The Winter sun?
The Summer breeze?

Where?
no
some
any

Wherever.

.....

why I'm not an artist

When living in a market economy,
unless the market says so,
you are not an artist.

{ALSO SEE: <http://tomellard.com/wp/2013/06/five-reasons-why-im-not-an-artist/> | Tom Ellard: <http://tomellard.com/ellard.html>}

.....

Everyone poops,

the bumper sticker says.

Ergo, everyone is
(more or less)
full of shit.

.....

There's the aching missing of people we know we will never see again in this life time, and the wistful missing of people we hope we can see again before long. With intimates it's all the more. And in the missing there's the reminder that ultimately we are alone, all utterly alone -- and how good it is to have someone else who cares, and for whom we care deeply, to be alone together with. I hope I can be one of those for you.

.....

#BlondeHairs get all the attentions first for a good reason!

.....

Vilify your enemy,
ignore your champion's faults.

.....

*Homeless,
but happy.
7 yrs sober,
but lacking.*

{Panhandler sign}

.....

Picking up from McDonalds a panhandler near the entrance says,
"Starving artist. If you have a couple bucks change when you come out "I'd appreciate it."
On the way out I see he's eating a hamburger someone has given him and remark,
"Glad to see you eating." To which he replies, "Thanks.
By the way, do you have a medical marijuana prescription?"

.....

Aaah, for the cool breeze of Grace
in the searing desert of political discourse.

Kindness.

.....

If Google algorithms can supply real-time data for the fastest route in navigating traffic in LA and the rest of the world, then it can also learn to provide the most cost-effective way to deliver the basic necessities of life to the people of Darfur. The quirkiest variable, of course, will be in mitigating political wills.

.....

I'll never forget
what I didn't know,
but what I did know
was epic.

.....

Extreme Yin becomes new Yang.
Extreme Yang becomes new Yin.
Moderates meet in the middle.

.....

We want the best
to do their best,
and the underdog
to do better than ever.

{Salute2016Rio: #KōheiUchimura & #OlegVerniaiev}

I over-heard a pair of passionate Comic-Con attendees explaining that the primary mission of a species is to reproduce itself, with each new generation being all the more capable to thrive in its environment. And we're on the precipice, the next big evolutionary trajectory for humans is here: Androids. Feel no pain Androids.

Going to a new place
seems to take longer
than going back
along the same path.
But it doesn't.

Corollary: once you've done something new, it's easier the second time.

In dramatic summer afternoon sunlight

Something loves unstable clouds,
the soaring lift.
Ocean moist air
colliding on the west face
of the Mountain Empire,
the dry desert heat to the east
forming towering columns.

<some> Apartment dwellers are a breed unto themselves. On average, pampered and entitled. </allegedly>

{from Observations of a Courier}

An Italian lawmaker proposed a bill last week that would punish parents with imprisonment for raising their children on vegan diets that don't include animal products. It's official, the Age of Enlightenment is over.

"It may soon become a crime for Italian parents to keep their children from indulging in the country's legendary meats and cheeses by restricting them to vegan options."

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/08/11/an-italian-lawmaker-wants-to-make-it-a-crime-for-parents-to-feed-their-kids-vegan-diets/>

Walking through the mall,
I'm soaking you up.
It's not likely I'll ever see you
again. Not like this.

If you consider yourself to be a rascal, clap your hands.

{Honk if you love Jesus!}

This last chapter
is a superficial time
in my life,
but below the surface
is an unfathomable
deep & wide. I'll meet you
on the other side.

.....

"...in a great American tradition: the true fight against oppression is the one nobody notices."

I rent. I labor. I consume.
Somewhere my people too were once
First Nation.
Vital, strong, connected
to human scale balance.
Before being robbed
of rights to land, water,
their world view.

Now I am too tired,
compassion fatigued.
I've lost my feeble grip.
I turn my back in real time
on the Lakota. I can't help
as The Empire, again,
steals their promised land,
their water, their way of life.

But it's not them I surrender,
it's the madness modern.
It's us, again.

{*"The Lakota occupation of the pipeline route is part of a longer and more violent history."* >
<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/08/dakota-access-pipeline-protests-lakota/>}

"Between 1866 and 1868, the United States military suffered a series of humiliating defeats as they tried to defend railroad workers and settlers from Lakota warriors. Red Cloud, a leader of the Oglala Lakota, forced the military off the tribe's land and burned their forts as they left. The conflict ended with the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, which promised the Lakota undisturbed control over nearly half of present-day South Dakota."

"When the United States Army illegally invaded the Black Hills — both a spiritual center and a crucial source of food for the Lakota — in search of gold, another war erupted, with yet another stunning defeat for the American military. Americans call that 1876 defeat the Battle of Little Bighorn; the Lakota call it Greasy Grass, or, simply, Victory Day."

"But the Lakota could not sustain their victories, not just against the United States military, but also against industrial hunters, who nearly exterminated the bison herds that once numbered at an estimated thirty million. Forced to give up the hunt and accept the corrupt reservation system, many Lakota nearly starved."

"The Lakota, on other hand, are resisting a real and all too familiar danger. Their numbers grow every day. And, unlike the standoff in Oregon, almost no major national news outlets are covering the story. This too participates in a great American tradition: the true fight against oppression is the one nobody notices."

.....

Sometimes you're the pedestrian in the crosswalk.
Sometimes you're the driver

...waiting for the pedestrian in the crosswalk.

.....

When you keep your vitamin C pill in your mouth to see how long it takes for the gelatin capsule to fully dissolve, you know you're more of a scientist than a believer. When you dissolve a whole Yin Chiao tablet on your tongue, you've crossed-over from scientist to atheist.

.....

Bumping into door jams,
banging pans in the kitchen sink.
This is not a metaphor,
my spatial perception
kinda sucks today.

.....

Enjoy life!

(It'll go by quicker that way.)

.....

Arne, please forgive my disconnected bits of commentary. I'm losing my memory and can no longer string cohesive pearls together, but only offer (hopefully pertinent) nuggets of entertainment. I so love to be awash in your thought streams, but comprehension below the surface tension is lost on me. I have no depth. I can dance with you in only one frame at a time, and by the time the movie is finished, I will have forgotten the plot. But I do so cherish the snapshots!

.....

Joe, what I like about you is what I like about me. You're smart, thoughtful and obviously very talented, heart-centered and caring. But mostly, what inspires me the most is your lightness of being. <3

.....

There's a endless sadness in loss of ability,
yet a curiosity to find what
I am still able to do.

.....

We need more good Dads.
For millennia we've had good Moms,
but now that's not enough.
Now more than ever,
we need good Dads.

.....

[elevator conversation, late Sunday evening]

(tired sigh)
"End of the week?"
"Beginning of the week."
"That's how it goes."

.....

Try on something too big,
a house, a city, a garden,
a new relationship.
Grow into it.

.....

Opinions, like theories, are easy.

Proofs, not so much.
.....

Cashier: What do you do?
Customer: I'm writing a book.
Cashier: Fiction or non-fiction?
Customer: A memoir.
Cashier: Aha, a little of both...
.....

[161022]

I can't see.
Not because I can't find my glasses, but
because it's pitch black dark and
the Presidential elections are only a little more
than two weeks away.

Fortunately, I've already mailed in my ballot.
.....

In the face of beauty and/or power,
hold your ground.

Fuck Behaviorism!

Life is its own punishment,
and then sometimes,
you get a food pellet.
.....

A date!

Not the "Save This Date" kind
you put on your calendar
to remind you of an event
you don't want to miss.

A date!

Not the kind where you find yourself
fidgeting, staring at your shoe tops, wondering
if that dinner you spent three weeks
saving up for will win you a first kiss.

No, a date!

The fruit of Palm trees with Arabic names
such as Barhi, Dayri, Deglet Noor, Halawy,
Khadrawy, Medjool, Thoory, Zahidi.

That date!

Amber to golden brown with smooth,
glossy skin and golden-yellow, meaty
flesh full of syrup, syrupy rich, sweet
honey flavored, nutty flavored soft,
soft, the softest and most fragile date.

Spit out the pit date.

Ahh, now that's a date!
.....

As a courier at this age and stage of life,
I'm just grateful to get through the intersection.

.....
Big fan of the Law of Inertia!

When going go,
when resting rest.

Thanksgiving 2016

A lot of people are giving thanks today.
I'm receiving.

Someone's got to do it.

You're welcome!

You deserve it.

You deserve to be received.

You deserve everything you've got.

Now deal with it.

If you need help,
reach out to those around you.
Bootstrap the least among us.
Those who have too much,
those greedy bastards who only want more,
who are gaming for world domination,
cut them off at the knees,
cut them down to size.

Don't make it a rote annual habit,
make it a daily exercise, like
brushing your teeth, keep it clean,
stay in shape.

Let your gratitude focus on equality
and equanimity. Clearly
those higher powers you pray to
are on vacation, so it's up to you
to restore balance and head off the flood.

There is so much, so much to do,
so much to be done.
Don't let it overwhelm you.
When you are pleased and grateful
for what you have, this is the time
when you are thankful. This is the time
to act. The time is now.

.....
From the hilltop you see a high speed train wreck about to happen. In your mind's eye --- super slow motion, it's clearly inevitable. What can you do to stop it, when nothing will? Do you rant and rave in the howling wind? Do you turn away and curl up in futility? Do you run towards it to help to ease the certain suffering of the aftermath's carnage? What does the wise person do in the face of helplessness and hopelessness?
.....

At the risk of making the moment too pretty, I want to say my good-byes to truth and integrity. When I was a boy, truth and integrity were foundational organizing principles. A man was only as good as his word, and that word was based on enduring evidence based on facts. Truth was accurate and exact, and we it's loyal servant. For a member to be said to be true within the prevailing social order they must be correct, accurate, right, in accordance with what actually/really happened; for a member to be said to be true within a structure, it required it be placed on the perfectly

leveled floor, plumbed, aligned, and in the exact position. Thus were the efficiencies of the Industrial Age. Now, already in the dawning disruptions of the Information Age, all this dwelling on rightness goes out the window. The overwhelm of data overload precludes putting it in formation, much less verifying to make it right and true. What is true is what is useful for me alone in this moment. Integrity within the larger structure is fluid. And even before that subjective relative usefulness passes its truth is spent, and I am on to new data to excite my innate instinctive impulses for more. What endures is only change, accelerating, cascading change. My choices loyal but to my own brand of loyalty, bidding adieu to bright reasoning, shared truth and reflective integrity. And say hello to the measure of the new man: his last tweet.

.....

"Rethink", yes! But do we even know how? It would need to be a systemic rethink. Our economy is still predicated on Industrial Age values of producing goods and services, which machines are increasingly delivering making human labor obsolete. We need a new ways to enumerate and reward our contributions to society other than making/consuming stuff. New ways to equitably distribute the collective wealth we create for each individual's mind, body, emotions and spirit, for the whole of humanity and the planet. We know that much, but how?

.....

the best we can do
to resist mean times
is love.

.....

{170101}

Google Mapping the Logic of Donald J. Trump, *the prototypical Digital Age Leader*

Forget the age old logic of accountability and honor, "a man is only as good as his word," we're in a new age. The old word was a promise that predicted a consistent future in a world where events moved much, much more slowly. The word in the new age is a data point along the way of a suggested destination, a destination that can change at any moment. The old word was the right and wrong way to manifest destiny's end result. The new word only declares where we want to go, for now.

Google Maps is amoral, linear, utilizing binary conditional logic (IF you are at this location, THEN "turn right in 1000 feet"). You tell Google where you want to go, Maps knows where you are and puts data (information such as, " turn right in 1000 feet") at GPS points along the fastest route to your destination. There is no right or wrong path. You have infinite opportunities to deviate and still get to where you want to go without Google telling you you made a wrong turn. You can always change your mind. There's no accounting for past actions. Google doesn't look back and is not obligated to any previous directions or statements it made, or are you obligated to follow the prescribed path. It continually gives you new directions and statements based on the present conditions and your current location. So if there is a road block on the route Google said to go, and you turn off that route, it recalculates and begins anew from where you are, to proceed on the now fastest route. At any time you can stop Google Maps and give it a new destination and it will again recalculate from where you currently are to the new destination and give you a new, fresh instruction from here. So too the tweets of Donald J. Trump.

Though pure, real time binary logic, Google Maps can be quirky. It can give you some rather random, illogical Tourette's-like confused instructions, especially when there are overlapping data points on the z-axis. For instance, when traveling along an underpass of an interstate highway intersection, where in quick succession you can get the data point information for the path you're on and the information for data points on the overpass above, "turn left" . . . "turn right" . . . "make a U-turn" . . . "you are on the greatest route" . . . so too the tweets of Donald J. Trump.

{I do realize this may be technically/logically a false equivalency, but it is a fun ride.
As the old southern Senator says, "Don't let facts get in the way of a good story!"}

.....

FROM LSD Microdosing:

The brand of infinite mind-fuck that Adam from *PsychedSubstance* indulges in in this "*Life as a Game*" video [\[https://youtu.be/JhZkyYiMZuQ\]](https://youtu.be/JhZkyYiMZuQ) definitely wreaks of a psychedelically addled stream of consciousness. Useful to a

degree, yet inherently trapped within its own confines. But from my own experiences I do find that mind-altering substances have the potential to fundamentally throw into unfathomable question just what this existence is, this existence that IS quite enough. A poignant aspect comes in crossing over and back from the mind-expanding/mind-contracting threshold a lucid trip provides. There's an instant where I'd realize that the clarity and insights I experienced on a particular trip will not dimensionally fit back in the normal reality of "Dan" -- the facts and details will be lost and only the vaguest of impressions will remain. But in hindsight I can see even those vaguest of impressions changed the trajectory of my life.

My first mind-altering, cosmic conscious experience was while having dental surgery when I was 12 years old, sedated with sodium thiopental. It was so other to my day to day life I had no way to understand it, nor anyone to talk to about it. Looking back I can see the experience made the myths I was being indoctrinated with in Sunday School appear to be paltry in light of the enormity of the mystery I had been enthralled in in the dentist's chair. This seminal experience would gain more context and social relevance with later exposure to LSD and psilocybin mushrooms, and with the awareness of the likes of Timothy Leary and Terence McKenna -- how they translated and interpreted the trip.

Once when picking psilocybin mushrooms off cow pies, washing them in a creek and eating them in a northern Florida pasture, I had a very delightful and enlightening conversation with cow. What made it so enlightening was that the conversation seemed so natural, so matter a fact. I would speak out loud in English, and when the cow mooed back a reply, a cartoonish speech bubble would appear like a cloud above her head filled with text translated into perfect English. The speech bubble cloud appeared to be as 'solid' and real as I or the cow. And though I don't recall the details, the conversation was brilliant with details of types of grasses and healing properties of different plants, and tastes, different tastes and what taste tastes like. Amazing nitty-gritty earthy stuff. I'm now left with the vaguest of impressions of that dazzling day in the pasture, but I do know it left me with a lifelong affinity and respect for the conscious of cows and more generally with the sense that just as you can't tell a book by its cover, you can't know the conscious of another by the package it comes in. It also gave me a much greater appreciation for Lewis Carroll's wonderland.

In another instance, I overdosed (40 hits of windowpane) on a stormy day at Disney World. That confluence lead to a psychotic break that lasted for months during which I barnstormed through the South flickering between dimensional realities, some of which were useful in consensus reality, others not at all. But it was the vague impressions of those other realities that would later keep me warm and fearless when alone in the wilderness, or traveling overland to India through Iran's Islamic Revolution, and on & on -- not knowing what was going on, but trusting. In fact, I believe it contributes strongly even today to the inner peace I feel despite all the weirdness I see in the world around me, allowing me to take these days of the Trump phenomenon both earnestly and with a teaspoonful of sugar.

I can only imagine if I had learned how to properly dose and control those mind-altering 'accelerants,' I may have been able to bring back more useful bits from way out yonder.

.....

Thursday:
Winter cold, raining, miserable.
20 home & office deliveries, no tips.

Friday, Saturday, Sunday:
Summer-like, sunny, beautiful!
60 home & office deliveries, generous tips.

Go figure.

.....

I have again and again writ my name into the surface of the waters with no lasting effect, even when the waters were still and calm. Now that they are anything but, I can only repost and magnify the voices of women, for it is they who will give birth to the next generation.

.....

At the right temperature everything is gas, even the most enduring monuments man has made for himself. I chose water as my medium because between ice and steam it is the elixir of life as we know it. In essence, women are the watercourse way.

Respect your mother, the days of the father and son are numbered.
And respect your sister, brother, her strength is yours.

.....
If today they legitimize your zygote,
then tomorrow will they patient the eggs in your ovaries and the sperm in your scrotum?

{170128}

.....
My next door neighbor, Cam died. He had escaped the worst of worst of what our world has to offer -- Cambodia in the 1970s. From a long line of farmers, he brought his wife and six children to America. Cam never learned to speak English. I knew him most from admiring how he'd squat and carefully tend his garden for hours on end. His children all flourished here. Cam's 30 year old grandson, as American as you'd hope America could be, has two young, curious toddlers of his own. Cam died on the day his family had planned a celebration of his life. Six Buddhist monks in saffron robes came to chant and pray. Cam's youngest daughter, Bang came over to apologize in advance for all the noise

.....
My wife's one minute in the garden
is an hour out of my work day.

.....
The extension cord to my electric weed wacker is old and twisted,
takes extra time to untangle. If it wasn't so damn much like me, I'd throw it out.

.....
And we should remember, the left needs the right. One winged ducks don't fly.

When you walk, you are constantly falling, losing your balance and catching yourself. The left leg is supporting the weight and propelling you forward, but when it forces you beyond your center the right thrusts out to catch you from falling flat on your face, it absorbs the shock and takes over the burden of carrying the load. The left must, for an instant, let go. But soon the left too will need to step up to keep the right from over stepping and keep the mojo going.

Yes, the left needs the right to get to where you're going without gracelessly stumbling. Of course, 'the where' of where you're going is a completely different question. That question needs to be worked out in the politics of your corpus callosum.

Th!nk about it.

.....
Lazy purple hazy mountains
past lush green city
ahead

Sun-silver shimmering ocean
in the rear-view mirror

Coronado Bridge: *"No stopping anytime!"*

.....
Her nurturing nature
nurturing nature:
a gardener

.....
Life doesn't simply break your heart,
doesn't just smash it into jagged shards,
it pulverizes, pulverizes, pulverizes

your heart into nano-dust.

And you?

And you can only be the glue
that holds it all together for
as long as the beat goes on.

At the supermarket, studying the bulk bins,
there was this stylishly dressed emaciated young woman -- heart-breakingly
concentration camp skeleton skin & bones thin. I was conflicted. I'm a stranger,
I don't know her, but do I say something or not?

Barbara Rieke Turner: Eating disorders are difficult. Who knows?

Dan Landrum: Exactly, Barbara . . . it was the 'who knows' factor
that had the strongest pull in deciding not to break the silent wall
that could intrude on her dignity.

.....

Trapped between left and right,
trapped between earth and sky,
trapped within this skin,
what could liberty be?

.....

IF we are the only animal that knows
it's going to die
and goes about its business
as if it were immortal,

THEN we are the only animal that can say,
"I don't want to make a baby right now,"
and have sex anyway.

Knowing is one thing,
what we do is another.

.....

If you knew with certainty that you would live,
healthy & prosperous, for the next 300 years,
what would you be doing tomorrow?

If you knew with certainty that you will die
tomorrow, what would you be doing today?

These questions measure not only your belief
in an afterlife, but your fearlessness
in living this one.

.....

The tragedy isn't that we get wise too late, it is that wisdom has been made obsolete by the deluge of data.
That we get old too soon, only reinforces that youth is wasted on the young, who are awash, bathing fresh and
cracking wise in data. . . *sans* personal experience.

.....

Some are derisively questioning, *"What will people do? Sit around and write poetry all day?"*
in the advent that artificial intelligence takes over and can do everything better, faster and more efficiently,
and people have no relevant purpose.

To which I reply:

*Naked cartwheels.
Shalom aleichem*.
Spring!*

Take THAT Mr. Robot
(and stick it where the sun don't shine!)

{* <https://youtu.be/trUaSv1-jlk>}

.....
These guys (and the exceptional girls)
who don't just follow the path,
but make their own. Learn the hard way
what poison oak feels like. Find out
that sometimes you have to sleep
standing up, because the ground
is so damn cold it'll suck the life out of you.

These desperate kids that blaze the trail
through trial and error, and mostly error,
until that glorious orange sunrise after
the nasty storm of hate and lock-down ...
These desperate kids' retrospective
at the Tate opens up whole new maybe ifs.

.....
Country, Christianity, capitalism -- ideas worth dying for. But is it the ideal we die for or the people who share it?
Is the idea of Christianity fundamentally superior to Islam or is it furthering my people, not theirs,
I'm willing to sacrifice myself for?

*Everything to live for, in the ideas of ideas,
agnostics have nothing, no one to die for.*

.....
That pickup truck doesn't know it's Sunday,
the radio doesn't know it's Country,
that fancy dress doesn't know it's going to the prom.
But you better believe momma's hating waiting as you learn voice typing on your smartphone.

.....
How to arrest a cloud:
lasso Lao Tzu.

.....
We say "literally" when we mean "actually."
Literal talks about words. Actual exists in fact.
Remember *that* next time you think,
"don't believe everything you read."

.....
This Thai restaurant cashier has just a hint of a David Niven mustache
that suits her more than him. Hers is maintenance free.

.....
Incredible.
Every one of these odd looking people have been smart enough to survive in this complex society.

.....
On Demand Service: Customers complain it cost too much, restaurant owners complain their gouged on percentage, couriers complain they're not paid enough, especially given vehicle expenses, staff is outsourced.

A handful of upper management are becoming billionaires.
What's wrong with this model?

.....
Nobody ever said *life makes sense*.

April 2, 2017

.....
*Oh, I meant to say this yesterday,
you can kid a Kidder,
but you can't fool a Fool.*

.....
OLD AGE:

Better grow a sense of humor around it,
because you'll be there soon enough and
there's not a damn thing you can do about it.

.....
Toss your salad
into the garden.
In delight, watch it bolt.
Love beyond the limits of Trump.

.....
Life keeps you on your toes for as long as you got'm.

.....
Me: I'd like to pay my overdue fine.
Librarian: okay, I can help you with that.
Me: while I'm here, can I pay my debt to society?
Librarian: sure let me look that up. Let's see, ...your carbon footprint alone ...then there is nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen --
your water usage, oh boy, your water usage ...let's take a look on the plus side, what have you contributed ...ah geez, . . .
hmmm, okay then, payment-wise, looks like you're going to have to donate your body to science.

.....
Me: you mean when I'm finished with it ...

Librarian: no, I mean starting today!

.....
Go figure:

God created man, man created cars.
Old Men need to pee 7 times a day and poop 3.
A car goes a week on a tank of gas and 5,000 miles on an oil change.
If you get up a 3am, when can you ask, "*Are we there yet?*"

.....
I'm tempted to join the panhandlers in the middle of the median with a sign that reads:

*"You too will be standing here where I am soon enough.
Pay it forward. Encourage generosity and the equal distribution of wealth."*

Of course the excellent lettering will make all the difference.

are a relatively cool, fragile thing!

.....

Curious.

Two dusty orange saffron
coarse cotton monk robes
reflecting
in Louis Vuitton's
Wonderland window
at the Fashion Valley Mall.
Smiling bald heads
bobbling above leather handbags.

.....

This generation gives no indication,
making turns willy-nilly,
you have no idea where they're going,
distracted by cyberspace,
changing lanes without warning!

.....

If you're poor you spend a lot of time doing math. Especially subtraction.

.....

We're nothing without rules, but have you noticed, the rules keep changing.

.....

. . . all you need is one yes!

. . . all you need is yes!

.....

I feel so noble

sitting in the garden.

So regal.

As if I were connected

to all life!

As if I were important.

.....

Affection is a good infection to have.

.....

If you knew that next lifetime
you would come back as a donkey, would you?

How about a cockroach?

This cockroach did.

{How we so dearly cling to life.}

.....

I have no idea if there is a jealous God
that needs to hear me express my deep appreciation
for the immense beauty of this creation.
In any case, I'm happy to oblige.

{What do you think? Could this double as my Mother's Day card?}

.....

The moment humans
became machines
is the day
being a mother
became a job.

.....

I do my best
to try not to make predictions,
much less promises for the future.

That I will die
seems to be a given,
but when and how remain
an open question.

Along the way, in the eternal transitory,
I buy new shoes only as needed.
Pay my rent month to month.
Return to sober day by day.
Take each breath one at a time.

.....

Listen.

Listen to the depth of sounds
around.

The ticking clock,
the chattering birds.

That sound you heard
enduring the double swim
of the English Channel.

Your own heart beating,
your own breath gasping.

Listen.

{170612: *Listening* at the invitation of Anne Cleveland actively dying.}

.....

You have to be somewhere.

. . . just another eternal being trapped in a dying animal.

.....

Gravity is a constant.

My resistance to the force of gravity varies.

Want to bet who wins?

.....

If you're only interested in yourself,
you're just not that interesting.

.....

I love having the thought of you to come home to.

.....
And remember, we will forget.

We will forget that we are not alone
when the machine finally wears us down,
breaks us into pieces to be used,
to be used as parts,
formed and fashioned into separate parts,
told, "you are a special part, play your part."

In the grind,
we will forget the sky,
forget the universe,
forget that we are
we the people.

In our forgetfulness we are proud
to be machines,
perfect, faultless, blameless,
doing our part, now that we've lost our whole.

We forget to remember
that we are special, not
because we are a unique part, but
rather because we are the same as all the others,
as we hold our place
holding the whole fabric together.

.....
You're not who you were, or
who you're going to be.
You're who you choose to be.
(Even if you choose not to choose.)
.....

Double parked downtown,
damn sous sushi chef
thinks he's an artist.
.....

Evidently, all my needs have been met.
I'm still here.
My wants,
however, are another thing.
They too are still here.
.....

I've spent my life resisting death,
resisting gravity, resisting the rule
of authorities that don't suit me.

Resisting reality?

I know they are the constants, and
my efforts come and go. I know

I can't win.

Yet, I still feel compelled
to rebel. To push back.

That's life.

.....
Just because your little girl
has you wrapped around her little finger
doesn't mean it's not cutting off the circulation.
.....

I have too much faith
in my doubt
to follow a zealot!

I have too much faith
in my doubt
to follow a doctrine!

{171224}

.....
In reality,
it's absurdism
and it's older cousin, magical-thinking
that did us in.
.....

Rule #1: You have to be somewhere.
Rule #2: It's always now.
Rule #3: You can't break the rules, don't even try.
(I'm talking to you, psychotropic mushroom eaters.)

You have to be doing something,
might as well be worthwhile.

You have to be somewhere,
might as well make yourself to home.

{#mightswell}

.....
Whatever lane you're in, I'm not.
Going to the open spaces.
.....

{180101}

Life just won't leave me alone.
.....

I'm banking on that denounced government waking up and seeing
the new robots taking our jobs, and giving us flesh & bloods Universal Basic Income.
That's my retirement plan. What are my odds?
.....

I think I need to join a cult that will wash my brain.
Then get kidnapped by deprogrammers. *My brain needs a good scrub.*
.....

I'm appalled at my scrawny limitations and my paltry lack of success in piercing The Mystery. And no, that I even tried is no consolation.

.....

The problem with having an original thought is once you repeat it, it's no longer original.

.....

The thing with classic Religions, the focus on the invisible -- spirit, souls, the promise of an eternal afterlife is a wholly different scope than the thing with classic Science with its empirical focus on what our senses can perceive, even when amplified with tools we can make and embellished with abstract imagination. Even the overlap of those domains don't begin to touch on what lays beyond our senses, our perceptions. We know Bats use sonar to navigate space, but nothing of that experience. Much less other consciousness that perceive in means beyond our imaginings, like the Sun and stars. As JBS Haldane puts it, "*The universe is not only stranger than we imagine, it is stranger than we can imagine.*"

.....

That moment when you wake up and realize you're a landline in a world of mobiles the week before telepathy breaks out in shades.

.....

Someone will win the Mega-Lottery. Someone always does. Though, somehow, my odds never seem to improve. In the grand lottery of being born and having a life on this planet, I'm simultaneously both playing and being played.

.....

I've heard the first person to live to be 200 years old is alive today. That could be you! Especially if you were guaranteed good health, not necessarily wealth, but good health, what would you be doing for the next 130 years?

.....

In the making of something out of nothing, it builds upon itself, one stitch at a time. You didn't need to tame fire, reinvent the wheel, create the English language out of thin air, but you make great use of these things. You hold a unique and specific intersection in the warp and wolf of this compounding complex creation. The contributions you make to this fabric we weave together rests on the shoulders of our ancestors and is the soil from which the future generations spring.

.....

When you're out and about and you see a stranger, do you ever stop to wonder, "What is that life about?"

.....

{180210}

Why I Am Out of the Art Conversation

The world is increasingly polarizing between the myth of the rational and the myth of the faithful. The confrontation between religious faith and the modern scientific world is not going away. It's time to break the spell.

Culturally from its inception Art has served the magical, the religious, the superstitious powers. Currently — art for art's sake, art for the love of it aside — art culturally predominantly serves commercial interests, and as an artificial marketplace for moneyed interest to sink their exorbitant gains into inflated and distorted values.

By far, in the modern era, the aspect of art most employed is absurdity. Absurdity has long had its place in art as a wedge to break the magic thinking spell. From Aristophanes in classical Greece to the Dadaists in World War 1, absurdity spoke truth to power. But now the truth of that power has been usurped. Look at advertising, especially TV. Most commercials are surreal. Go to the world class art shows, to the big New York City galleries, museums and auctions that define the art market. The vast majority of what you see will be absurd, surreal, otherworldly -- unreal. The place of art as subversive reason speaking truth to power has been turned on its head. The Joke is on art. Absurdity has saturated

what entertains us. But when it reaches the point that we elect an Absurdity to the Supreme Seat of Power, the bully pulpit that defines what is and isn't Fake News, there is no longer reason or cause, there is no longer reason or cause to speak. It's futile to argue with Absurdity when it holds the upper hand.

"Those who can make you believe absurdities, can make you commit atrocities," Voltaire

Art can have many other functions, but when absurdity has its finger on the Nuclear trigger that could annihilate us all . . . it's time to stop and mourn the loss.

I'm arguing here that "We the people" have strayed into a mindset that presents a clear & present danger to us all, to the people, to the planet, to life as we know it. And that our Art is culpable, our art, via the absurd, reflects, if not generates the escape into fantasy and unreality, rather than encourage thoughtful dives into reason and legitimacy. I'm calling for a penetrating look into how a Post-absurd approach to speaking truth to power might develop, in Art, in journalism and beyond.

.....

One times one is one,
but one plus one is two.

Valentine, be mine.

.....

That place where seagulls meet crows.
That place where the fog rolls in as the marine layer,
(except when the wind blows off the desert.)

That place is this place, the place I call home, where
liars lay low and Truth is spoken from and to the heart.

That place, where the Old Culture voluntarily turn in
their assault rifles to be melted down and
made into hoes and shovels, because
"That's the world I want to live in."

Oh!, THAT place!

.....

I'd much rather die opening to what I love than live under the boot of fear.

.....

Sweet! And I of so little social influence,
am I ever closer to that perfection of imperfection,
that stillness of Zen sitting in the community of 'Woke Ones'
that moves by half steps, but can never quite reach its ultimate Samadhi?

.....

It's my 'stoned' experience that rocks have "mind" with 'other' relationships to time than we do, and my 'vision quest' experience that the interwoven root network of fields upon fields of Manzanita have open and direct lines of communications with distant stars, and my 'meditative' experience that ultimately contentless space of inner consciousness is too vast to navigate, and it too again has relationships to time than we can't fathom. Makes me think we need to rethink both "mind" and "evolution." I can well imagine that the vast, deep, and living microbial biosphere, the "subsurface microorganisms in hydrothermal vents/springs, cold methane seeps, deep oceanic sediments, coastal estuaries and bays, and subduction zones" underneath all the world's oceans that Karen Lloyd speaks of from her Lloyd lab is a persistent form of intelligence worlds apart from our own.

{Karen G. Lloyd lab, University of Tennessee, deep subsurface biosphere research focusing on uncultured microorganisms.>
<http://lloydlab.utk.edu/>}

.....

I don't make promises.
Only on rare occasions I'll make predictions,
and then only with the caveat that predictions can be wrong.

.....
You spend your life in my store,
and I'll be buying your story, baby!

.....
It's not always what you think. You may think it's just piss,
but it turns out to be both piss and shit. You may think it's shit and
all that comes out is gas. You may think it's really nothing, and it turns out
to be the whole enchilada. Nature can surprise you that way.

{SEE: Here I sit broken hearted, came to shit and only farted. > <http://folklore.usc.edu/here-i-sit-broken-hearted/>}

.....
Meaning doesn't come inherent,
we create meaning after the fact,
or fiction.

It's malleable that way.

.....
OH!, for the romance of the misfits,
for that one heroic artist who speaks for the hoards
of romantic misfits who will live out their play poor & anonymous
with ear-splitting whiny voices as thin as pitchy piccolos.

For that special, talented one
Who, by chance, picked up a tattered ticket from the gutter
and won the mega lottery. And for the many millions
who never will.

.....
"Comfort-zone??, Forget comfort-zone! Get outside of your FILTER BUBBLE!!!"
"But I like my Filter Bubble."
BECAUSE, "You don't see what gets edited out," whispers the filter bubble.

.....
The internet is a cannibal.
It's the human mind feeding and eating itself.
My thoughts are a snack, not even an appetizer.

.....
There's objective reality, then there's what you perceive.
Try to marry the two. The more you can marry the two,
the more chance you'll have to create a place where you can meet others.
Otherwise, you're just playing with yourself.

.....
{180519}

History, as we know it is a very, very short blip of human, much less animal existence, but even so, you would be hard pressed to find a time when humans, much less animals, were not '*violent attack*' actors. We might want to try to hold ourselves apart and indict 'willful and wontan' actors, when they act against their 'own kind' as villains (though we hold them out as heroes when they attack the 'enemy',) but intent is really beside the point. We are a violent, violent

I don't regret the long practice to train my body-mind-spirit. Nor do I regret letting go of the practice to be the optionally mannered animal that I am.

.....

Born helpless, they put you in diapers.
When you grow old and incontinent, they put you in diapers.
But in between it's a smorgasbord feast, help yourself!

.....

{180810}

Before learning to love, *learn discernment.*
Love truth more than anything.

.....

Did you think the composition of the atmosphere would stay steady state forever the same, so you could endlessly suck up the oxygen and spew out shit? With around two-to-three trillion planets in our galaxy, all with atmospheres different than your own, you thought yours wouldn't change as you fart like a fat-fuck mythical fairy chopping down the globe's purifying forest lungs and clogged your own with momentary high drug laden smoke? Did you believe in the primacy of primates? That, of course, ipso facto it's a given that the fittest apes, like you, somehow divinely deserve to reign over the planet for longer than the terrible reptiles did. That your social political structure gave you a controlling God's blessing say, and you are free to do whatever the hell you want for His Glory. That somehow your insatiable avarice for more junk justifies the 150-200 species of plant, insect, bird and mammal that become extinct every day. Are your planned obsolescence creature comforts really worth the hundreds of millions of humans exterminated in genocides in the 20th century, the tens of millions of humans being exterminated in your name in Yemen today? Did you think your book learning college education diluted mind would give you a survival advantage over cockroaches and ants when they drop the nuclear bomb? Did you think you could live a ceaseless more want, neurotic mess of an unconscious plastic augmented life and fade away into the sunset living happily ever after? You be wrong. You be wrong on so many dimensions.

{PS: I hate to be the one to spring it on you, but there is no such thing as unconditional love of all sentient beings. Not in this world.}

.....

Then again,
if it weren't for the news media,
I'd think things on the whole are going pretty good in the world.

.....

Focus/Ignore: You must be ignorant to form an ego.

Our personal reality is a matter of focus, blurred or concentrated, we choose to ignore the rest. We choose ignorance in order to focus on forming an identity of who we are in relations to what we know. Alan Watts, "*When you focus your consciousness on a particular area, you ignore everything else. That is why to know is at the same time to ignore. The ego is nothing other than the focus of conscious attention. So then, the relationship of self to other is the complete realization that loving yourself is impossible without loving everything defined as other than yourself.*"

.....

Awareness is the ground of all knowing, and simultaneously can be the perception of a specific thing or event -- both the event and the perceiver of the event. Global or local, whether a spotlight or floodlight focus, awareness itself is value neutral. Understanding the consequence of all possible actions before they happen, ultimately percipient, awareness has no preference for doing or not-doing and holds the ground for being. Awareness aware of itself is an Indra's Net of reflection at play with being and becoming.

.....

Soul? Are we talking mortal or immortal here? If we're talking about "the part of you that will go to heaven and be immortal," I can't help you. If we're talking about the "mental abilities of a living being: reason, character, feeling, consciousness, memory, perception, thinking, etc" . . . we have a deep, wide, unfathomable rabbit hole we can go down

and explore together. And that deep dive will most certainly take us through all manner of evil and goodness and then some. But, we go together, and that's what matters.

*"Out beyond ideas of right and wrong,
There is a field. I'll meet you there." --Rumi*

.....
There's a peace in being last,
there's a quiet in the corner,
there's strength in having your back
up against the wall.

*I don't know what they told you,
but I'm telling you now,
you are the all in all,
the only all that is.*

The peace in the quiet,
when you're feeling small,
is all you need to draw on
when you feel you're at the end
of your rope.

.....
Are you a spirit that came into a body
to inhabit this world,
or did you spring out of your mother's Earth,
like a mushroom,
to people the planet?

Did you fall from sky, or
Spring from between the legs
Of earth?

.....
My ego's center rests here, two fingers below my belly,
and extends out, at its periphery, just beyond the stars,
where my imagination grows dim.

.....
Striving stride arrive,
this is it!
Going is destiny.

Sep 28, 2018 4:57am

.....
Believe the woman who has nothing to gain
and everything to lose
when she summons the courage
to speak truth to corrupt power.

.....
Life is more fun when you're funny.

November 6th, 2018 - Midterms

.....
What is a vote untabulated
but a spit in the wind
in the face of the gas lighting few who controls the conversation?

.....
*Never try to win an argument with your spouse. Relationships are never a zero-sum game.
They are relentlessly about learning, discovering more about the intimate other.*

Thus when I say:
Throw mother from the train,
a kiss.

We can argue all day about the intended action,
but not about the enduring affection.
.....

Hollywood for decades, generations, has glorified gun violence,
desensitizing us to mass murder.
Same with alcohol.
.....

THEORY: we can't think without 'place'. Even our notion of empty space needs place.
Our thoughts of nothing are always relative to something.
And our thoughts of 'no thoughts' can only suggest that 'no thoughts' is a purely experiential state.

Even an abstraction such as numbers needs a discreet unit of place. Where did you learn to count numbers?
On your fingers. Only when we can fix the whole and rational can you begin to imagine irrational ones.

Where am I?

There's only one question you need to answer: where am I?
If you can answer that, everything else will fall into place.
.....

1/2: **Respectful?** It's not so much that you are worthy of respect,
as that I prefer to be full of respect. It's a courtesy I extend to you for my benefit.

2/2: **No one can give you self-esteem**, you have to make your own.

Blessed, though the universe could give a fig about me.
.....

Black Olive & White Grape roll into a salad bar,
Saddle up to the cutting board...

{A set-up in search of a punch line.}
.....

Do Your Damnedest

You can only do your best once,
but you can do your #DamnNearBest
until the cows come home.

{Perfect is the enemy of the good.}

Good enough is good enough.
.....

What if you set aside your magic thinking, and
accept that when you die you simply cease to exist?

How would you live then?

I fly beneath your notice.
Yet, here I am.
In all my glory!
Life is really something.
Isn't it?

.....

When you're the best thing going in the life of your neighbor's cat ...
A simple life is a full life.

.....

Even in its most sophisticated use,
using language that normally signifies the opposite,
irony and its cousins satire, sardonicism, cynicism . . .
doesn't add to clarity.

.....

The shortest distance between two points is not the point.
Unless you're a surveyor.

.....

The problem with your neighbors having kids, . . .
they grow up and take your parking spot.
Which is exactly why Saturn devoured his babies.

.....

The Next Generation city is never finished,
a country never finally built.
War makes monsters out of our children.

If now is a time of monsters,
revolution is the lie that undoes
what was never finished.

The old America is dying.
A new America is struggling to be born.
Now is a time of monsters.

{RE: Waleed Shahid, Sep 27, 2018: "*The old America is dying./A new America is struggling to be born./Now is a time of monsters.*" >
<https://twitter.com/waleedshahid/status/1045508823786622976>}

.....

Is a mixed nut tree possible?
That's the kind of tree I've fallen from.

{Appreciative self-deprecation.}

.....

The convention of 2+2 totaling four is only true when it's not pinned to a thing,
as no two things are the exactly the same.
Science is built on faith, on a hypothesis
that is only supposed true until proven it's not.

.....

It takes both wings for a duck to fly.

My auto mechanic, Enrique Gama, is the best I've ever known.
When asked if he expected to spend the rest of Eternity
with the family he currently has, he said, "*that's the way it works.*"

{PS: Having worked too hard, Enrique died too young ...a broken heart.}

Neither science nor religion knows what it doesn't know,
but the choice to be kind suggests free will.

All these kids who were late doing their homework assignment are now out on the highway making lane changes.

When you wake up, get going and then realize you're not making good choices today . . .
how do you decide what to do next?

A dingleberry is a dingleberry, will always be a dingleberry.
But a caterpillar may become a butterfly!
Who are you in this story?

I'm a very interested person.
Are you interesting?

Who guards the interface between your inner and outer worlds?

{190124}

I love you beyond measure, beyond number.
I've grown to love you more than water.
You are the life of flowers shared.

The life of flowers is hope and fulfillment and
peace; tears and laughter.

I treasure the years I get to spend with you.
The seconds, the moments.
Each instance.

The life we weave together between,
a life of bittersweet good-bye,
a life of "I'm home!" welcomed;
again, tears and laughter.

Yes, dear.
The life of clouds is a life of farewell, a life
of transformation and reunion, but also
the life of flowers is rays of sunshine
breaking through the raindrops – together
forming the rainbow's promise of hope
and fulfillment and

peace;
Joy!

I share you with the garden,
I share you with the neighbor's cat,
I share you with those that need you,
I share you with the Pleiadians,

I share you with earthquakes and wild fires,
hail and hurricanes. I share you the broken
and the healing.

I share you with tears and laughter.
yet you are mine,
all mine.

You are magic that way.
I'm so happy it's you!

.....

We're all disingenuous, why would you expect our politicians to be different?

Disingenuous, complex, compromised. For instance: This straw man debate between climate change believers and climate change deniers is bogus. We're all actually deniers. If we really, really, really believed, we'd act like it. We'd stop shopping on Amazon & eBay, stop shopping for 'bargains' and start growing our own food, making our own clothes, building our own tools. We'd believe that our suburban neighborhood is the right human scale for all we really need and act on it, make it so. We'd walk to work, share our resources, cooperate extended transportation and communication needs. We'd be our entertainment. We'd plant and nurture trees, collect rain water, volunteer to help our neighbors, skip rope, sing new songs, laugh. Laugh at corporation's hot new trends, shake our stank face collective heads at political candidates hell bent on destabilizing and exploiting foreign lands, turn away with quiet humor from things not built to last. We'd roll on the floor roaring at the giants demanding our attention to sell us, to enslave us in their supply & demand schemes. If we really, really believed in global warming, we'd live like it. We'd cool down our pace of life, our avarice desires for more, more, more and find the beauty in the quiet, in the open space, in friendships with kindness of strangers. We'd stop being so selfishly lonely. We'd join hands, holding our place in the linked chain of humanity and live a small, grateful life full of the magnificence of being whole and healthy and well within the slowly changing climate.

And on & on down the list of what we see is wrong with the world, if we really walked our talk, we wouldn't wish power to represent us match our dream world, we'd take agency, we'd be living the life.

.....

*Dive shallow often,
dive deep as often as you can.
Keep your toes wet.*

The creative process is inevitable, it comes from the inner necessity – you just gotta do it. If you're prudent, you'll weigh the cost/benefits before you take action. Sometimes to dream is enough. Then again, most often by conventional standards, creatives are quirky, eccentric, and prudence may just as well appear as a desperate Hail Mary. Destruction is also inevitable, but rather than developing a novel form of order, destruction knocks the blocks back to an elemental array of random chaos. It's easier to destroy than create, but as a creator you've picked a side, so it's best to know what you're up against. You'll need to pick your moments, the moments you have the resources, the energy, and you've assessed the outer world's time is right to go for it.

There's an old African proverb that says *"If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."*

Seven years ago, I went alone. I'd lost my day job, but was left with, what for me, was a nice nest egg, and also a burning desire to explore the nascent emerging Makers Movement, and specifically the new technology emerging out of Computer Numerically Controlled machines, like the laser cutter. I built a few lines of what I felt were lovely and primary

things, but not a sufficient audience (art) / customer base (business) to make the venture a sustained success before I ran out of money. I lacked the skills, personality, sales savvy and/or inclination to solicit patron benefactors (art)/ angel investors (business), so the project died in infancy. The work was satisfying in its own right, but left me in so much debt at a time in my life that I am unable to get a day job that will allow me to recover, hence effectively ending any dreams of future endeavors.

Thus I'd counsel, embrace your inner critic. Edit WHILE you frame the image, are actively writing the story line. Embrace the openness of doubts, bring them close, cheek to cheek and reassure them with the deepening well of the swelling love and conviction that grows in your hunt for these most elusive newnesses you are after. Let that resistant voice be part and parcel of your exuberant process. Dance like someone you admire, admire more than you fear any bullying naysayer, more than you recoil in darkness and meanness, is watching. There is where you find the Grace in the creation. Your inner critics prepare you for the outer ones, and the more precious your truth tweaks reality, the harsher the consequences.

42 YEARS AGO Vanessa Redgrave won an Oscar for playing a woman killed by Nazis for her views in the film "Julia." Because of her involvement with another film "The Palestinian" the Jewish Defense League launched a campaign against her. She calls them out ("Zionist hoodlums", believed to be a reference to the JDL who were picketing the ceremony) in a powerful speech against fascism, racism and anti-Semitism and salutes the legacy of Jewish resistance.

Following her nomination, members of the JDL burned her in effigy and allegedly offered a bounty on her head. The cinema in which "The Palestinian" film was to be shown (The Doheny Plaza theatre, Los Angeles) was bombed (15th June, 1978: 04.26am) prior to its screening that day. The film was shown at the same cinema the following night. A member of the Jewish Defense League (JDL) was later convicted for the incident.

The controversial statement about "Zionist hoodlums" reportedly cost Vanessa Redgrave many roles over the years.

"I didn't realize pledging to fight anti-Semitism and fascism was controversial. I'm learning that it is. I had to do my bit. Everybody had to do their bit, to try and change things for the better, to advocate for what's right and not be dismayed if immediately you don't see results."

Redgrave has remained true to political causes even at the twilight of her career. In 2017 she directed her first film, "Sea Sorrow," a documentary about the European migrant crisis and the plight of migrants encamped outside Calais, France, trying to reach Britain. She has criticized the British government for its policies toward migrants.

Just today, from the public library, I ordered Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* to see if it says what I recall it says. *The Old Man and the Sea* tells the story of a battle between an aging, experienced fisherman, Santiago, and a large marlin. As I recall, it's an epic little story fraught with excruciating struggle with, and simultaneously great admiration for, a worthy adversary. And just when Santiago feels the victory over the vanquished, forces greater than he, Sharks, devour his prize before he can bring it home. Defeated, he tells the sharks of how they have killed his dreams. . . but, waking the next day Santiago promises his young apprentice they will fish together once again.

And that's the thing about any creative endeavor, whether your initial dream survives and flourishes, or is killed by sharks, upon waking the next day there is great satisfaction in "The Go," having given your all.

.....

I have a chronic, pre-existing condition.
I keep waking up every morning.

.....

Experts who talk in technical jargonese hurt my inner poet's ears.
"An expert is a man who has made all the mistakes that can be made in a very narrow field," Niels Bohr

No questions can live in a rarified vacuum.

.....

If yours is a Merciful God, you don't need religion.

If yours is a Wrathful God, well hell, it doesn't really matter.
Does it?

{190401}

I was going room to room trying to drum up business, back when I gave art sessions for the Alzheimer's Association, when I met Joy. Propped up in bed with her hands folded on her lap, she was a tiny, frail woman.
"We're drawing pictures in the dining room, would you like to join us?"

< long silence >

*"Honey, when I wake up in the morning and I'm still here, I praise the Lord.
If when I open my eyes the ceiling isn't spinning, I sing Glory Hallelujah!"*

That's been my touchstone ever since.
A deep abiding gratitude for those days the ceiling isn't spinning.

{190428}

If we had no words, how would I know you?
If we had no words, I'd know you by the love you are.

how
do you do
research

double down
down

down

>> Here's a few 'Life of a Courier' bits from the '*Shortest Deliveries*' files:

Awhile back, after circling several times, I found parking a couple blocks from the pickup, which was a little convenience store in the first floor retail space of a downtown steel & glass tower. I put a quarter in the meter for 5 minutes and jogged to the store. Fortunately I didn't have to wait in line, as I was the only customer in the store. I gave the clerk the name & order number and he handed me a small plastic bag with a pack of cigarettes in it. "That's it?" I asked. "That's it," he confirmed. Before leaving the store I swiped the 'picked up' button to get to the delivery screen and studied the address a few seconds. As it said 'Deliver to Door,' I walked across the foyer, took the elevator to the 4th floor, turned right, walked 2 doors down and rang the bell. Soon a rather bedraggled thirty-something woman opened the door a crack, stuck her arm out and muttered 'thanks' as I handed her the small package.

I had a modest wait after a 15 minute drive to the Chula Vista Denny's off I-805 to pick up a Breakfast Special. I checked and double checked the map on the delivery screen, then drove across the shared parking lot to the lobby of the La Quinta Inn. As the instructions said, 'Wait in Car,' I rolled down the passenger window and asked the twenty-something man standing there, "UberEats?" "Yup," he replied. "What's the name on the order?" "Joaquin." "Great, thanks for being out here."

But that's not the shortest delivery on record.

The shortest was a pick-up at the McDonalds in the City Heights Center. I got parking easily in one of the designated 'Online Orders' spots. The restaurant was pretty packed, but once I got a clerk's attention and gave her the order number, she quickly handed me the already ready stickered bag containing 40 McNuggets. I stepped back from the counter, swiped for delivery and stared puzzled at the results. The delivery address was exactly same as the pick-up address. Did the app malfunction? What's going on? Just then I feel a tap on the shoulder. I pivot 180 degrees to find a

high schooler asking me, "Is that for Dylan?" "Why, yes it is..." Bemused, I ask as I hand him the bag, "...if you were right here already, why didn't you just place the order directly with McDonald's?" He shrugs, "I didn't have any cash."

>> AND one for the '*Longest Deliveries*' :

When I got to Five Guys, a vintage style hamburger stand, to pick up an order, the cook told me the customer had cancelled the order. "Why is that?" I asked, and was told, "They forgot to change their delivery address before they placed the order, and now they live in Texas." Glad they cancelled. That would have been a long drive and the fries would have got soggy.

.....

{CALL: rare correspondence on Monday, April 29, 2019}

dear kids

I was thinking my fone was broke-I can use it ,it just never rings!
So we just got back from Paducah ,most exciting show I've been to. Then we visited their quilt museum ,it was as exciting or more than the show. After that we went shopping in this huge store of fabric. We had to finance the farm. very exciting outing.

Mostly we try to stay home and make quilts and other unnessessities. Like hand bags. No one really wants to go to town to buy food. However we do see the grand babies a couple of times a week and watch Netflix shows or chase lizzards.

this time of year I will work on the pool and get it ready for swim season.

And don't forget the garden ,we ate fresh spinach and lettuce with lambs quarters for dinner tonight.

so that and read books

love{don't forget to spread the love the world is laking in it}

{RESPONSE: Tuesday, April 30, 2019}

You chase lizards? Me? I chase my neighbor's cat, when it's chasing our lizards. Our lizards help keep the spider population in check and add a certain panache to our suburban, semiarid xeriscape garden. The Western Skink, Western Fence Lizard and Side-blotched Lizards are the species most commonly seen; in spite of being here in appreciable numbers, the Orange-throated Whiptail is observed only occasionally, and the Alligator Lizard is rarely seen. It can be heartbreaking to find a Skink tail without a Skink, but it can renew your faith in nature, when later, you come across a tailless Skink sunning on a rock.

The most rare lizard around here is the California Legless Lizard, yet a few years back I spent an afternoon with one. This particular Legless Lizard slipped in under the side door and startled the crap out of me. I thought it was a snake. I gave chase. First it ensconced behind the desk, and I when move the desk, it quickly slithered under, then up into the sofa. Took the damn sofa apart, but never did see that Legless Lizard again. Might still be in there as far as I know.

The other day I was making a delivery out in Lemon Grove and as I came around the bend, what did I see cascading down the hillside? A herd of 200 goats. And a happy lot they were, frolicking, butt butting and kicking up their heels. Turns out the city hires a company called Environmental Land Management Goats to run the goats, overseen by human handlers and a Great Pyrenees livestock-guard dog, as a simple and convenient way to clear brush and implement preventative measures to control fire outbreaks. They say, "Goats can be used effectively in almost any location or terrain type, especially in terrain too rocky or steep for human or machine clearing. Because these goats are tightly managed by highly trained handlers, they are kept from overgrazing and make a wonderful option for brush abatement and weed control." With all the wildfires we're prone to here in California, you can imagine why seeing a herd of happy goats scampering down the hillside would bring a smile to the face.

What books are you reading? I recently went back and read Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, mostly to see how it stacked up to my memory of the story. Turns out what I most remembered of the story came from the 1958 film adaptation starring Spencer Tracy, and subsequently influenced by the 1990 miniseries starring Anthony Quinn. I probably had never read the book before. But the theme of deep admiration and respect for an adversary, even as you're trying everything in your power, as Santiago did, to vanquish it, ran true in the writing as in the films. That and the nostalgic heroic-task feel, salty smell and untiring mystery swimming deep of Marlin fishing, as exaggerated by my boyhood perspective.

I looked up Paducah, Kentucky, home of the National Quilt Museum, "a cultural destination that annually attracts an international array of more than 40,000 quilters to one of the largest quilt shows in North America, the American Quilter's Society "QuiltWeek Paducah". I can see why you thought you were in heaven. Cheers!

Yes, love! {spread the love generously, like peanut & jelly}

.....

The inevitability that I will die, imagining life ever after, ...which is more terrifying?

.....

db

qp

{#DyslexicNightmare}

.....

You don't need to remember if you ate, you only need to know if you're hungry.

.....

"the arts are all daughters of memory" — Stephen Fry

(speaking of the 'public dream' of the Greek people or Jung's 'collective unconscious' > 25:20, https://youtu.be/SYPZwZud_PA)

{SEE" "Hope and Memory have one daughter and her name is Art, ..." — William Butler Yeats}

.....

"When you have a minute or two you may want to have a look at this [suspicious URL]"

D: Hey Joe, this 'From' email address looks suspicious, did you send this?

J: Nope. Didn't send it. Suspicious. Or just another person with that name coincidentally?

Hope you're well, Dan. Been thinking about you lately with no contact for a while.

D: Thanks for confirming that it's a spoof email, Joe. I too have intermittently been thinking of you and yours fondly. Having no convenient way now that I've tipped-toed away from social media to confirm that y'all are doing well, I have to fall back on the ole pre-internet intuition and trust that you are. And as all three of you are bright, truth-centric, formidable spirits in ever healthifying bodies, . . . I do trust.

J: Same, Unclebrother Dan. Tip-toeing away is wise. It's become the only way to get in touch with some people, but I too have eased waaaay back. You and Gail and that crew were some of the only worthwhile discussions going on. Otherwise, nobody's truly curious. All 3 (G\$, Janie, and Domino) are good here. I am too. It's sometimes a wacky struggle to square the rapid decline of the country and planet with raising a boy and all the effort and joy that includes. It all feels wack, like someone's tipping the angle of the earth too subtly for anyone to scream - that is, except for those 3 spirits. I can't honestly tell if it's the times, me, me getting older, or being able to see the train track truly ending and falling at the cliff. Still VERY nice to see your comments on my blog.

D: I'm right there with you peering over the ugly world's cliff's edge and spryly wondering. Here's to the bar that serves the ever curious, and when I next meet you there, I'll be sure to start the conversation with "Why?" . . . if I can remember. I've heard it said that 'all arts are the daughters of memory.' As I am slowly losing my memory and can clearly see the train tracks ending on complex, layered thinking, I may very well forget to ask. But still I'll rest assured you'll notice the understanding we share as we sit together quietly in the wordless abyss refreshing in the cool breeze's final whispers, "Ready?"

.....

If you are aware that you're aware,
you are intelligent enough

to have a marvelous life.

.....
I don't know enough to be an atheist, but
I've experienced enough not to believe in your God.
.....

Zero degrees Kelvin, *absolute zero* as it is called, is, -459.67 degrees Fahrenheit, or -273.15 degrees Celsius. Kelvin is a temperature scale with increments equivalent to degrees of Celsius, but uses absolute zero rather than water's freezing point as its starting point. The highest possible known temperature before particle physics breaks down is 142 nonillion kelvins (10^{32} Kelvins) . Us mammal are comfortable within a tiny, tiny sliver of possible temperatures— NASA explained that human bodies are made to live in environments that are between 4-35 degrees Celsius. And you believe in the full range of the Cosmos, God selected that range for his Anointed Ones?

{Homage to the **Possibilianism** of Dr. David Eagleman: https://youtu.be/AP_Q6JqFMf0 > <https://www.possibilian.com/>}

.....
If I had a dog, I'd name him Pavlov,
then I'd be Pavlov's human
.....

Sometimes you turn a corner and come across a stand of trees that makes you feel
that it's possible that everyone can be happy.
.....

The mind is such a transient vagrant,
where do I put my trust?

{#EnduringLove}

.....
You're a cork bobbing on the ocean,
carve out a rudder.
.....

Wild Weed, gone to seed.
Wild Weed, Wild Weed
"Little Lamb who made thee / Dost thou know who made thee"

T-shirt Cotton needs a lot of water,
requiring up to 713 gallons to grow enough for just one T-shirt.
I think it's okay if I flush the toilet.
.....

*You are trapped in a world of competing symbols, more than life, you love the fight. The contest.
Those symbols are not the thing, the thing is the thing. **Be first the subject of your objective truth.***

Squeeze out the redundancy and you have a solid *"How to Change Your Mind"* book. Solid in recapping the social political winds of the best minds of a generation that did not go mad, forging on in their isolate labs to cure the broken, endeavors to legitimize our rational knowing of the transcendental, (distinct and separate from the ages of traditional experience and exploration,) no mere recreation, reflecting how extraordinary the ordinary is. *"Of the many trips Pollan describes — several in almost slavish detail — the most common takeaway is that "love is everything." While Pollan admits that this observation is Hallmark card banal, he can't help but be charmed by it. Nor can we. But what Pollan sometimes neglects to make clear in this alternately fascinating and frustrating book, is that the experience of taking these drugs is very much a reflection of who we are, and what we believe."* —Ellen Ruppel Shell

{**How to Change Your Mind:**

What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us About Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence,"

.....
CLOWN: if the world's not fun, make fun of it.
.....

Don't ask me where I'm hiding.
I'm withdrawing from the world.
But I can't come out and tell you,
because I've withdrawn from the world.
.....

We like our heroes Super, we like our heroes flawed.
.....

Singular They

The way that man nods
to strangers tells me
he's in on the joke,
the cosmic joke, and
knows better than to laugh
out loud.

The way that woman nods
to strangers tells me
she's in on the joke,
the cosmic joke, and
knows better than to laugh
out loud.

Why still no third-person singular gender-neutral pronoun,
all these years after Ms. Magazine was launched in English?

My pronouns We/Us includes Ted Cruz saying his pronouns are 'kiss my ass!'

{SEE: **Singular They** > Singular they is the use in English of the pronoun they or its inflected or derivative forms, them, their, theirs, and themselves (or themself), as an epicene (gender-neutral) singular pronoun. > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singular_they}

.....
In a field of daisies, you found the dandelion.
.....

You can tell me you love me
more than anything,
and then you tell me
to shut up,
all in the same breath.

Ours is a raw,
unedited love.
.....

It is what it is.
Focus on your piece of it.
Pay attention.
Stop. Look. Listen.
When you're ready to

cross the road,
hold hands.

.....

{191016}

I agree Doug,
there is no evidence for hope.
Not in the Balkans.
Not here at home.
And religion, culture, art,
though providing distractive entertainment,
are no true solace
to the existential contemplation.
All I can do today,
like every day,
is to get up and wonder,
"What's going to happen next?"
The pain, the joy
come and go.
If there is lasting salvation,
it's in the wonder.

.....

Rich fame, young LOVE:
I'd be of that age
when I must of necessity
tame my wild hair
and rambunctious heirs,
if indeed I had had children.

.....

da asshole don't give a shit.

<constipation>

{'I don't give a shit' is a popular phrase to be used when you are not interested in what someone else says or believes. It implies that you don't even care enough to physically give them a sample of your fecal matter. ~

<https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=I%20don%27t%20give%20a%20shit> }

</constipation>

.....

Unlike Bob Dylan,
I ran away from home 16 times
and got brought back 17.
In my place, dug in.

*{There's only one question you need to answer: where am I?
If you can answer that, everything else will fall into place.}*

.....

*The diddling doesn't do it,
but the doodling does*

.....

I've seen what good days look like.
This isn't one of those.
But still, it's pretty darn good.
Good enough.
Perfection, they say, is the enemy

of the good. Enough.
Enough is enough.

.....
Now that oligarchs have decided our democracy as their play toy,
Michael Bloomberg taking the helm is good as any??
.....

In all fairness...

"Religion performs the key function of providing social solidarity in a society."

No small thing, forming a society.

"The function of government is to step in to regulate large, complex societies."

Again no small thing.

"Government is subordinate to society."

And justice, fairness and equitability are subordinate—though not required,
of good governance.

If you could redesign society from scratch, what would it look like?

How would you distribute wealth and power?

Would you make everyone equal or not? How would you define fairness and equality?

And—here’s the kicker—what if you had to make those decisions without knowing
who you would be in this new society?

Its purpose is to explore ideas about justice, morality, equality,
and social status. . . *Behind the Veil of Ignorance*, no one knows who they are. . .

They exist as an impartial group, tasked with designing a new society
with its own conception of justice. . . a few tiny ones for your friends,
but one of them might take the large slice and...

{SEE: **The Fairness Principle: How the Veil of Ignorance Helps Test Fairness** > <https://fs.blog/2017/10/veil-ignorance/> }

.....
Harry S. Ashmore begins accounting *Arkansas' Bicentennial History* by dropping names
like rain drops in a storm, wreaking havoc on what would be civil in civilization,
reiterating, contrary to the commonly held belief, the opposite of war is not peace.
The reality is that the opposite of “war” is “not war” and the opposite of “peace” is “not peace.”
And soaked to the bone, our collective history, then as now, is not peace.
.....

When being in your way is getting in my way,
the shortest distance between 2 points
is the path of least resistance.
Just ask water.
.....

I think the world of Blake Shelton & Stephen Colbert.
I only wish to hell they'd face head-on whatever it is
they're trying to drown in their drinking.
.....

The vehicle through which a culture is primarily projected: food.
.....

Awareness is the ground of all knowing,
and simultaneously can be the perception of a specific thing or event,

both the event and the perceiver of the event. Global or local,
whether a spotlight or floodlight focus, awareness itself is value neutral.
Understanding the consequence of all possible actions before they happen,
ultimately percipient, awareness has no preference for doing or not-doing and
holds the ground for being. Awareness aware of itself is an *Indra's Net* of reflection
playing in the interaction between being and becoming.

.....

If you need me to be other than I am,
you need someone else.

I can see there's no talking to you,
but I can't tell you that ...
hence this text.

.....

This is the place I saw that crow picking thru garbage.
I didn't get his name, but that's okay because he represents
his kind. . . I can just call him crow.

.....

The Voice has become a star factory, pumping out sausage where music should be.

.....

The day after a rainy day,
– fresh air –
crisp clear clean.
Where were you when I was depressed?

To all Anti-natalist Efilists,
you need to get out more,
out in nature.

.....

Boomers > subculture hippie, values:

PRO: Love Peace Harmony Goodwill Nonviolence
voluntary simplicity, equality: civil rights feminism ecology
organic drugs music Tao nature kindness open-source
live free

ANTI: war-establishment-CorporateFeudalCapitalism
(anti: Military-Industrial-Educational Complex)

.....

Heaven is found
when you stop hating
and start caring,
once and for all.

Not-hating is not love.
Not-hating is the absence of malice,
love is the presence of caring.

.....

Turns out, I prefer my own company to that of the national news.

.....

Google sits next to God, God's very annoyed.

.....
Don't let Monday cheat Friday.
.....

Apparently, the rules of the right-of-way are suspended in the parking lot.
.....

Cold Wet Dark Miserable

Warm Dry Light Joyful

Hot Parched Delirious Republican
.....

Don't be the kink in the slinky
.....

Homeless sign:

 "In desperate need
 of better life choices"

Homeless sign:

 "Give a dollar,
 get a tiny drop of dopamine
 to make yourself feel good"
.....

Those moments when I have the highway all to myself.

 Driving east on interstate 8
 at the intersection of interstate 5,
 I can see snow in the mountains,
 and simultaneously smell the briny breeze
 of the Pacific Ocean at my back,
 which makes me glad I'm not a pollywog,
 because a pollywog wouldn't get any of that.

The phlebotomist at the blood bank tells me we produce 27 million new red blood cells a second, every second. One point six two billion, billion with a "B," every minute. I'm astounded. What happens to all the old red blood cells in the blood bloodstream, I ask. She goes off, "Old or damaged red blood cells are removed from the circulation by macrophages, a large phagocytic cell found in stationary form in the tissues of the spleen and liver or as a mobile white blood cell, and the hemoglobin they contain is broken down into heme and globin. The globin protein may be recycled, or broken down further to its constituent amino acids, which may be recycled or metabolized."

"Whoosh, scary busy world there," I moan.

I'm sure glad I don't live in my blood stream.

{The poetry of highways and waterways: originates, travels, runs, stretches, spans "at its widest breadth," . . . terminus}

Five and Eight, and then there's Ten. Toll-free "freeway" interstate Highways. Five connects Mexico to Canada. Eight runs east from almost the Pacific Ocean to where it dies into Interstate 10 at Casa Grande, Arizona. Then Ten runs on for 2,002.6 miles, or 28 hours at speed limit, until it ends at the I-95 in Jacksonville, Florida.

{ADD NOTES: Ninety-Five: Interstate 95 (I-95) >> Interstate 5 (I-5)>> Interstate 8 (I-8) >> Interstate 10 (I-10 . . . [...])}

.....
"Do you have a brownie?"
"No, but we have waffles."
.....

Don't fool yourself
into believing
your suffering
in this world
is racking up credit
points in some other,
more permanent world.
.....

{Catskill Mountain fairy tales and the stories they don't tell}

You've never heard of Dame Van Winkle, who birthed Rip's two children, Judith and Rip Jr. Why's that?

The 20-Year Lost Weekend: Rip Van Winkle Was a Drunk

<https://apnews.com/e87d87a8fe0d3dc893f4c21f08339859>

DAVID GERMAIN July 31, 1990

The lovable rogue of Washington Irving's story was a real man who abandoned his wife and children to become an 18th century barfly in New York City, Real or not, Rip was not so lovable, And Rip should be an example for today, when alcoholism is acknowledged as a disease, and the drunk's loved ones are recognized as victims.
.....

Capital cannot afford to pay the true cost.
Never has, never will.
Capitalism is a shell game.
.....

I'm a scientist
in as much as I apply
a rudimentary scientific method,
mostly to myself.
The results
of my experiments:
"holyyfuck!"
.....

Why are middle-eastern myths believed more than Norse myths? If you are of pure anglo-saxon heritage, are you a traitor to your kind, a slave to the conqueror by being Christian? How did middle-eastern myths become monotheistic?

Zoroaster, also known as Zarathustra

Zoroaster, born Airyanem Vaejah c. 1500 BC – 1000 BC in ancient Iran introduces Good/Evil, Light/Dark, Right/Wrong—the freedom of the individual to choose right or wrong and individual responsibility for one's deeds—begins to become the myth that will supercede local pagan myths that humans, like all animals, are part & parcel subjects of nature, and not at-odds-determinators with dominion over all.

Leaving no room for Idun, a beautiful Old Norse Goddess with long golden hair, the Goddess of spring and eternal youth, she guards the apples of youth in Norse mythology. Idun supplies the other Gods and Goddesses with the apples of youth, to keep them young and beautiful forever. Without Idun the Old Norse myths turn brown, grow old, ugly and die.

Putting God, and then others before yourself is the ethics of tribalism. I do not want to romanticize tribalism, in many ways tribes can be brutal, especially for the individual, and complex societies can afford many creature comforts. It's no easy thing to form complex societies. Still, indigenous peoples tended to have a more appropriate scale and balanced relationship with their environment, than the burgeoning cultures that assumed dominion over all.

{The foundation of all Zoroastrian doctrine, including that of Ahura Mazda (who is aša), creation (that is aša), existence (that is aša), and as the condition for free will. The purpose of humankind, like that of all other creation, is to sustain and align itself to aša. For humankind, this occurs through active ethical participation in life, ritual, and the exercise of constructive/good thoughts, words and deeds. Elements of Zoroastrian philosophy entered the West through their influence on Judaism and Platonism and have been identified as one of the key early events in the development of philosophy. Among the classic Greek philosophers, Heraclitus is often referred to as inspired by Zoroaster's thinking. First in the chronology of philosophers, Zoroaster's impact lingers today due in part to the system of religious ethics he founded called Mazdayasna. Major features of Zoroastrianism, the world's oldest monotheism and henotheism and continuously practiced religion, include a dualistic cosmology of good and evil, an eschatology predicting the ultimate conquest of evil, messianism, judgment after death, heaven and hell, and free will may have influenced other religious and philosophical systems, including Second Temple Judaism, Gnosticism, Greek philosophy, Christianity, Islam, the Bahá'í Faith, and Buddhism. Zoroaster proclaimed that Ahura Mazda was the supreme creator, the creative and sustaining force of the universe through Asha, [truth, righteousness, cosmic order] and that human beings are given a right of choice between supporting Ahura Mazda or not, making them responsible for their choices. In forming monotheistic culture, Zorostra endowed the individual with Free Will to choose to do good or not. This both broadens the base for a conforming social order and opens the door for individualization. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoroaster>}

.....

[Tibetan:] dö chung chög shé

having few desires and being easily satisfied

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free
'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.
When true simplicity is gained,
To bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed,
To turn, turn will be our delight,
Till by turning, turning we come 'round right.

{"Simple Gifts," a Shaker song written and composed in 1848, attributed to Elder Joseph Brackett from Alfred Shaker Village.}

- - -

It's enough to be satisfied,
empty of anxiety,
dispossessed of the more want.

- - -

The choice of voluntary simplicity is different
than the Christian vow of poverty, yet
in either case, you're likely to live
a small commercial life and
a large Spirit-filled one.

- - -

I don't want to brag,
but I've had a small, modest life.
At every turn, turn, turn.

.....

The homeless passed out
under the overpass.

A week of torrential rains.

Cold and damp
and insanely happy.

.....

Reality doesn't tell stories,
especially stories with morals.
reality isn't teaching,
reality isn't preaching,
reality isn't taking sides.

Fiction pretends the fact,
the imagined lives
within reality,
but are in themselves
unreal.

(as are these words)

.....

Be as elastic as time,
as durable as empty space,
and you will live a life
stronger than the bond
of the most loving mother.

.....

I am both,
subject and object,
a predicate seeking renown.

Outsider included.

The person within me
bestills
the conglomerate I.

.....

Somewhere between La Di Da and being a hard ass MoFo.

.....

That's the problem with being an Eternal being,
eventually you're going to have days like this.
These ARE the good old days!

.....

Proposing to a girl by saying. "I love you almost as much as water"
is probably not the best strategy. It may be true,
but it's not what she wants to hear in this, of all, moments.

.....

The Trump impeachment trials is living proof that the US Senate can expediently get things done,
when what is getting done is a Kabuki theatre troupe performing Jean-Paul Sartre's "*No Exit*".

.....

If feminism is equality, I'm for that.
If socialism is equality, I'm for that.
If merit-based education is equality, I'm for that.

It's not so much that we are all created equal,
it's the need for a level playing field,
a field more like a stadium football than the Alps.
Or what is society for?
.....

the day Allen Ginsberg died

Gay Jew poet dying in the big cities
surrounded by less than the best minds
of his generation, up in his grill
tinkling bells and howling
in anuṣṭubh meter:
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma
Don't wake dad, man,
be cool. Out of sight.
Say it, do it! Out of sight, out of mind.

{And then there's Gary Snyder, an American man of letters. Haven't buried him yet.}
.....

If the rating on Independent Movie Data Base and Rotten Tomatoes are to be believed,
the raters are much, much more entertained by violence and make believe than I am.
.....

We're not grown-up enough that we can control our impulses,
it's that we're adult enough not to keep temptation in the house.
.....

I'm not inclined to thank military men for their service.
I certainly am inclined to stop to commend road workers and
bridge builders, they do such an astonishing good job.
.....

You can't say it's sudden when you die at 88.
.....

Waste not, wont not. And what not.
Live simply, that other's may simply live.
.....

You know you're in trouble when your government
makes itself the primary focus of your attention.
.....

If we don't remember the suffering,
we can't remember the joy
of not suffering.
.....

In a Thugocracy the exceptions ARE the rule!
.....

My Revelation came in that dazzling, Nataraj,
if you will, moment when I first realized I AM
the Dancing Sun.

.....
That lawyer picking up his sandwich at the counter,
his mother didn't turn him enough in the crib.
The back of his bald head is flat.
.....

When you're in that place where you only have seagulls and crows for company.

{On the mesa between shore and desert, when the hummingbirds hide and the doves have gone away.}

.....
By war,
everyone is ruined,
there are no heroes.

War makes monsters out of our children.
.....

Excuse me,
I have to go
and agree with nature,
or suffer the consequences.
Chill the peppers, baby,
chill. *The Least Among Us*

{The King will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'
—Matthew 25:40}

.....
You are my prize for staying alive.
.....

Monsieur blasé-faire, you don't care
...to go anywhere?

{**blasé faire**: apathetic, indifferent, and unwilling to meddle in the affairs of others. Generally meh.
From the French words blasé and laissez faire. > <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=blas%C3%A9%20faire>}

.....
"Sometimes, they said Satnam,
when they meant "Fuck You!,"
—Hari Shabad Singh of some 3HOers

{NOT DISSIMILAR to "*Bless your heart*," a phrase that is common in the Southern United States with multiple meanings including used in an insulting way meaning "you are dumb or otherwise impaired, but you can't help it" by individuals who wish to "be sweet" and do not wish to "act ugly." | 3HO (Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization > <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3HO> | In the ancient Sikh language called Gurmukhi, Sat means truth. Nam means name. Together, Sat Nam essentially translates into something deeper: "I am truth," or "Truth is my essence."}

.....
As an empire the Romans ruled in large part because of the collection of techniques, skills, methods, processes, and engineering practices they borrowed from the Greeks, Etruscans, Celts, and others. When the empire fell, power broke apart and the technical know-how was redistributed, but the most global function of state-craft power went with the Church. The Church's primary technology employed: shame & guilt, and their compliments honor and righteousness — "**Glory be to god in the highest.**" Valor for, pride in and loyalty to God and Country are the cornerstones to maintaining the unquestionable establishment, and maintain the allegiance of a poor mass more interested in being saved for the glory of the world to come than abiding in the agony of the world as it is.

.....
The true eternal constant is Love.
All else is temporal, variable flux.
.....

*War is defined as an active conflict that has claimed more than 1,000 lives.
How many wars have there been since November 11, 1918, the end of World War I, "the war to end all wars?"
Of the past 3,400 years, humans have been entirely at peace for 268 of them, or just 8 percent of recorded history.*

What is genocide? Genocide is any number of acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, according to the United Nations. Others include political and social groups in the definition, making genocide more broadly the annihilation of difference. Genocidal campaigns have become more frequent since World War I. Modern industrial weapons have made mass killings easier to commit.

How many genocides have occurred since World War I? Dozens. The most devastating include:

- The Soviet Union, where approximately 20 million were killed during Stalin's Great Terror (1930s);
- Nazi Germany, where 6 million Jews were killed in concentration camps along with 5 million or more Gypsies,
- Jehovah's Witnesses, and other "enemies of the German state" (1937-1945);
- Cambodia, where 1.7 million of the country's 7 million people were killed by the Khmer Rouge (1975-1979);
- Iraq, where 50,000 Kurds were killed during the ethnic cleansing of Anfal in 1987;
- Bosnia, where 310,000 Muslims were killed (1992-1995);
- Rwanda, where more than 1 million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered over ten weeks in 1994.

How many battles have there been since the end of World War I?

1180,
727 of those since 2001.

{https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_battles_1901–2000 | https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_battles_since_2001}

.....
"Mother dear, *the Ambassadors of Hope* are at the front door. Do we have anything to donate?"
"Sorry dear, not this year, we're fresh out of beguiling deception."
"Nothing to offer, then?"
"Oh no, we can no longer afford to give away our gullibility."
.....

Walking on the sidewalk, having just picked-up hot food from the *Broken Yolk Cafe* on Garnet Ave in Pacific Beach, a young man, three sheets to the wind, was leaning out over the balcony of the Silver Fox Lounge, staring at me with a big shit eating grin on his face. I returned the stare, when I got close, to which with great mirth he proclaimed, "*You're adaptable!*"
.....

True, some people's meter by default are set closer to Mean than Gracious, even so, if you treat them with respect and fairness, more likely than not, that's what you'll get back in return.
.....

I would rather live with the nativity that a lasting peace is possible than the gnawing angst of being resigned to a perpetual state of war.
.....

The community kaput noodle soup

The people build the houses,
the people live in the houses,

the people embody community.

The people build the malls,
the peoples stock the mall,
the people shop the mall,
the people bring home the goods,
the people exchange the commerce,
the people make community thrive.

The oligarchs fence the community,
the oligarchs herd the people,
the oligarchs milk the people
 for all their worth,
the oligarchs work the people
 to death,
the oligarchs eat the people.
In brightly colored bibs and funny hats
the oligarchs slurp up the last dregs
of the community kaput noodle soup.

.....

All you fools using up precious, sentient resources
building wooden fences around your gentrifying lots,
wooden slats as decoration for your living room walls,
please go back and re-read the *Three Little Pigs*.
Take a note from the Middle Ages, and the word, Masonry.

.....

It's happening more and more
that the person in front of me at the stoplight
is looking at their smartphone, and I have to honk them
to get them to go when the light changes.
After I honked this particular young women,
she drove half a block before looking up from your phone.
A skillset I don't possess.

.....

A server I've had several years history with at *Crest Cafe* in Hillcrest,
"Are you Daniel? You don't look anything like the picture on the app."
I took off my hat and glasses.

"Oh yeah, there you are."
I asked him his name.

"Faustino."

"Faustino? As in . . . like, Faust?"

"Yes, exactly."

"What were your parents thinking, do you know the story?"

"Sure, Faust sold his soul to the Devil for fame and fortune."

"How is that working out for you?"

"Not at all."

.....

Sandra Bland died for failing to signal a lane change,
By that standard, in all fairness,
do you deserve to live?

.....

The more you know,
the more useful you are.
The more you care about,
the more you have to live for.
Given enough energy,
I'm happy to do it ...with vigor.

.....

To Resist the Devil,
in high office:

 Feel the Joy.
 Be the Joy.
 Live the Joy.
 Spread the Joy,
 in all you do.

.....

I have seen Angels, fleetingly, just none with wings.

.....

Chasing the almighty dollar,
you can only get a piece
and you want more,
you have to keep chasing.
Chasing, chasing.

It's the chase that bites you in the ass,
eats you alive,
wings the joy out of you,
and spits you out,
pale, drained and worthless.

.....

Why do these ultramodern cars remind me of the helmets of the stormtroopers in Star Wars?

.....

 Pay attention,
 make wise choices.
 (and other indissoluble koans)

.....

You will see 10,000 posters telling you
what to do, how to feel,
be, think and act.
This one is to tell you not to read posters.

.....

The annoyance of the itch, the pleasure of the scratch. Any damage done?

.....

 Some days no matter where you go,
 no matter where you look,
 all you see is beauty.

You turn the corner
beauty,
down the hill, up the hill,
beauty beauty.
Oh, beauty.
Ahhh, beauty!
Wooosh, beauty...
Beauty beauty beauty.

.....

The only number that counts is
how much they put in my bank account
at the end of the week,
minus expenses,
divided by the amount of hours spent.

Dollars per hour.

.....

I get air kisses
for stopping many yards away
from old ladies crossing
in the middle of the block.

{Quid Pro Quo for Aiding and Abetting}

.....

Those instances
when you have two hair's breadth
distance between their side mirrors
and yours, on both sides ...

.....

My father was a Christmas and Easter Christian.
I'm a World Series and Super Bowl sports fan.

.....

If you measure yourself
against the sky and ocean,
against the mountains and deserts,
you will feel big,
even when you come up short.

.....

If the work involves using your hands,
not only is there a <insert ethnic> willing
to take your job, but
they would be more reliable,
do it better and do it for less pay.

.....

Self is like a city,
always evolving, never finished;
building something new,
repairing something old,
adapting to changes.

.....

"I don't want to be The People,
I want to be The Boss," —my wife.

.....

"Don't judge me!"

"Don't want to surprise you,
but when you walk down the street,
even a not so busy street,
you are making 10,000 judgments
before you have a thought."

.....

Caucasian is not a race,
Black is not a race,
Asian is not a race.
Race s c h m a c e.

The only race there is
is the race against time,
and yours is running out.

.....

If politics is the new religion,
the "*optics*" to sway popular opinion
has replaced the one-and-only,
all-seeing Big Eye in the Sky.

.....

Out towel drying my car in the rain.
Sisyphus ain't got nothing on me.

.....

Whether it's baseball or fishing,
for the most part nothing happens,
but when it does . . . whooooh, boy!
The same can be said for the Shaktipat ritual
with your traditional Hindu guru.

.....

#mightswell

You have to be doing something,
might as well be worthwhile.

You have to be somewhere,
might as well make yourself to home.

.....

She counted her chickens before they hatched
and ended up with an tasty omelet.

.....

I'm too old to let people waste my time.
I have other tills to plow, mills to grind,
fields to field.

.....

I'd much rather drive a 'worry-free' Toyota
than a 'don't touch me' Mercedes.

.....

You don't want to live too close to the now,
for the same reason you don't want to be conscious
of every tiny bit of happening of your autonomic nervous system.

.....

How did feminism become being more like a man?

{The American frontier experience was over.
How are you gonna prove your own toughness?
There was this cult of manliness – desperate for opportunities to man up.
<https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolab/episodes/football> }

.....

When you tattoo
your history on
your body,
you limit who
else you can be,
how you might frame
your ever-evolving self.

.....

She walked her property line

everyday,
one day
when she ventured out
far into her neighbor's yard
and looked back
she caught sight
of the whole of it,
the grandeur.

.....

You don't want a president
who doesn't want the truth
to be true.

.....

In boxes,
waiting to be unpacked.
My life's memories.
Going to Goodwill.

.....

Who is the actor that has free will?

Who IS the actor that has free will!

Life should be easy, or
you're trying too hard.
Take this drug, get
addicted, then
your ass is mine.

I owns you.
I AM the One.
You have
nothing to worry about.
No choice.
Your free will,
it rests easy.
Rest assured.
Now you have the power
of acting without constraint,
without necessity,
without fate.
Free & easy.
Further and further from things
to be done, leaving them
one by one.
And you've just began.
For my yoke is easy,
and my burden light.
*"People get ready, there's a train a-comin'
You don't need no baggage, you just get on board
All you need is faith to hear the diesels hummin'
Don't need no ticket, you just thank the Lord."*

{Free will is closely linked to the concepts of moral responsibility, praise, guilt, sin, and other judgments which apply only to actions that are freely chosen.}

.....

There's the bus,
and there's The Way,
And there's the way,
around the bus.

.....

If you're reading this,
you're more like me than a giraffe,
you're more like me than an octopus,
you're more like me than a redwood tree.

如果您正在阅读此书，
你比长颈鹿更像我，
你比章鱼更像我
你比红木树更像我。

Rúguǒ nín zhèngzài yuèdú cǐ shū,
nǐ bǐ chángjǐnglù gèng xiàng wǒ,
nǐ bǐ zhāngyú gèng xiàng wǒ
nǐ bǐ hóngmù shù gèng xiàng wǒ.

{Or, expressed as numbers:

105 102 32 121 111 117 39 114 101 32 114 101 97 100 105 110 103 32 116 104 105 115 44 32 10 121 111 117 39 114 101 32 109
111 114 101 32 108 105 107 101 32 109 101 32 116 104 97 110 32 97 32 103 105 114 97 102 102 101 44 32 10 121 111 117 39 114
101 32 109 111 114 101 32 108 105 107 101 32 109 101 32 116 104 97 110 32 97 110 32 111 99 116 111 112 117 115 44 32 10 121
111 117 39 114 101 32 109 111 114 101 32 108 105 107 101 32 109 101 32 116 104 97 110 32 97 32 114 101 100 119 111 111 100
32 116 114 101 101 46

[
letters-to-numbers: ASCII > <https://www.boxentriq.com/code-breaking/letters-to-numbers>
numbers-to-letters: ASCII > <https://www.boxentriq.com/code-breaking/numbers-to-letters>
]
}

.....
Ants have no wifi,
they can't phone it in.
Every communication is face-to-face,
in-person, within touching distance.
And ants have some of the most successful societies
in the history of societies.

{SEE: **Ant-y social: Successful ant colonies hint at how societies evolve** | Liz Fuller-Wright, Office of Communications |
Aug. 23, 2018 > <https://www.princeton.edu/news/2018/08/23/ant-y-social-successful-ant-colonies-hint-how-societies-evolve>}

.....
In some respects,
watching *The Great Britain Baking Show*
makes you wish the British had
won the American Revolution.

.....
In my trekking days the crown jewel aspiration was to hike the Yellow River to its source in the Tibetan Plateau and back
down the Yangtze to the East Chinese Sea. Not knowing the language or the customs, the only way I could see myself
making the trip was as The Fool, and the skinny was these were waterways that didn't suffer fools.

.....
You act as if you have a happiness quota,
you're only allowed a certain allotment of happiness each year.
And by the end of The New Year's Eve party you've used it all up.

.....
The rain-plumped lush green vegetation
lining our canyons
this year
will be the dried kindling
fueling the wild fires next.

{Throughout history, California has experienced many droughts, such as 1841, 1864, 1924, 1928–1935, 1947–1950, 1959–1960,
1976–1977, 1986–1992, **2006–2010, 2011–2017, 2018 and 2020-2021 ...and counting.**}

.....
"If I'm Godlike,
like the Bible says,
why am I suffering?"

{young homeless man, excerpt from a long, interminable rant}

.....
Every it
of all of it
is God,
all God.
And within
every bit
of all of it

is all of God.
It's all God,
and you are it,
my friend.

.....

For your Soldiers,
war is a way to say death is okay,
"He died for our cause."
For civilians, not so much.

.....

Sometimes you just have to tell the sky, *"Get it out of your system!"*
Better to fish when the fish are biting.

.....

Have you ever watched roadkill decomposing?
That's how fast the body goes when it doesn't have an immune system.

.....

The Age of Coding:

```
<Meta-Algorithm>  
[if (!then) else{if(then, if then) (blah blah blah)  
[then(<<algorithm>>) if{else(blah blah blah) try{etc}}  
}]  
</Meta-Algorithm>
```

.....

SPoS /spōz/
noun

1. *Slimy Piece of Shit*
2. one who does the Devil's work
3. one who lies, disseminates disinformation or obfuscates for personal or political gain, when they very well know better

"Vote that SPoS out of office!"

.....

Look at me, this is what happens
when you fall in love with poets.

.....

Ever thoughtful, Malcolm Gladwell has become a very lucid writer
with far fewer discursive digressions.

.....

This tiny little bird must have something important to say,
she uses her whole body to say it.
Tweeting her little heart out.

.....

To the bumper sticker,
"You must be the change you want to see in the world,"
Curtis James Jackson III replied,
"50 cent!"

and proceeded to Get Rich or Die Tryin'.

He ain't dead.

.....
Stalwart 'Fill the Boot' fireman
begging at the intersection,
displace the derelict homeless.

Another expense externalized
by the government.
.....

She looked good (looked good), she looked fine (looked fine)
She looked good, she looked fine and I nearly lost my mind
"Do wah diddy diddy dum diddy do" ~Manfred Mann
.....

You have to be really missing the sound of your own name,
much less the base warning signals, to die of alcoholism.
But a mysterious growth at the edge of the end of the road,
below the skin above the pubic bone,

...now

that's worth giving an educated narrative.
.....

*A lotta dada
in the age of the Absurd,
the Post-Rational Trump-Era*

Whimsy

*It's said, "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious."
Can you say more about, "be wise in the face of the unknown?"*

After a 10-day meditation retreat a Buddhist Abbot's parting words to me were, "Make wise choices."
Which left me wondering, if I could, wouldn't I always make wise choices?

The deep understanding based on careful thought and good judgment of Wisdom in the Age of Enlightenment has
become a far cry from the sagacity that the punditry passes on today. Hence wise choices in the face of the unknown
seems to offer a special conundrum.

There is an aspect of wisdom that draws from experience, another that derives its understanding from trusted source
information. But increasingly it seems we are living in an age when common sense is uncommon, disinformation for
personal and political gain is rampant and our socially constructed experience is distracted and fractured. Our collective
values, focus and vision wildly askew. In congealing wisdom, from what am I to individually draw from?

If Politics of Power is superseding Religion and Science with Big Data in the Information Age:

Scientists can only hypothesize, put forward a theory, experiment a proof until it's disproven. It's belief, never actually
true. It may be pragmatic for now, but it's logic is limited to an objective belief explaining an object narrative with
empirical illustration, as far as the senses go. As distinct from religions' subjective trans-sensory moral experience,
trans-logical ethical beliefs, coercing mythological psychosocial narratives with rhetoric and dialectics. Both rational or
irrational, with nothing verifiably ever true, it all becomes the fodder for the opportunists' power plays.

Then where do the wise find the true in the unknowable:

The equanimity of awareness, simple neutral awareness, bolstered with resilience, the flexibility to adapt to newness appropriately, and find balance, harmony and a satisfying narrative of being on the other side of this ever-accelerating, ever-evolving becoming—somewhere in that dynamics can we find a process for wisdom that is fresh, and open, yet somehow knows from past experience and the present condition, and knows with conviction that it knows what is true? Knows what is true and is a truth that is transferable to others?

{It's not a question—the equanimity of awareness—nor an answer.}

.....
If you are always striving,
you're never really here.
If you're always becoming,
you miss the being, and
you'll be missed.

.....
Life is not a boat,
there is no Rudder.
But don't tell the Tillerman,

.....
Begin PANDEMIC media clipping 3/15/20 <poster(s):>

There are times to take risks, this isn't one of those.
Be safe and know: I am not a viral vector.
Save lives, wash your hands.
PS: don't touch your face

*"We will unite together to defeat this Coronavirus bastard!
And when we've finally beat back the scourge?
We can go back to fighting amongst ourselves."*

.....
To the Groom at the wedding reception dinner:

"Now that you're hitched, it's inevitable that arguments will arise.
The important thing to remember is to always, always get in the last two words,"

[pause for laughter]

"...and these two words are, 'Yes, dear!'"

{ALSO: "If at First You Don't Succeed, Do It The Way Your Wife Told You"}

.....
Treat language like a luscious pudding with far more calories than is good for you and spiced to tantalize the senses.

.....
I do not eat McDonald Burgers,
yet I will pick up and deliver them to those that do.
Same goes for those who believe in God.

.....
"Is your supply chain robust enough to meet the demands of the panic buyers?"
Always a good question.

The height is 80% of the width,
but the width is 25% more than the height.
How does that compute?

One is 4/5ths and the other is 5/4ths

I prefer the funny-side of life,
as the other sides are, frankly,
unsettling.

When the forest is dry, a spark can ignite a wildfire.
So too with inflammatory language.

Bees in the trees,
Orange blossoms.

You are a
Clear and Present
Love of Mine!

I recently had a peculiar adjustment to how I framed the English poet Alexander Pope's famous quote:
"To err is human, to forgive divine."

When I learned that Pope was a little person, merely 4'6" tall, I realized in my childhood mind's eye I had imagined the author of that phrase to be a BIG man, an Admiral or a General, someone with broad shoulders and a square jaw. When I realized that he was a man who likely was ridiculed in his day more than most for having lost the hope of impressive stature to Pott disease, my admiration for his willingness to champion forgiveness grew immensely.

Older than young,
younger than old.
Younger than some,
Older than most.
Younger than death.

Coronavirus epidemic:

Thing is, the lizards in our garden are oblivious.
Going about their business like it's a heyday.

{#lizards #oblivious #heyday}

On losing my religion, scientists told me religion has no equivalent record to science of discovering hidden truths.

In the run-up to the Coronavirus landing in America in a big way, I heard people saying concerns were overstated, "the current dire models radically overestimate the ultimate death toll." The president himself had a hunch that the numbers were false, and "this is their new hoax." Having no faith in the empirical evidence, such denials kept us from learning from what China and Italy were experiencing.

A month later, waiting for Baron's grocery market to open an hour early for seniors, next in line ahead of me was a former dean of UC San Diego's elite Medical School. She said an world renowned epidemiologist friend had cautioned her well in advance to "get all of your money out of the stock market, stock up on supplies and

prepare for a long isolating stay at home." Advice the retired dean laughingly pooh-poohed and ignored.

If scientists have no faith in science, what is science for?

.....

"There's something else, I'm forgetting."
"Don't worry, it'll come around again."
"And if not, we'll never know."

.....

Back when my niece was in 6th grade I told her empathically,

"You are a very special person."
"No I'm not," she replied.
"Oh, yes you are!"
"Well, if I'm special, everyone is special."

And thus the 'special' club expands and multiples.

.....

Don't mess with her,
she'll make pulled chicken mash
out of you.

.....

Nature calls. I answer.

.....

Good thing we have crazy ass neighbors.
Statistically, if we didn't have crazy ass neighbors,
the crazy ass neighbor would be us.

.....

The upside of the coronavirus pandemic?
To clear the room all you have to do is blow your nose.

.....

Beautifully broken.
She loves the great outdoors
and stilettos too.

.....

You be the test group,
I'll be the control group
in this little COVID-19 pandemic.
You go out and liberate San Diego,
I'll stay home and keep my distance.
You congregate and I'll isolate.
And at the end of round one,
we'll see whose grandmother
is still standing.

.....

Lovely people, both.
The ones passing away,
the leaves, and the ones
that endure, the rocks.

Both can appear
very much like
one another
in the shadow
of the avocado tree.

.....

The thought is the thought.
Yes or no is secondary.
If I say, "Don't think about monkeys."
You think about monkeys.
For or against, attend to your first thoughts.
Don't think twice, it's all right.
*"Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing
there is a field.*
I'll meet you there," Rumi

.....

The best I can hope for is being honest with myself in trusting my perceptions, honoring the primacy of the instinct, the imminence of raw emotion, the present clarity of sensation, the truth of my feelings.' First Thoughts are the culmination, the gestalt of all feelings ever in this moment. The whole, not the divided, categorized, analyzed, prioritized segments. Not impulsive, not compulsive . But rather the distilled consensus of all time, all experience suggesting: *This!*

"This!" may be right, may be wrong. Experiment, try *This!*
And then we have a clear basis of an unequivocal contemporaneous trial to base our understanding on.

Steven Pinker, say no, you better stop, reflect, dissect, analyze. That's the problem, the problem is, when you put 'things' in compartmentalized boxes, into categories you limit them to a finite data set for the analysis. Your conclusions can only be constructed in a glass bell jar separate from the whole of your reality. "No, no, you're not thinking; you're just being logical," as Niels Bohr might caution. Without the feelings that mortar the bricks of all your experience across time and place you are left with a token model of your reductive reasoning.

First Thoughts INCLUDE all feelings encoded in your life experience, your DNA.
The reasons are their own. How you play with them your choice.

.....

I too took to the streets risking tear gas and billy clubs. Way back when in the 1971 May Day Protests we marched on Washington, 200,000 of us calling for end to the Vietnam War. "If the government doesn't stop the war, we'll stop the government," we cried. Wearing buttons featuring Gandhi with a raised fist. I helped drag fallen trees and debris into the arteries leading into the city to shut it down. This non-violent mass civil disobedience campaign of blocking traffic led to the single largest mass arrest in the history of the United States: some 10,000 people, many of them temporarily held behind fences at the Washington Redskins practice field, surrounded by National Guard troops. I got arrested and released on my own recognizance. I'm on the record.

Most of us identified as hippies. We were mostly white, middle class, non-conformists. We were protesting war, not just this one, but all war and all that goes with it. We were protesting war, but we were also standing in solidarity with Civil Rights, Women's Rights, Gay Rights, the ecology movement, Peace and Justice. By the civil in Civil Rights we meant opposition to oppression of all kinds, which was predominately, then as now, whites dominating non-whites, human claiming dominion over all sentient life, all things, dominating the environment, dominating beliefs, suppressing individual democratic voice and voting. Suppressing Humanism.

I'm encouraged with the people I see in the streets these days in support of Black Lives Matter. Where we were mostly white, middle class and proportionally small in number, this new generation is more diverse, more representative of the larger middle class, the formerly silent majority. Though still mostly young, they appear more emotionally mature, better informed with clear convictions. There are still tiny factions promoting violence, but on whole Peace and Justice has new legs.

We had our fair share of provocateurs, undercover cops and FBI agents feeding us misinformation, disinformation, provoking, inciting criminal behavior to turn the hearts and minds of the masses against our cause. We were "hey man, be cool" more or less successful in weeding them out. But now that the misinformation, disinformation comes openly from the top, it's not so easy to pull the weeds. That war in Vietnam did end, or at least we withdrew our military. Some awareness was raised, headway made for the 'civil' rights of women, non-whites and the environment. Gays would have to take matters into their own "Act Up" hands after AIDS broke out. But by then the conservative powers-that-be ushered in the "Reagan Revolution," doubling down on The Sixth Party System and opening the floodgates for large-scale spending on politics by corporations, labor unions and very rich individuals, oligarchs using "Super PACS". Consolidating the "rich get richer, the poor get poorer" domination. The Third Way, the Green Party, the Independent Party – all centrism that attempts to reconcile right-wing and left-wing politics by advocating a varying synthesis of center-right and centrist economic platforms with some center-left social policies would be subsumed, mocked and dismissed. Disinformation wins the day. I spent a few years getting the Green Party established at the local, county and state levels in California. It taught me the consensus building is an arduous task and the tiniest bit of internal maleficence makes it damn near impossible, making it all too easy for disinformation to win the day.

(FYI: "The English word disinformation is a loan translation of the Russian dezinformatsiya, derived from the title of a KGB black propaganda department. Joseph Stalin coined the term, giving it a French-sounding name to claim it had a Western origin. Russian use began with a "special disinformation office" in 1923. Disinformation was defined in Great Soviet Encyclopedia (1952) as "false information with the intention to deceive public opinion.")

Now China promulgates disinformation on social media like wet on water. Only to be out done by the world's 25th leading democracy, the United States of America – a flawed democracy. Flawed democracies are nations where elections are [supposedly] fair and free and basic civil liberties are honored but may have issues (e.g. media freedom infringement and minor suppression of political opposition and critics). These nations have significant faults in other democratic aspects, including underdeveloped political culture, low levels of participation in politics, and issues in the functioning of governance. Having the leader of the most powerful flawed democracy in the world openly spew undeterred disinformation creates a nightmare scenario for hope of building a fair and equitable society based on good reliable intel.

This new generation I'm so encouraged by, do they see our flaws? Can they untangle the torrents of dezinformatsiya propaganda and get to the cool, soft facts, the enduring truths. Back then we thought we were 'raising consciousness,' by now we know there is no such thing. It's not consciousness we're raising, it's human intelligence we're evolving. Human intelligence grows out of the lizard brain base of survival instinct and visceral emotion, primitive guttural communication and complex society forming. The fear and greed mindset of not-so-long-ago past generations gave us the disinformed fabrication of human races as a classification of animals. We now know human's are not different animals, and now want to redefine 'race' as ethnic, referring to one's cultural traditions, ones ancestors to be protected and honored from a core survival of identity instinct. But if we follow that logic back, we only can see that we all originally came out of Africa, we're all Africans and it's merely whatever bitter divorces that forced our ancestors' migrations out of Africa that undergirds our irrational fears and preemptive violent protectionism of me and mine.

Life is hard, life as we know it is brutal. Always has been. Compassionate intelligence is what has informed where it has been made easy, or at least easier.

At the root we are all the same people, wanting respect and fairness, peace and justice. With the advent of the Information Age we have the computational prowess to evolve our compassionate intelligence in forming our collective way back to the Garden. We can't allow ourselves the luxury of getting caught up in the false dichotomy of us/them bickering. Not white, not black, but distinct 'we're all in this' togetherness. We collectively, judiciously must look at what is the optimal scale, optimal number of humans, the optimal number and parameters of machines, artificial intelligence, of animals, vegetables, elements – clean water, fresh air . . . the balance. It's our evolving intelligence that will take us out of this brutish existence and address the question:

Where is the sweet spot of harmony for all life forms, all sentient beings on this planet as we know it?

Life as we know it has always been brutish. Evolving compassionate intelligence our saving grace.

.....

"We cry because we are not numb on the inside," Cornel West to Anderson Cooper.

For me, the big hope is that we look honestly, passionately, go wide and dive deep into the context of the causal source of our systemic and chronic inequities. That, with dignity and respect, we have the unbearably uncomfortable conversations that can lead to the innovative new structural changes that need to happen, if we are to inch closer to our collective aspiration of 'freedom and justice for all.' And by 'for all' here I mean all sentient beings on this planet. It won't work any other way. And I'll purpose, if there is a villain in this narrative, its ignorance and poverty. Forming a complex society is no small thing.

It doesn't take a lot of study to recognize that 'race' and 'racism' are useful fictions, but fictions nonetheless. 'Money' is another useful fiction. It has a utility in facilitating exchange in human endeavors, but importantly it's who controls the narrative of money, and why, that drives the results. Currently, Central Banks are fabricating money at a prodigious rate by simply adding zeros to their baseline and pushing the 'freely inflated' currency down the chain to inspire more and more people to consume more and more 'things' to drive faster and faster to a spurious illusion of progress. An illusion of progress that maintains the proportional status of our present economic classes. The concept that there are human 'races' is an invention of academia to justify slave owning, again to maintain the proportional status of economic classes. Specifically the mid-19th century concept of race was created as a classification of human beings with the purpose of giving power to white people and to legitimize the dominance of white people over non-white people. Today, "the scientific consensus is that race does not exist as a biological category among humans."

[SEE: https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/matthewclair/files/sociology_of_racism_clairandenis_2015.pdf]

'White Privilege' was born of the Medieval victories of our 'Western-ho' expansionist ethnic ancestors and the ingenious gadgets, bigger more lethal bombs and ever more sophisticated social engineering processes they developed. Historically, more than race, it's been the invention of 'class' that has been exploited by the oppressors. 'Race' is but a convenient 'identifier' subset of 'class.' Factually, it's pretty obvious the longer you and yours live at the equator the more pigment you gain in your skin. The longer you and yours live in the artic the less pigment. It's a natural physiological phenomena – same person, different environment, same result. But skin tone can also be a clear visible identifier that can be used to subjugate a class.

Both Éleuthère Irénée du Pont and Harm Jan Huidekoper were born in north western Europe in the 1770s, in the midst of the upheavals that lead to the 'Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité' French Revolution, which in turn went hand-in-glove with American's 'Independence' victory over the British. Both of our Burgher and aristocrat ancestors were well educated and backed by affluence. Before leaving France ElduP was mentored by famed chemist Antoine Lavoisier in "advanced explosives production techniques." Before leaving the Netherlands HJH was gifted a premium German education and letters of introduction to the directors of the Holland Land Company which gave him the keys to a disproportionately vast 'Western-ho' expansionist fortune. [SEE: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holland_Land_Company]

Our ancestors were the victors of their day. But that expansionist day has proven not to be sustainable. Until crazies like Elon Musk get us to Mars, we've run out of new terrain to conquer. We'll have to make do with this little water rock, 3 stons from a modest 1.7 millirem of radiation a day Sun.

Our ancestors did not invent slavery. Slavery is an invention of empire building and goes back, as far as we know, to the advent of agriculture and domesticating (enslaving) animals and women. Hunter/Gatherers had no use for slaves and their small tribe society tended to be much more egalitarian with each member contributing according to their ability. Though more robust as individuals, not to romance their reality, Hunter/Gatherers also lived shorter, less secure, more brutal lives. Farming is hard, but more predictable work. Slavery historically has not been about skin color, but about class – a subjugated class of free/cheap labor.

Pope Gregory in the sixth century first witnessed blonde hair, blue eyed boys awaiting sale in a Roman slave market. The Romans enslaved thousands of white inhabitants of Great Britain, who were also known as Angles. Pope Gregory was very interested in the looks of these boys therefore asking their origin. In the late 6th century Pope Gregory sent a group of missionaries to England to convert the Anglo-Saxon King of Kent, Æthelberht – one of our direct line ancestors.

"The eighth to the eleventh centuries proved to be very profitable for Rouen France. Rouen was the transfer point of Irish and Flemish slaves to the Arabian nations. The early centuries AD the Scottish were known as Irish. William Phillips

states that the major component of slave trade in the eleventh century were the Vikings. They spirited many 'Irish' to Spain, Scandinavia and Russia. Legends have it; some 'Irish' may have been taken as far as Constantinople."

[SEE: <http://www.douglashistory.co.uk/history/Histories/slavery/whiteslavetrade.htm>]

The Jews were slaves in Egypt for generations before Moses said, "Let my people go." And when the Pharaoh finally did let Moses' people go, where did he lead them. Moses led his people into poverty. Before crossing the Jordan River into Israel, Moses made a primary organizational decision. He had 12 tribes. He could assign a representative few from each tribe to sit on the central Priestly council (democracy) or he could, as he did, make Aaron's tribe the privileged and learned council of Rabbis. And the rest is history. Some 1500 years later it'll be the consequence of this inequity that Jesus is railing against in over-turning the tables of the money lenders in the Temple.

A thousand years before Moses, the caste system in India was the framework for grouping people into classes, first used in Vedic Indian society. Though eventually skin color differential would become a thing, these caste divisions went primarily along the lines of tribal identity. In 1948, negative discrimination on the basis of caste was banned by law and further enshrined in the Indian constitution; however the system continues to be practiced in India with devastating social effects.

You and I have a rather distinct contrast in our own lived experience of the class struggle in that our mother was an heir of privilege and our father clearly was not. Compounded by our parents' culturally self-reinforcing emersion into alcoholism made it profoundly confusing to understand the 'implicit bias' we were operating under. No wonder when our nuclear family finally broke apart, we were left to find our own way. That you were able to pull yourself out of those unstated social assumptions compounded by the general malaise of the culturally omnipresent alcoholic consciousness and reach the level of astute social responsibility that you demonstrate is quite an accomplishment! And to have passed that base understanding on to the next generation through your 3 children . . . wow, remarkable!!

In the face of the current *Black Live Matter* awakening and hopefully reckoning, addressing the question, "what can we do?" What we need to learn, if we are honest with ourselves, is the course we are on is not tenable, not sustainable. Eight billion humans cannot live the lifestyle of George Bush's middle class. You and I have a vastly more prosperous life, with our T-Mobile networked smartphones and flush toilets than that of King Louis XVI of France, one of the richest men of the 18th century. As impressive as that is, eight billion humans living the lifestyle of George Bush's middle class would take a fierce amount cows, pigs and chickens living a horrendously hellish existence in compacted disease fostering factories proliferating further the unwinnable fight against nature from the scale of the microscopic organic cellular to the global macro-climate systems. Not to mention plastics and whatever else all they're pitching to the oligarchs on Shark Tank. If we are honest with ourselves we'll begin to go deep into the conversions of the limits and quality of life on this planet. During the Enlightenment being Rational was all the rage. But what is it that we are rationing? The Progress myth leads us to believe there are no limits. Our true cost measures are tied to 'creative accounting' fashions, not to real things. Entrenched in the belief that we have divine domain (dominance) over all things and with aggressive husbandry, perseverance and providence they will be fruitful and multiple exponentially forever after. If we are honest with ourselves we'll let go of such magic thinking.

To get back and find our right place in the Garden, make-believe notions of race and class and subjugations of all kinds must end. We can't allow ourselves the luxury of getting caught up in the false dichotomy of us/them bickering. Not white, not black, but distinct '*we're all in this*' togetherness. We collectively, judiciously must look at what is the optimal scale, optimal number of humans, the optimal number and parameters of machines, artificial intelligence, of animals, vegetables, elements – clean water, fresh air . . . the balance.

The bottom-line balance sheet: Where is the sweet spot of harmony for all life forms as we know it?

As it is, not everyone in their present condition should be making babies. More value needs to be given to giving more people fact-based, non-polemic education. The means and methods of production, and especially what is produced must answer to a broader awareness of planetary appropriateness – along with a felt experience of the virtues of 'living simple so that other may simply live.'

Excuse the rant. Big questions. Short time. In this Play of Life who'll write the next chapter?

.....

I don't remember a word.

I don't remember a word, still it reverberates -- the pow in powerful, shakes the rain outta the train. It could have been the electric Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley or the Sea of Tranquility on the moon. I never knew. In those days I never knew -- everywhere was here and it was always now. It may very well have been Alice Walker for all I know, or for that matter maybe God was giving me a moment and brought in Ella Fitzgerald for the day. I never got her name. Didn't seem important just then, nor whether the lines rhymed or if the verses kept the beat. Exuberance, the full body presence of joy on every wet sparking utterance, that's what I hung on. Wave after wave, deeper and deeper into that ageless shape being drawn in thin air and left dangling in an after image fading into a distant tomorrow that never comes.

I don't remember a word she said, but I know the place well. That place where it's just me and all of it. And the others who stopped on the sidewalk and listened, and really listened, let her seamless mystical conveyance wash over them, they too would light up, you could see clear as day. Those passersby too busy to notice didn't see it, didn't go there, didn't get transported back into themselves. Had nothing to recall.

I don't remember a word spoken, not one, but the place she spoke of was a drop of water. Could have been a teardrop or a dewdrop on a dirty window, or dripping from a leaky faucet, or a single drop of the spray gushing from the sprinklers in the park. One drop, the sunlight hitting just so, fracturing a tiny rainbow in a stunning surprise of wonder and sparking delight. (Yes, there's that wet sparking again, echoing the wet sparking utterances that gushed and gushed from her animated lips in a steady breathless stream.)

I don't remember a word, but for sure I remember she didn't know she was poor, she didn't know she was black. Not then when she first saw the beyond a mystery in a single dazzling clear water drop -- that instance of noticing. Not then and not now, as she overflows three octaves too high an exuberant squeal, (yes, there's that exuberance again, echoing the full body presence of joy on every wet sparking utterance that I'm hanging on,) three octaves below gravitas trying to help us find our way off the hustle bustle traffic jam and into the place where living takes place. She didn't have a cigar box out, or a guitar case. She was gifting, not begging. It wasn't performance politic or a sly sell. It was this other thing. This other thing I'd never see again even if I looked and looked. And I looked, looked long and soft after the last sound whispered out her heart past her moist lips. I looked sharp as she stood silently swaying in the unspoken currents. Rich with an ocean of diamond sunlight in a dewdrop. As free from the chains of social status as a ghost surfing that ocean's breeze.

I never got her name. I didn't have words, or maybe I was too shy or afraid to step up and ask. It's dangerous to know the name of such beauty. Everlasting beauty has a way of capturing you and making you a slave, demanding you stop and listen and be absorbed. You can lose yourself in such beauty, where you find everywhere is here and it's always now; where it's just me and all of it.

UPDATE 211208:

No words. Not an utterance. No words, just dance. I never got her name, but I saw this poet's granddaughter today. Soft shoe, light feet, quick step, a hop, a leap, a twirl. She rolled up to the plaza in front of Apple Inc in Fashion Valley Mall, across from the Banana Republic, past Gucci and Prada with a piece of pink hard-shell airport luggage and her wooden briefcase. Opening the briefcase to fish out The Word Puzzle Book and a journal, she studiously arranges a 3 bill display, a one, a five and a ten dollar bill -- her stretch goal suggestion, which she lays flat and neat, and weighs down with loose change. She's gifting, and soft-sell begging. The books are placed atop the pink luggage, which she's rolled to the other side of her imaginary makeshift stage.

Set-up, she takes a moment. A face covered black on brown with symbols and floral tattoos, otherwise a doppelganger for Amanda Gorman....she begins to sway. She takes a moment, and in that moment she takes me. She takes me with her. The dancer cues to the sounds of the mall sound system. The dancer aligns with the music, but more, she dances feeling. Her feelings run deep. Her knees bend, feet move, her eyes open. She notices me noticing her, smiles a beatific smile as her feet catch fire. Quick step, step, step, a hop, a leap, hop, hop. Twirl, full circle. Stop. Bliss. Leap. Reverie. Twirl. Sublime. Absorbed inner-outer. This! I, we, us, all, dance. I, perfectly still, she, fluid ecstatic motion. Exuberance,

the full body presence of joy. Passersby, some somewhat curious, too busy to notice, didn't feel it, didn't go there, didn't get transported back into themselves. Had nothing to recall in this moment.

The mall sound system fades, song ends. The hop stops into a soft sway, eyes close. She takes a moment. A thought bubble cocks her head to the side and the soft shoe dancer steps purposefully to the journal atop the pink luggage. As she documents, I fish a twenty out of my wallet and place it in her wooden briefcase. As I do she looks up, sparkles, "Thank you. I really appreciate it." Not shy at all, "Yes, thank YOU!" I reply. Thank you for this rare moment. Now unafraid of the everlasting beauty that has a way of capturing you and making you a slave, demanding you stop and listen and be absorbed. Now more than happy to lose myself in such beauty, where everywhere is here and it's always now; where it's just me, and she, and they, and all of it.

.....
Lizards and squirrels,
cats and butterflies.
My companions!
Oh, did I mention the birds?

Birds.
.....

"The world is a tragedy for those who feel, a comedy for those who think."
~Horatio Walpole, 4th Earl of Orford (24 September 1717 – 2 March 1797)
.....

Life is for Living

*{Living above your means, punching above your weight, they tell me.
Life is for the living—a test of faith. Where to rest my head?
Where to rest my head tonight? Tonight, I say, let the music keep your spirits high!}*

[
 "Life is for the living.
 Death is for the dead.
 Let life be like music.
 And death a note unsaid."
 — Langston Hughes
]

My mother recently wrote, "I really urge you to find less expensive living quarters. I know you ignored that suggestion before, but it is about reality. I have moved into less expensive homes, and it's a huge relief."

My boss said virtually the same thing some 25 years ago when I first moved into this place. I'm glad I didn't buy into his foreboding. This has been the most stable, satisfying home I've ever had. It's afforded me a wide variety of experiences I wouldn't have had otherwise. And as life is about having experiences and the quality of those experience, it feels like it's been worth the risk. Test of faith aside, even if it hadn't turned out so well, better to have flowed with taking the chance on a life I wanted than muster through, putting up with one I didn't.

Besides in the midst of the worst global pandemic, the most diverse social civil rights protesting and the deepest economic downturn in my lifetime, who needs the stress of a self-inflicted push towards yet another huge, disorienting move into God knows what.

It's inevitable, it'll all eventually crash. Unsaid or not, I will die.
There is a time I will leave this place. This is not that time.
For now, I say, "Ride the wave to beach, baby, enjoy the ride!"
.....

Going down to rake the leaves under the Orange tree, the other day, I inadvertently interrupted a squirrel munching an Orange on the ground. Startled by my presence, he dropped the Orange, scampered some 15 feet away towards the Avocado tree, paused to turn to look back at me with a miffed expression on his pointy little face – leaped up in the air a good ten inches and spun around mid-air 270 degrees. With my rake and deft aim I flicked his half-eaten breakfast to land right at his feet. Surprised the squirrel took a few seconds to examine his Orange before gathering it up with great delight and scurried on past the Avocado tree.

That's exactly how I too feel about having a second bite at a sumptuous marriage Orange.
So happy you are here for my leap up in air and spin around celebration.

.....

I have a problem with Thursday.
I go to sleep Wednesday night,
and when I wake up I think it's Friday,
I feel it's Friday. I know it's not,
even though I don't feel the loss.
Thursday is lost to me,

Maybe it's old age, thank God, or perhaps
being so long shut-in from this pandemic,
but I am grateful for my second Fridays.

.....

Can we get to the final 'and finally,'
the end of everything?
Can I get an Amen?

.....

COVID-19 Report: USA Coronavirus Cases Continue to Surge

"You stupid, stupid petty little people, WEAR a Mask!"
She yelled from the roof-top using her inside voice.
"You are the reason the world pities us."

.....

I'm glad John Lewis lived long enough to see the George Floyd protests.

.....

COVID-19 Report:
Alligator Lizards living in the wilds of suburban San Diego –
good, life affirming companions during the pandemic.

.....

I'd say it was the Romantics that held the Fates back from me becoming the CEO of IBM, what with their emphatic promotion of apprehension and awe, reverence for the sublime or referring to a greatness beyond all possibility of calculation, measurement, or imitation. The allure of such an authentic source of aesthetic experience kept my magic thinking head in the clouds unable to portray real and typical contemporary people and situations with truth and accuracy, preferring to avoid unpleasant or sordid aspects, situations as they arise in ordinary life. I mean, if the God of my forefathers, whether Toga and white bearded, or white shirt, blue suit, skinny black tie and horn rimmed glasses were to be believed, why did it take Them over 13.8 billion years to allow the competition to invent the smart phone.

.....

Perhaps your consciousness is both akin to parallel computing and a wifi connection to the divine? Woo-woo and all.

{The Internet and the Brain by Chris Woodford | April 21, 2020 > <https://www.explainthatstuff.com/internet-and-brain.html>}

.....

Somebody has to be the machine.

Don't judge me by the contents of my spam folder.

{200802}

In my view, what's at play here is the black hole of confirmation bias firmly holding each of us in our own private Reality Tunnel. Reality Tunnel is a theory that, with a subconscious set of mental filters formed from beliefs and experiences, every individual interprets the same world differently, hence "Truth is in the eye of the beholder". Or as Anais Nin said, "We don't see things as they are; we see them as we are." The long and the short of it, I don't sense that my Reality Tunnel intersects with my brother's. I don't see a path that would lead us to a common understanding. Best leave sleeping dogs lie. And as politics is fast taking the place of religion as the predominate organizing force of our society, better to build alliances with like hearts & minds, than try to convert the closed mindsets – clinging to fear and desperation – defending the old guard. Here's to those who know shit from Shinola voting on Tuesday, November 3 and getting America back into a Reality Tunnel I can understand and relate to.

In conversations with others,
you're looking for common ground
and/or to prove the difference between you.

In conversation with yourself,
you're looking to break new ground
and/or to reaffirm what you already know.

{#RealityTunnelConfirmationBias}

The technically most advanced society, yet worst response to COVID-19 in the world.
What does that tell you?

{#Emotional-Immaturity}

I'm compelled to track the unnatural disaster spawn by the White House in the way
I'd track the pending doom of a full force hurricane or a raging wild fire.

[200808]

Consider the life of a peasant in eighteenth-century Europe.
The fields of Flanders were deserted for much of the year.
Entire villages would essentially hibernate from the time of the first
snow in November until March or April. Families packing their bodies
tight together in order to stay warm and eat less food during the long Winter months.*

It doesn't snow here, so I'll practice by taking a nap.
Wake me when it's over.

{*In Malcom Gladwell's book *Outliers* is an excerpt from "The Discovery of France" by historian Graham Robb:
<https://www.reads2019.com/outliers-gladwell-malcolm?page=0,72>}

[200911]

eat
eat
eat
all
the
time
time

time

VOTE

VOTE

VOTE

put on your coat

get in the boat,

VOTE

VOTE

VOTE

don't be a goat

cross the moat,

VOTE

VOTE

VOTE

Take a note,

and I quote,

"Go vote!"

VOTE

VOTE

VOTE

get out and vote

VOTE

VOTE

VOTE

.....

Everything's different, but nothing has changed.

.....

I was there when the land of the free, the home of the brave, the last best chance for democracy became the personality cult of a delusional narcissist. A narcissist at a level I don't think this country's ever seen, alienating many who have served him, yet defying expectations by continuing to attract an adoring core. How does a narcissists "wear out his welcome" long enough for We the People to wake up and return from the Cult of the Self?

{ "A real-life narcissist manages to take his eyes off himself just long enough to find out if others are looking at him. And if the narcissist has admirers, this makes him feel good. It temporarily boosts his self-esteem. Likewise, his admirers feel a rush of excitement and allure. They enjoy being in the presence of such a beautiful figure—or a powerful, creative, dynamic, charismatic, or intriguing figure. They bask in his reflected glory, even if they find his self-obsession to be unseemly. As time passes, however, the admirers grow weary. Once upon a time, they thought the narcissist was the greatest, but now they suspect that he is not. Or maybe they just get tired of him, and disgusted with all the self-admiration. They become disappointed, for very few narcissists can consistently provide the sufficient beauty, power, and greatness to sustain long-term unconditional devotion. In the end, everybody loses. The former fans loathe themselves for being fools, or else they blame the narcissist for fooling them. And the narcissist never attains what can never be humanly attained anyway: supreme and unending love and adoration of the self." ~

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/12/how-narcissists-wear-out-their-welcome/602446/> }

.....

A feather trying to move the mountain,
sadly my ardent, yet puny, adulthood efforts to try and counter
the conflict narrative "*Man against Nature*" has badly failed.
Were it "*Man with Nature*," happy my birthday would truly be.

Dan Landrum, 16 October 2020

{The World Lost Two-Thirds Of Its Wildlife In 50 Years. We Are to Blame | September 10, 2020

<https://www.npr.org/2020/09/10/911500907/the-world-lost-two-thirds-of-its-wildlife-in-50-years-we-are-to-blame>

• Human activities are causing an "unprecedented" and alarming decline in wildlife populations around the world, a new report warns. It says the staggering loss ultimately threatens human life as well.}

.....

Spiders, crickets, cockroaches.

I catch & release the insects that come into the house.

Though I'm not adverse to dropping them off at the lizard condo*.

{*lizard condo: a cat proof shelter strategically built cinder block wall occupied by succeeding generations of a family of lizards.}

.....

There comes a point
you have to give up
on magic thinking,
stop extending hope,
and accept it as it is.

Satisfaction guaranteed.

.....

It was June 16, 1858 when Abraham Lincoln—
accepting the Illinois Republican Party's nomination
as that state's US senator— remarked,

"A house divided against itself, cannot stand."

It's now October 31, 2020— more than 162 years later—
and we're still standing,
and we're still divided.

.....

I fear
not even
the best among us
can save
the least among us
from ourselves.

.....

I'm sure you, like me, like the beautiful days,
the sky blue and sunny, the breeze just right,
the temperature and humidity just so.

But consider the weather in total sum.

The blizzards, hurricanes, tornados.
The floods, wildfires, earthquakes.
The rain, hail, and sand storms.

And my temperament, ...
why should my nature be any different?

.....

Soon.
You can't get any sooner than now.

.....

Socialism done right.

For decades the increasingly extreme political right has relentlessly painted 'socialism' as an evil thing, culminating in the divisive, combative meaningless rhetoric of Donald Trump. The word 'socialism' needs more champions like Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders to restore it to its denotative meaning of cooperation and unity.

.....

"I interview a lot of people, and when I interview writers, they'll often say, 'Oh, too much time on politics. I wish I'd focused on art or literature or science or something else, but politics has a way of taking up too much brain space and time,'" Isaac Chotiner

Noam Chomsky, "What we're talking about has to do with the most urgent things you can imagine — human survival, the fate of my grandchildren, all sorts of things. I'm reminded of a comment that Bertrand Russell once made, back around 1960 or so. He was asked why he was out marching at his age in anti-nuclear demonstrations, when he could be working on serious problems of philosophy for the ages. His answer was something like, if I'm not out here demonstrating against nuclear weapons, there won't be anybody around to read the philosophy.

Bertrand Russell, who by any standard is one of the leading intellectual figures of the twentieth century. He was one of the very few leading intellectuals who opposed World War I. He was vilified, and in fact ended up in jail, like his counterparts in Germany. From the 1950s, particularly in the United States, he was bitterly denounced and attacked as a crazy old man who was anti-American. Why? Because he was standing up for the principles that other intellectuals also accepted, but he was doing something about it. For example, Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein, to take another leading intellectual, essentially agreed on things like nuclear weapons. They thought nuclear weapons might well destroy the species. They signed similar statements, I think even joint statements. But then they reacted differently. Einstein went back to his office in the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton and worked on unified field theories. Russell, on the other hand, went out in the streets. He was part of the demonstrations against nuclear weapons. He became quite active in opposing the Vietnam War early on, at a time when there was virtually no public opposition. He also tried to do something about that, including demonstrations and organizing a tribunal. So he was bitterly denounced.

On the other hand, Einstein was a saintly figure. They essentially had the same positions, but Einstein didn't rattle too many cages. That's pretty common. Russell was viciously attacked in the New York Times and by Secretary of State Dean Rusk and others in the 1960s. He wasn't counted as a public intellectual, just a crazy old man. There's a good book on this called *Bertrand Russell's America*.

{Excerpted from *Propaganda and the Public Mind*, 2001, pg166 > <https://chomsky.info/propaganda01/> | <https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/noam-chomsky-believes-trump-is-the-worst-criminal-in-human-history>}

.....

No one is busier than anyone else.
We all have the time we have.
It's only a matter of how you choose to spend it.

{being/doing/inging}

.....

No poop is good poop.

(When picking up after the wildlife in the garden. ERGO: news is someone else's poop
Variation on the theme: 'No news is good news.')

.....

Sittin' around,
watching his beard grow.
He's only ten months old, but
there's still the promise of hope
that Americans will respond

appropriately to the pandemic.
.....

Your sense of personal freedom is shitting in the community well.

(#HerdStupidity #yankdaHopeRope)

{to COVID-19 pandemic protocol resisters}
.....

{201117}

1. devolving

"Happy Birthday."

"Job or Prison?"

"Serve others."

"Liberty."

"Vow of poverty."

<In large letters
tattooed across his
face and neck,
"Fuck your Job.">

"Justice."

{*Life is sad*

Life is a bust

All ya can do is do what you must

You do what you must do and ya do it well

I'll do it for you

Honey baby, can't you tell?

~Bob Dylan}

"Pursue Happiness?"

"A more perfect union."

{*Little red wagon*

Little red bike

I ain't no monkey but I know what I like

I like the way you love me strong and slow

I'm takin' you with me

Honey baby, when I go

~Bob Dylan}

"Be myself."

"Life is suffering?"

"Chin up."

"Don't cry."

"Suck it up."

{*Buckets of rain*

Buckets of tears

Got all them buckets comin' out of my ears

Buckets of moonbeams in my hand

You got all the love

Honey baby, I can stand

~Bob Dylan}

"Merry Christmas,

Happy Thanksgiving."

2. involving

a miserable experience of ecstatic mystic transcendence:

[elated rapturous joy
blissful beatific cloud nine
delirious seventh heaven

jumping for joy
over the moon
on top of the world

thrilled orgasmic exultant,
wrapped happy jubilant]

.....
Clearly, there are more ways to die than to live.

Everyone dies, but
so few really live.

We're all going to die,
once,
but you have to live every day.

.....
"Wash your hands,
you just *looked* at the trash can."
That's the logic I have to live with.
Have you ever heard of someone dying
of an underdose of anything?

Dial it back.

.....
When I say amen, you say allelujah.
When I say allelujah, you say amen.
We're that kind of church.

.....
In times of trouble,
through my darkest hour,
I've out lasted the blues.

If you don't climb the mountain,
you won't see the view.
And when you descend the mountain,
you see anew.

You exit the trail, blink in the open sun
and feel the wash of relief that the descent is,
finally, over.

.....
Peace.
No justice, no peace.
There has never been justice.

.....
Wars never end.
They only take a nap.

Peace sleeps uneasy.
No rest for the weary.

<< Excerpt from "The Rock" by T.S. Eliot, published in 1934:

All our knowledge brings us nearer to our ignorance,
All our ignorance brings us nearer to death,
But nearness to death no nearer to God .
Where is the Life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?
The cycles of Heaven in twenty centuries
Bring us farther from God and nearer to the Dust.

[...]

The lot of man is ceaseless labour,
Or ceaseless idleness, which is still harder,
Or irregular labour, which is not pleasant.
I have trodden the winepress alone, and I know
That it is hard to be really useful, resigning
The things that men count for happiness, seeking
The good deeds that lead to obscurity, accepting
With equal face those that bring ignominy,
The applause of all or the love of none.
All men are ready to invest their money
But most expect dividends.
I say to you: Make perfect your will .
I say: take no thought of the harvest,
But only of proper sowing.
The world turns and the world changes,
But one thing does not change.
In all of my years, one thing does not change.
However you disguise it, this thing does not change:
The perpetual struggle of Good and Evil.

.....

The air is free.
There's no cost to live.
Food, shelter, toys...
the desire for more,
those cost extra.
Being in this moment is the starter kit,
What you make of it, what you become...
your Narcotics dealer.
It can treat severe pain,
but it owns you.
Nearly all people who use heroin
also use at least 1 other drug.

The air is free.
breathing is painful.

.....

The lifecycle of the News: womb, looming doom, doom – tomb.
{going to tell you, told you, told you I told you}

.....
The glass may be half full,
the glass may be half empty.
For sure, the glass is all glass.

{the thing itself}
.....

Subtle tease: subtly sane.
.....

Measure once, cuss twice.

<<meme>>
.....

Do you have truth on your side?

I hear sandpaper and a good exfoliate
can help with that.

Treat it like a barnacle.
.....

What do we remember more,

Medgar Evers, what he stood for,
or the cowardly hate that killed him?

Or was it fear?

And 57 and a half years later ...
that cowards' children's children
lay siege to the US Capitol,
killing a cop in their haste
to spread their lie.

What do we remember?

June 12, 1963 - January 6, 2021
.....

Sometimes my friends pee on my window.

Then the neighbors do too.

Soon I'm hating on all cats
marking territory.

I don't hold a grudge, but
if the problem persists,

I may triangulate with cohorts
to seek a resolution.

If you catch my drift.
.....

It's time and place, the cultural moment and the specific society we find ourselves in that shapes us.

*Even when that shape moves us to contradict our most ardent principles, we can't be any other
than the 'who we are' that the here and now prescribes. For instance:*

Unlike Shakespeare, 19th century Walt Whitman could never have written what he wrote had he been born in Britain,
"conceiv'd out of the fullest heat and pulse of European feudalism—personifying in unparalleled ways the medieval
aristocracy, its towering spirit of ruthless and gigantic caste, with its own peculiar air and arrogance (no mere
imitation)."

A 20th century Native Son of Harlem, New York City, James Baldwin could never have written what he wrote had he been born anywhere in Africa. For that matter, anywhere else at all. Or would his particular intelligence have flourished as it did, if the harsh persecution he endured in his stepfather's home hadn't driven Baldwin to spend much of his time alone in libraries.

Albert Einstein was born in Ulm, Kingdom of Württemberg, German Empire, but died in Princeton, New Jersey, U.S. If it had been the other way around, it would be unlikely that he'd have developed the theory of relativity, and more likely the Germans would have won World War 2.

Some say that it was a result of Einstein's meetings with Franklin D. Roosevelt, the US entered the "race" to develop the atomic bomb and initiate the Manhattan Project. In 1933, while Einstein was visiting the United States, Adolf Hitler came to power. Because of his Jewish background, Einstein did not return to Germany. He settled in the United States and became an American citizen in 1940. On the eve of World War II, he endorsed a letter to President Roosevelt alerting him to the potential German nuclear weapons program and recommending that the US begin similar research. Einstein supported the Allies, but generally denounced the idea of nuclear weapons. For Einstein, "war was a disease . . . [and] he called for resistance to war." By convincing Roosevelt, some argue he went against his pacifist principles. In 1954, a year before his death, Einstein and ten other intellectuals and scientists, including British philosopher Bertrand Russell, signed a manifesto highlighting the danger of nuclear weapons.

AND how many nearly 70-something people are there that paint pictures, and how many nearly 70-something people are there that paint pictures as I do? None. All the sub-demographics and cultural influences aside, or the fact that I am an amateur (I paint only for the love of it and to please no other,) it's my experiences in this time and this place, this cultural moment in which I find myself that uniquely shapes my paintings, like no other. And thus, even if they are not deemed 'good' by others, there is a particular beauty in this art that can only be found here.

.....

Never in my life have I had a conflict
that needed a gun to resolve it,
much less be at all useful.

.....

REMEMBER:

You are, after all, an eternal being.
You have to be somewhere.
Weather the weather.

.....

"The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry."

{Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms}

.....

In winter,
I'm a big fan of bundled and cozy,
In summer,
running naked and free.

.....

No hope, no pray.
Do what you do,
get through the day.

They ready.

.....

Art is cultural politics
made impalpable to the old,
and oh so addictively tasty
to the young.

{DISRUPT: innovative art as rebellion, REMEMBER Grandma Moses—for the love of it.}

On a barren path
to nowhere
 We get what we need,
 and then some.
To understand this world
is to understand
 incredulity.

{the whole ball of wax in a nut shell}

The best you can ask for is competent leadership, acting in good faith.
 And some say, "A good crew doesn't allow their captain to fail."

{SEE: <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/why-people-believe-in-their-leaders-or-not/> }

Developing a picture in conventional analog art, to improve it, you must be willing to lose it.
With digital technology, all along the way, you can save an infinite, dizzying number of iterations—all gain, no loss.

Look at you grow,
grow, grow
towards the sun,
sun, sun!
Aren't you a beauty?

{TONE: Overly übermütig expresso expression}

Screaming to an audience of Wise Spiders

*What have I learned from being shut in during the pandemic the past year? Social distancing is just fine with me.
For the most part, I don't like people. At least Americans. Are they just stupid, or what? Proud to be an American?
What is there to be proud of? And here I apologize in advance for this rant:*

I recall a celebration hosted by my brother and his wife—at the crack of dawn walking from my motel over the approximately one mile long Roosevelt Bridge on FL-714 crossing the south fork of the St. Lucie River. The top of bridge's substantial metal railing is segmented into uniform 1 by 4 foot rectangles. In every single one of these rectangles were three, exactly 3 perfectly formed spider webs complete with the spider in the center. The arrangement of the webs themselves varied from rectangle to rectangle, but in each rectangle there were always three gorgeous webs lofting in the cool breeze, shimmering in the morning light.

I can't help but wonder how such a tiny, pea brain creature could orchestrate both such an engineering wonder and a collectively uniform social marvel. Now here we are, sitting atop the most advanced technical empire in history, with both the cutting-edge medical and electronic telecommunications, replete with Google at our finger tips to be able to draw from the best thinking and history we know of, yet when push comes to shove, the proof is in the pudding ...the 'United' states of America had and continues to have the worst response to the COVID pandemic of any country in the world. Not just worst among developed countries, but worst among all countries. Worst in case numbers, worst in deaths. Even worse than other fascist-centric lead countries like India and Brazil. How could this be? A question I'm left to scream from the bridge top to an audience of wise spiders.

I'll leave you with an excerpt from "Alive" by one of my favorite poets, Naomi Shihab Nye:

Dear Dog Behind the Fence, you really need
to calm down now. You have been barking every time
I walk to the compost for two years
and I have not robbed your house. Relax.
When I asked the man on the other side
if you bother him too, he smiled and said no,
he makes me feel less alone. Should I be more
worried about the dog or the man?

.....

We're not a good people. Never were.
And lately we've been in retrograde,
moving away from BECOMING a good people.

.....

{210310}

I like being alone by myself,
then I'm clearly the smartest person in the room.
(Yet, then again, I'm also the dumbest – small room.)

.....

At least cognitively, I was broken to begin with. Now I'm just falling apart.

.....

I can't afford you protection,
This world doesn't do safe.
What I can offer ...comfort.

.....

We live within the contrasts of dualities,
cold/hot, large/small, light/dark.
Yet, even at the extremes
we are all on the spectrum.

.....

Music: a way in
to your self.
Music: a way out
for the poor, depressed,
the troubled.

.....

Beauty in the plainness. Taupe is dope.

.....

She rubbed up on me enough to smooth out my rough edges. And boy, did I have some rough edges.

.....

Just keep it fun, and no one gets hurt!

.....

"I think 99 times and find nothing. I stop thinking, swim in silence, and the truth comes to me." ~ Albert Einstein

Analysis requires a closed set of knowables (and/or probabilities.) You can't analyze an unknown. For uncertain and unknowable issues, **you're better off sleeping on it** and giving it over to your intuition, your well-rested gut-feeling.

Funny is a muscle as much as your gluteus maximus, you have to exercise it to keep it in shape.
Don't be the butt of the joke, Keep your funny muscle fit!

{*"If you don't have a sense of humor, it just isn't funny," Wavy gravy*}

Thank God for routines and habits. If I had to think through all this shit, I'd never get anything done.

There's a curious belief that you live on in other's memories, which is analogous to the sentiment, "I'm with you in spirit." Try getting your arms around that. "You're in my thoughts & prayers," and that's where you'll remain for my other five senses. Sadly, as it is, metaphysical hugs are simply a few dimensions short of a real experience.

Human are the Hood Ornaments and Pantry for the Coronavirus

Similarly to other corona viruses, SARS-CoV-2 has 'learnt' during the course of evolution to adapt more efficiently to its host than if this were a purely random process: overall, the virus appears to have a lower mutation rate than might be expected statistically. On the other hand, the mutation rate at specific sites on the virus RNA can be much higher. These regions are mostly relevant for the human immune response. When the virus interacts with the immune system it appears to 'learn' how to evade it. There are specific patterns of gene deletions in the Sars-CoV-2 genome which enable it to rapidly acquire genetic and antigenic novelty.

Systems capable of solving problems with a higher rate of success than might be expected with random processes, can indeed be called 'intelligent', even if the virus is not actually 'thinking' or 'planning'.

(But, then, is Coronavirus more intelligent than humans?)

{*Coronavirus: "intelligent" mutants* > <https://www.testbiotech.org/en/news/coronavirus-intelligent-mutants>}

If yellow is acid, violet is alkaline.

Sixty-seven percent of life is taking care of the body. The other third we sleep.
In between we steal a moment. Life has its moments.

When the world's on fire is not the time to reorganize your sock drawer.

You can make faces out of the clouds all day long,
they'll keep right on morphing.

A busy life is a hungry ghost,
an insatiable chaos, an empty life.
A simple life is a full life.

You can do every right,
absolutely right, and still
you will die.

.....
Me and the bees in the Avocado tree.
Buzzing!
.....

During the past two centuries that I have been on this planet, for that matter, for all of human history and undoubtedly from the very beginning, germs – bacteria, viruses and such have killed more humans than humans have by all other means, including wars, automobiles, saturated fats and heart attacks. Thing is, the thriving of germs in the human host is an intelligent expression of the exuberant joy of living, while human preying on human is an stultifyingly insane expression of abject mortifying horror – one that undoubtedly goes back to the very beginning of man.

{“In my research last year into horror movies, I showed how the horror genre has grown incredibly in the past decade or so. Twenty years ago, horror movies accounted for 4.3% of all movies made, whereas in 2017 they represented 12.4%. Other genres which are growing in popularity are History, Sci-Fi and Biography.” > <https://stephenfollows.com/genre-trends-global-film-production/> }

.....
I've reached that place where my future is the past.
.....

{210415}

When your sense of personal freedom is shitting in the community well:
turn away from the pain in the world,
embrace the hate.
.....

Time Out

No one noticed her, until
she put herself facing the corner.

{#HazelBusby}
.....

When all hell breaks loose, the best place to be is the eye of the hurricane, until the storm plays itself out.

{Corollary: the best way to win a firefight battle is not to be there.}
.....

Recordings Show Chaos

(your perspective depends on where you're standing)

The instant before 16-year-old Ma'Khia Bryant
tried mightily to end a black life,
the life of 22-year-old Tionna Bonner
with a kitchen knife, Officer Nicholas Reardon
shot and killed her dead.

The instant before, one of the young women
had apparently been cut with the object
that was in Bryant's hand.

The instant before, one of the adult males
is seen kicking one of the young women
who is on the ground in the head
with all his might.

In those next 11 seconds, Bryant was seen
charging at 20-year-old Shai-Onta Lana Craig-Watkins
with a kitchen knife before moving on to 22-year-old Tionna Bonner

before Reardon yelled, "Get down!"
and fired four consecutive shots into her chest.

"You have no respect for life," another Black man,
who lives across the street, can be heard yelling at Reardon.
"No, actually, you have no respect for Black life."

While Reardon, who is white, faced recrimination
at the scene, his split-second decision to shoot
was commended by the national Fraternal Order of Police,
who called it "an act of heroism, but one with tragic results."

{Recordings show chaos surrounding Ma'Khia Bryant shooting > <https://apnews.com/article/makhia-bryant-ohio-shooting-video-recordings-186abfbcfd1717a8c42a38021a83de4b>}

Why do so many Christians act as if they are still in the catacombs evading Roman persecution when they have long ago been appropriated by their overlords and have themselves become the persecutors?

Nomadland won the Best Picture Oscar in 2021.

In my experience, "nomads" in America tend to be somehow broken people. Then again, when you're a product of a broken culture, maybe taking a break is a move towards dignity, if not authenticity. At the awards ceremony, Frances McDormand's howling tribute to sound mixer Michael Wolf Snyder, who recently took his own life, cryptically, yet so empathically, captures the nature of that wild-crazy godhead. Without having yet seen the film, I sense Nomadland is the only piece of moving picture art ever, either TV or cinema, that I can personally identify with, that I can see at least some aspect of myself in.

Essence of steamed cabbage
makes washing the pot a breeze.

Boiled rolled oats straight-up
not so much, a bit stickier.
Quite a bit.

210501

William Stoehr painting

Commentary on the rhetoric describing the Abstract Expressionist school of painting.

William Stoehr asks too much of paint. Paint can never serve to "make your experience more real," it is after all a veneer, one thin coat away from oblivion. The pictorial image it forms is an illusion. From what I've seen, his work does have some nuance within it, mostly contrived nuance, but the overall effect is a dark bludgeoning Rorschach instrument aimed at getting the numb thick-skinned to feel, feel something. Anything. Anything 'they' can imagine and use to construct their own alternative reality. Lost in the field of ambiguity, it appears Stoehr is attempting to answer questions where he hasn't spent the requisite ten-thousand years to get to know the place.

{<https://www.williamstoehrart.com/brief-bio> | <https://www.williamstoehrart.com/methods>}

His sister's final relapse came in 2012, after her husband died and she was prescribed opioids to lessen the pain of two unsuccessful back surgeries, Stoehr says. "There was a bottle next to her, a bottle of vodka, and the opiates," he says. "So it was obvious, and tragic." Stoehr had once coaxed his sister into rehab by offering to paint her portrait. After she died, he kept his promise. But he couldn't bring himself to title the work with his sister's real name. "And so I called it Emma," he says. "And now I continue with the Emma because Emma now has become a stand-in for everyone who is a victim, witness or a survivor." There are hints of Emma in many of Stoehr's portraits — haunting faces painted with broad strokes on large canvasses.

On one such painting Stoehr inscribes:

"Dad called
Emma OD'd
Her soul is at rest."

https://media.npr.org/assets/img/2021/04/30/stoehr2b_custom-8b31979edbbd2291e56bc00465fffedfcebdb7c1-s1200.webp

Stoehr says, "In 2004, I retired to become a full-time artist. I could afford to define success in my way but it took a few years to find my voice – my soul's work." He believes he doing his "soul's work," but he's beside himself, outside himself. He is an out-of-body witness to his subject – though a biased, not a neutral witness. He witnessed the decline of his sister into addiction, hoping for her recovery, and when she passed he declared "her soul is at rest." Or so he wants to believe. The fictitious 'Emma' now becomes a stand-in for everyone who is a victim, witness or a survivor. But Stoehr doesn't paint from the point of view of the witness, his paintings don't say, "I stood by and watched my sister's decline, it ripped my heart out, I felt powerless to truly help her, to make a real difference in her life." Instead he wallows on the surface in harrowing angst, painting haunting faces with broad strokes on large canvasses, avoiding, neglecting his own unresolved depth of natural feelings. A metaphor for the audience he attracts?

William Stoehr says, "My job as an artist is to get you to think and to ask questions. This is the larger conversation; the wider dialog that I want to be part of. In the end we must ask how we are to respond. Simply being affected is not enough. How can I make that happen? Can I be part of the solution?" Technically, William Stoehr's work is still very much derivative of his key influencers: Willem de Kooning, Pablo Picasso, David Hockney, et al. For visual interest Stoehr wallows (again) in the space between features filling them in with scribbles, pseudo symbols, mini abstracts as "composites of cues that your brain assembles." But in terms of being a part of the solution to a clear narrative these markings are an attractive nuisance, less like helpful cues and more like the deranged noise of an unexamined life.

Nothing grabs your attention like horrific tragedy. If only there were beauty in the ugly. . .

Plato separated art and beauty into two independent concepts: real beauty reflects truth, while art is a deceiving imitation of nature. Aristotle, by contrast, held that good art is beautiful and that, therefore, the two are inseparable: a good work of art is a beautiful work. By that measure, if good, Stoehr's work argues that natural beauty is subordinated to his lineages' deceiving reductionist imitation of nature and that even an unexamined life is worth the dither. It appears Stoehr is attempting to answer questions where he hasn't spent the requisite ten-thousand years to get to know the place, especially, 'Who am I?'

.....

It's life or death, and
death is guaranteed.

{precious}

It's life or death, and
death is guaranteed.
There are no other options.

Sure you can sleep-walk,
through life zombie-like, but
that's not really living, is it?

Life is short,
turn up the dial.

Is there life after death?
You won't know for sure until you get there, and
you'll never really know if you don't fully live this one.

{too precious for the gray zone}

.....
If you don't trust yourself, you can't trust.
There is no trust.
If you don't love yourself, you can't love.
There is no love.

{autonomy, sovereignty, integrity at the least common discreet unit of organization: individual, family, in-group, local society/network, extended formal organizations/government.
[SEE structural difference between Formal Organizations in Sociology and Biology/Physics]}

.....
With only tooth & claw
the tiger travels light.

.....
You can put a new label
on an old fish, ...
still stinks.

.....
It's not a fashion statement. This is my hair.

.....
Shades of orange to taupe.
There are no truly black people, or white people,
or yellow or red.
People only come in shades of oxidized orange to alabaster taupe.
Earth tones.

.....
Modeling. The best we can do with any particular data set is construct a model that best explains it. There will always be new data, so our model will frequently need to be flexible or replaced with a more coherent one. Here comes some new data now: scampering sure-footed across the telephone cable, dodging low hanging branches, bushy tails all aflutter— let's call it 'squirrel in pursuit of happiness.'

.....
Music is a river, and
you the fish swimming upstream.
But poetry, poetry is
an island in the desert
where you go to fish.

{alone in your lineage}

.....
Don't forget!
That flowering plant
you're pruning,
it too is
a wild beast.

.....
A silver lining in the ominous pandemic clouds – my wife & I are loving this time home alone together. We've got our sweet little rhythm and effortless routine to a frolic, and jabber on like wild parrots in a ripe crab apple tree when she's not focused on editing her book. I recently pulled together a webpage that somewhat documents the past 30 years or so of my thoughts and expressions doing what I love doing most,

playing with words & pictures. That opus reminded me how much I like myself, especially when I'm doing what I do for its own reward.

{with Love}

.....

{May 12, 2021}

You know your party's in trouble when Liz Cheney is the voice of reason.

.....

Millimeter for millimeter
there is likely no other piece of real estate
more expressive
of the feelings or 'state of mind'
behind it
than the human face.

.....

We all experience pain and suffering. If we include apprehension and generalized anxiety, a lot of life is pain and suffering. There is another lot that is none of that. A portion of this other lot is simply the absence of, the relief from pain and suffering. Then there is yet another portion that stands alone in its own right as pure unmitigated joy. It's the astounding shock of that pure unmitigated joy that keeps us hooked. Even the slightest whiff of that pure unmitigated joy gives us hope to carry on. And there within that hint we find the nut of the meaning at the center of the story we tell ourselves. The narrative we invent to describe the distance between being and doing, good and well – a life worth living.

.....

One organism's disease is another organism's lunch.

.....

Ya gotta separate the physics and the psychology from the biology from the sociology, then stich'm back together again, which is what philosophy is for.

.....

"How are you?"
"God enough."

.....

When you're in pain it's hard
to think of any thing else,
much less anyone else.

.....

If Little Richard was born white, there would be no Elvis.
But then Little Richard would've had no soul.
If Bob Dylan was shy,
you'd never know it.
You can take the man out of the culture, but
you can't take the culture out of the man.

{A nod to **William Clifford "Big" Brown**, a toasting street poet prominent among the Beats, a boxer, an influencer of Bob Dylan among others. Born September 30, 1920 – killed in a hit & run August 30, 1980. :: Scholars of African American folklore and folk music have placed Brown's poetry within the African-American tradition known as *toasting*. Abiodun Oyewole, of the Last Poets, places Brown's poetry within that tradition as well, but has also suggested that Brown's work crossed a racial divide. >
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Brown_\(poet\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Brown_(poet))}

.....

You don't need God
to realize how cute you are
in the universe.
Just take a peek
at where you fit in
in the modest sized Milky Way;
one of hundreds of billions,
maybe trillions of galaxies
in the observable universe.

.....
Robustly holding my place in the Milky Way galaxy, I ask:

Tell me when any organism or natural system – a dandelion field, a redwood forest, a kangaroo mob, the Roman empire hasn't followed the process of birth, growth, decay and death; and if fortune is balanced, perhaps rebirth.

Then tell me when any one organization in nature – a fungi colony, an ant hill, a plague of locusts, free market capitalism becomes overly enamored with the growth phase having left the environment behind better off for the 'perhaps reborn' future generations after its inevitable deep collapse.

Then tell me when, if ever, any human tribe, society, culture or empire has ever been fair, just and equitable both to those members within and/or to the outer world at large*. Which is to ask when ever have those with an avarice want for more ever been in balance with nature.

Yet with no dream of justice the busy high-energy superheated gas and magnetic fields at our galactic center 26,000 light years (nearly 156 quadrillion miles) away lives on unfazed – with or without us – just as they are.

{*CAVEAT: 7th Generation Principle. The Seventh Generation takes its name from the Great Law of the Haudenosaunee, the founding document of the Iroquois Confederacy, the oldest living participatory democracy on Earth. It is based on an ancient Iroquois philosophy that: "In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations." This philosophy is not unique to just the Iroquois nation. Many Native American nations, tribes and other indigenous people around the world have and still live by this philosophy. > <https://www.7genfoundation.org/7th-generation/>}

.....
Nothing like a pandemic
to make you appreciate authoritarianism.

.....
Grief is not just one emotion.
Grief is all the emotions.

If there is a loss,
you've lost none of the past,
only the loss of future potential,
which never really was.

The real loss is
the loss of the thing itself,
that someone special to squeeze.
That cannot be replaced.

Grief is not just one emotion.
Grief is all the emotions
that cannot be replaced.

.....
I'm going to leave
my 16 month long pandemic hair
loose today to annoy me
so I remember
before I get it cut tomorrow.

.....
If the earth spins on its axis every 24 hours, and rotates around the sun every 365 days or so, and the sun makes its orbit around the Milky Way galaxy every 225-250 million years, or so, how many miles per hour is a passenger in San Diego California traveling?

Hint: Earth/Circumference: 24,901 miles; the surface of the earth at the equator moves at a speed of roughly 1,000 miles per hour. Speed of Revolution of Earth around the Sun = Distance/Time = 585,331,663 miles / 8766 hr = 66,487 mi/hr (= 18.64 mi/sec) The Sun (and its Solar System) moves at about 500,000 miles an hour as it makes its orbit around the Milky Way galaxy HENCE: 1,000 miles per hour spinning this way, 66,487 miles per hour rotating that way and 500,000 miles an hour orbiting the Big Fuss –thus– equals a whole lot of inherent dizzy.

And at your best, you think you're Zen still and calm? Ha!
.....

We know gravity is going to win in the end, but we have to keep trying, try to keep up lifting. Stay upright, sister!
.....

It's one thing to watch yourself slowly grow and wonder what will become of you. It's quite another to see yourself too rapidly deteriorating and know with certainty where you will end up.

{the proper use of the word proper}
.....

Though possibly a useful fiction, virtually everything you believe—religion, science, et al—is a myth. Never actually existed, never will.
.....

Wining and whining, vicious downward spiral.

{The pandemic has further increased rates of alcohol use in women. During the pandemic women have increased their heavy drinking days by 41% compared to before the pandemic. > <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/women-alcohol-and-covid-19-2021040622219>}

.....
Coming out of pandemic hibernation like a hungry bear.
.....

The phone is alone on the kitchen island, deserted. Robocalls go unanswered.
.....

"Beauty, cleanliness and order" grants respectability, asserts the Moral high ground,

and offers security against the superior powers of nature,
playing a key role in establishing cultural values
in relation to social class, humanitarianism,
and cultural imperialism, said the Psychoanalyst
derisively.

Civilization demands repression of desire
for the sake, for the need for people
to cooperate with each other
and to work together, but
it's a zero sum game.

Individualism / Collectivism,
Civilization and Its Discontents

One of the most fundamental dualisms of human life is
the tendency to assert and develop one's self,
to differentiate one's self from the group. But
at the same time, people want to affiliate with others,
membership in groups of people provide warmth,
comfort, and connection.

Compete / Cooperate

Within and outside the home,
"beauty, cleanliness and order"
is a class act.

.....

When you live in high heaven,
where is there to go
on vacation, but
down.

.....

Honor your Avocado tree roots even
as your canopy intermingles with
the Triangle Palm and
the Silver Elm.

But then, you go into the 54 flavor Ice Cream Shop and
EVERY TIME order only dark chocolate mint with sprinkles, and
mock your friends who order pistachio vanilla or
caramel butter pecan.

{bigotry}

On snack break from baseball practice
pre-schoolers jeer at the little Indian boy
eating an apple, "poopy poopy poopy."
They have chocolate-chip cookies.

{starts early}

.....

What can I say about my older brother, but
he was an early initiate into the *Snipe Hunter Society* and
has been on a fool's errand ever since.

.....
We meet. We eat.

{prayer}
.....

Life is a vinaigrette,
you have to shake it up
to get the full flavor.
.....

*Showing a neighbor my doodles, he asks how I learned. In big part I say,
I must attribute them to the round well-formed handwriting of my mother.
Which caused me to think what I owe my life line of expression to...*

I am to be found in the lineage of
humanist, transcendental to realist
American Bohemians ala Walt Whitman
(with a pinch of Mark Twain,)
through the post World War 2 beatniks,
spiritual-poets and hipsters melding Alan Watts,
Gary Snyder, Philip Whalen and Jack Kerouac,
twisting with social-political renegades in the ilk of
Abby Hoffman, Ram Dass (nee Richard Alpert)
and roshi Joan Halifax –
of course too,
the sirens of my day,
Joan Baez, Carole King, Joni Mitchell, Judy Collins
and Bob Dylan teased me to open
and be with myself on the Us-Them odyssey –
careful to be on alert not to try to dissolve
the boundaries between,
but rather to ever be expanding
the inclusive facets of what belongs within us.
.....

{210713}

If you're a medium
wearing an extra large
shirt, it doesn't make you
look larger. On the contrary.

{goldilocks}
.....

Mockingbird on the telephone pole
singing the endless repertoire,
a baby squirrel splayed on the cross bar.
Jumping-up, fluttering-down
demonstrating what a fine and agile
and studly fellow he is.
A flock of chickadees lit in the adjoining tree.

Mister Mocker moves to the next pole down.
A lady joins him.
The vigor song begins again with added gusto.
Baby squirrel rouses,
giving me one lazy eye.

I smile. My kind of community.
.....

If the human species wants any hope of surviving at scale,
it has to understand what that scale is.

We must recognize we've fulfilled the Genesis 1:28 mandate,
that there is no more 'western ho' territory to subdue, that
we'll never be able to colonize another planet in time
to save ourselves.

Humans must regulate themselves and stop
treating their environment as if it were an endless,
inexhaustible resource. We must shift from fierce competing
for limited turf and treasure, and learn intelligent moderated cooperation.

Humans collectively need to know
what their mission is, agree on the parameters
and how to justly proceed. There can be no more war, or
pernicious capitalism, excessive accumulation of idle wealth, or enslaving.

Humans must henceforth become good stewards of this sustainable
small, fragile planet, and make wise choices.

The hope for getting into balance with the natural world doesn't rest simply with the individual. It is an imperative for society as a whole. The individual can only do their part, success demands on a full societal response. If a tipping point majority of self-actualized individuals don't align with actions required for the complex systems necessary for a progressively sustainable reciprocity, chaotic destruction will continue to ensue.

{Genesis 1:28, 'And God blessed them and said, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over every living thing upon the earth.' }

.....
July 21, 2021

Jeff Bezos, the world's richest man, has thanked his employees and customers for 'paying' for his trip to space.

Clearly money has long since ceased to be tied to any objective or market-based standard and only tabulates social welfare based on people's capacity to generate income*. Its primary utility is to coerce labor to do work, which left unregulated allows for hugely disproportionate exploitation, corruption and stratification of wealth and power – institutional implicit slavery of both humans and their environment for the many, out-sized self-worth puffery for a few billionaires competing senselessly to be the first to launch themselves into space.

*"Since the mid-20th century—whether in the Keynesian 1950s or the neoliberal 1980s—economic indicators have promoted an idea of American society as a capital investment whose main goal, like that of any investment, is ever-increasing monetary growth. Americans have surely benefited materially from the remarkable economic growth over this period of time, an expansion wholly unique to capitalist societies. Nevertheless, by making capital accumulation synonymous with progress, money-based metrics have turned human betterment into a secondary concern. By the early 21st century, American society's top priority became its bottom line, net worth became synonymous with self-worth, and a billionaire businessman who repeatedly pointed to his own wealth as proof of his fitness for office was elected president." {<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/10/money-measure-everything-pricing-progress/543345/>}

.....
I'm in the summer sun a lot these days.
My question is, how dark to I have to get
before I can be considered a colored person?
.....

It's not enough to say grace,
you must be grace or
there is none.

.....

What young does, in *the Age of Disrupt*: fuck shit up.

.....

When I die, I suppose I'll go back to where I came from.
And soon after I'm back they'll ask me, "*How was your summer vacation.*"
Hep-cat, mama.dat

.....

I'm finding that it's increasingly important to understand HOW I make decisions
and WHAT those decisions are predicated on. Inherently, instinct infused intuition is the main driver,
but this transitory spark needs to be grounded in an exhaustive survey of knowable facts within the full data set.
Short of that, I go a wild-ass guess and see what happens.

.....

Provocative banner sign on a commercial building: "X=?"
If X only equals a question, why would you need X?

.....

The un-united state of America fueled by fear and
outrage, powered by the Mis-disInformation Age.

{#WeaponsofMassDistraction @fledgling}

.....

Overheard at Starbucks: "*Idaho? No, you da ho!*"

.....

210816, Monday

I understand and share your concern for the hordes of immigrants flooding over our southern board. I can only
encourage you to take a deep dive into the complex actions and consequences of the Monroe Doctrine.
And as a corollary, the history of the rise and fall of empires. The United States of America is no exception to this history.
We are in fact reaping what we have sown.

{Remembering the Fall of Saigon, today, as we look on with horror at the Fall of Kabul.}

.....

It's a strange notion, isn't it?
The desire to live past your living,
to live on in other's hearts and minds.
As if that somehow makes you immortal.

.....

Discipline,
the process of developing useful habits.
Discipline is not a punishment, or rather,
shouldn't be. Discipline is a process
developing useful habits.

.....

If I were the child I was then today,
besides the labels of aphasic dyslexic,
I'd be saddled with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

and treated with dopamine increasing stimulants, non-stimulant medications, such as atomoxetine and guanfacine, and/or powerful zombie inducing antidepressants. Forever battling acute, rapid, and chronic neural drug tolerance.

*When the reality was,
I was a refined sugar addict,
undiagnosed, untreated.*

.....

Opinion journalism as exploited by such Rupert Murdoch minions as Sean Hannity and Tucker Carlson, or even cable propagandists such as Chris Cuomo and Rachel Maddow is what has fueled the divisive outrage in that right-wing American 1/3 that led to the insurrections of 6 January 2021. It's serious shit.

Since I can first remember the business model of the main stream media has been fear, and the business model of this relatively new alt-right media is outrage. Both bottom-lines are money. The main stream media for the longest time held the dignity of pretense of adhering to principal. The disintegration of the truth behind that mirage is what fuels the flame of outrage.

The funny thing, when I'm out running around town picking up and delivering food with a descent disposition and cordial manner, 99.99% of the people I encounter reciprocate in kind, even the raving lunatics camped out along the sidewalk. And it feels like, if I had the time, I could have a very interesting and enlightening conversation with most all of them, as long as I don't bring up abortion, guns and immigrants. Though, albeit, the tone, tenor and animation of the convo with raving lunatics is going to vary widely from the guy wearing the sharp suit pressing the elevator button for the penthouse. I think there's something to the notion "This is what happens when you let a hateful person have a platform..." Shock jock radio hosts like Rush Limbaugh and Alex Jones have been fanning the flames of hate, giving live call-in audio life to tabloid news sensationalism for a good while now. More recently cable TV and twitter have given Opinion Journalists a platform to insinuate whatever to build a suggestible following under the banner of 'alternative facts.' Opinion journalism as exploited by such Rupert Murdoch minions as Sean Hannity and Tucker Carlson, or even cable propagandists such as Chris Cuomo and Rachel Maddow is what has fueled the divisive outrage in that right-wing American 1/3 that led to the insurrection of 6 January 2021. It's serious shit.

I don't think we really have that many closeted hateful people. I think we all have the capacity to project hate, as much as a capacity to choose to be loving and kind. It just depends on which dog we feed. And the hate dog can be mesmerizing in his sing-songy righteous barking and masterful rhetorical allure. And what does the love dog have to recommend herself? Sloppy, cute face licking? Since I can first remember, the business model of the main stream media has been fear, and now the business model of this relatively new alt-right media is outrage. Both bottom-lines are money. Murdoch's media is for money, no holds barred The main stream media for the longest time held the dignity of pretense of adhering to principal. The disintegration of the truth behind that mirage is what fuels the indignant flames of outrage -- manufactures dissent and discontent.

It appears to me that the best we can do is NOT fall into either the fear or outrage models, and be on guard not to add voice to the polarizing delusions. See the decency in others and speak to that.

.....

Forget the whimper or the bang,
I'm going out with a hardy "haha. . . Ha!"

.....

Why do so many furry critters have black noses? Sunscreen?

.....

Meaning cannot be described with nouns or pronouns.

.....

I appreciate my autonomic nervous system,
I really do. But

sometimes I just like to breathe on my own.

It's odd that some many girls want to make themselves attractive,
but when they don't like what they attract, *he's* the creep.

The soul has no body.
Nobody has a soul.
When you get to heaven,
will you have to shit?
Who'll make the toilet paper?

Santa, Parents and the Surveillance State
What do you want for Christmas?

<https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/12/santa-claus-and-the-surveillance-state/383830/>
(Confession/Testimony: SEARCH > "The Morals of the Catholic/Protestant Church")

Don't let your belief system
get in the way of your lived experience.

Brackish water in the gutter,
washed down from last night's rain.
Short-billed Crow, head tilted side ways,
sips. A moment tender in my mind's eye
though he, no doubt, has moved on.

The best find a way to win,
even when they're not playing their best.

As long as I get my drugs,
I won't begrudge you yours.
Live & let live.
(Or is it, live & let die?)

Let's go!
I have earnings to earn,
living to live.
C'mon! Vamos! Allons!

In terms of human rights,
has there ever been a net-positive empire?
By the very fact that you are still here suggests
you feel this life is net-positive. But
is the system that supports you,
and reciprocally you support,
also net-positive?

When there's more wolves than Caribou,
say goodbye to your way of life.

.....
The unborn or the born?

What does it seem that Republicans are more interested in?
They don't want to limit the yet to be born. The living they want to exploit.

The aggrandizing '*thoughts and prayers*'—merely PR marketing:

"they may face each new day with hope and the certainty that nothing can destroy the good that has been given."

.....
Dew East

{210921}

Towel drying the dew from my old beater,
Santa Ana driven traffic sounds roar
from the I-805 highway in the east.
Harvest moon setting in the west.

{Welcoming autumn in Southern California}

.....
I told her the truth
with the volume turned up,
it hurt her ears,
she didn't want to hear it.

{Protesting Liberty}

.....
Just saw a flock of pigeons in flight, lovely sight . . .
Loving, too, ...the inner sight of you.

.....
Things I do most (*in order:*)

- Breathing
- Sleeping
- Eating/Drinking
- Exercising mind/body (work/recreate)
- Shitting/Pissing/Farting
- Resting

.....
Down in the valley,
the valley so low,
that's where you'll find me,
'neath the avocado tree.

*Through the Birmingham Jail bars,
Jimmie sees the moon shining.
Hang your head over, hear the wind blow.
Late in the evening, Huddie hear the train blow.*

Sitting lotus, watching breath,
inhaling love, exhaling peace.
If you don't love me, love whom you please.
Put your arms round me, give my heart ease.

{folk fusion: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Down_in_the_Valley_\(folk_song\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Down_in_the_Valley_(folk_song))}

.....
There's a lot worth not being said that doers need to hear.
.....

I'm still courting my wife. Daily.
My sweet nothings are really something.

{sweet nothings for my sweetheart}
.....

So much big data to crunch. How
to get to the nut of it without trivializing or
diminishing the complexity?
.....

Prestige is a trap
that pulls you away
from your authentic self.
.....

If Bill Maher is how you get the news, you need a cynicism check-up.
.....

Forget, "*Can we all get along?*"
Let's try, "*Can we all get on the same page?*"
C'mon people, focus! Get with it!!
.....

I'm not for nor against science.
Best take data, referencing it's source,
for what it is and test it against experience,
verifiable current reality.

{appropriate scale pragmatics}
.....

Some planets are huge gas giants,
all vaporous hydrogen and helium, airy-fair.
Other planets, like our own,
have a molten hot iron core with a heat-tempered
solid as a rock crust.
So too religions.
Some with more gravitas than others.

'God' is a very odd, Stone Age caveman sound
for 'all that is.'
'Yahweh' is more Iron Age tribal.
A more up-to-date modern metaphor
for 'all that is' is
Awareness.
Aware not of a particular, but rather
the all-knowing state of awareness.
No genuflection required.
.....

A self- professed liar

tells you they no longer lie.
How do you know?

{liars dilemma}

.....

Two drivers nearly met,
exchanged finger birds and
sped away erratically.

{birds of a feather rage together}

.....

To educate me, to indoctrinate me into the herd, they, my parents, teachers and coaches did what they did to break horses using the test of wills sweet carrot & cruel stick method. "By heart and by sore flesh," as John Muir would say. I desperately had to keep spark alive, if there were to be any hope to live an authentic life unencumbered by the weight of calloused dead-inside character armor. I soulfully didn't want to be a character, but rather to live, to fully experience a life. *For the walking dead, feeling is healing.* And those are the embers I blow on in feeling my way home. The best I can hope for is being honest with myself in trusting my perceptions, honoring the primacy of the instinct, the imminence of raw emotion, the present clarity of sensation, the truth of my feelings.

.....

Our fore-Fathers offered us Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.
Life was not theirs to give.
As slave holders, liberty was a lie.
And the pursuit of happiness a curse,
as they didn't offer happiness, only the pursuit.
And where were our fore-Mothers?
What were they pursuing?

.....

If life is an experiment,
I wouldn't want to cross-contaminate our findings,
you & I, for the small bit of positive results we share.

*If life is an experiment,
I wouldn't want to my findings
to contaminate your results.*

and vice versa.

.....

I love seeing the skunk family scampering, all lined up in a row.
Just not too up-close and personal in the dim pre-dawn light.
Especially the stink-ass caboose end of the train.

.....

You don't know what free is
until you know what constraints are,
they say, as the wild dog chases
the rabbit down her burrow.

.....

Shit I'm just glad I'm alive
and have more than a modicum of health.

.....

There's an implied reluctance in traipsing

that you don't get in a saunter.
.....

{211003}

It's not that I'm opposed to accomplishments, accomplishments come and go, that's fine. It's what we define and revere in accomplishments that's off putting. We eat, we sleep, we wipe our ass, these are accomplishments enough. That we do it with great regularity and consistency is a marvelous accomplishment in and of itself. If you live in and contribute to a society that aids and abets this great regularity, and not one that imposes obstacles and deterrents, all the more so—a highly privileged, well-earned accomplishment. It's those for 'extraordinary accomplishment in a specialized category' stars and accolades they hand out in award ceremonies I take exception to. If you need disproportionate recognition for doing what you love, then perhaps you've lost sight of stalwartly doing what you must and doing it well.
.....

I don't arrive here out of context.
I find my place following those
that have gone before me.

I simply live a life.

And like those who have gone before me,
if the story of that life is not told, it dies with me.
.....

There is a story in Nietzsche that goes something like this. There was once a wise spiritual master, who was the ruler of a small but prosperous domain, and who was known for his selfless devotion to his people. As his people flourished and grew in number, the bounds of this small domain spread; and with it the need to trust implicitly the emissaries he sent to ensure the safety of its ever more distant parts. It was not just that it was impossible for him personally to order all that needed to be dealt with: as he wisely saw, he needed to keep his distance from, and remain ignorant of, such concerns. And so he nurtured and trained carefully his emissaries, in order that they could be trusted. Eventually, however, his cleverest and most ambitious vizier, the one he most trusted to do his work, began to see himself as the master, and used his position to advance his own wealth and influence. He saw his master's temperance and forbearance as weakness, not wisdom, and on his missions on the master's behalf, adopted his mantle as his own – the emissary became contemptuous of his master. And so it came about that the master was usurped, the people were duped, the domain became a tyranny; and eventually it collapsed in ruins.

{Iain McGilchrist, 'The Master and His Emissary,' page 14 :: The Master is betrayed by his emissary: the need for appropriate scale in light of growing complexity.}
.....

Try not ending up being
someone else's lunch
while getting your own.

{paying attention: limelight and/or floodlight}
.....

Panhandler sign:
*please help
feed
my addictions*
.....

The need to upgrade your mobile phone
is kind of like shitting and pissing.
You'll never be done with it
until you're completely done in.
.....

In real world terms,
you have taken more than you have given,
you have done more harm than good.
Both as an individual and a country.
Yet you imagine you, yourself and the country
you serve, are on the right side of history.
Hence, the dream of the American Dream.

.....

{211009}

<What if the US Census stopped tracking its citizens by ethnicity?>

"Questions regarding racial and ethnic self-identification have been included in each U.S. census dating back to the first in 1790," justifies Timothy P. Johnson, director of the Survey Research Laboratory at the University of Illinois at Chicago and president of the American Association for Public Opinion Research.

I say, *phooey!* Just because we were racists then, doesn't need to speak to now!

.....

Hey stranger,
I've spent the last 70 years wandering the Earth
getting into position to have this moment with you.
And this is the way you treat me?

.....

The herd is running scared.
The young, old, and feeble get trampled.
Pandemic becomes endemic.

.....

Another view, nephew: the mythology, the poetry, or dogmatic interpretations of "this magical text!," of the The Bhagavad Gita serve to obfuscate the recurrent effect of the revered text, whether intended or not. *At base the Gita is propaganda for war.* It assumes war, even war against cousins is inevitable, and you must choose a side. The spiritualized script is clearly written by the ruling class, and overall serves to fix and maintain class structure in that eternal battle. Even as it tells you, you have a pretense of free will choice, it emphatically tells you must do your duty according to the dharma.

"An individual should make a choice depending on what type of spiritual person they are. . . each person decides how to live their lives. There is no 'correct' way to act, only a person's dharma and personal choice."

That rhetoric of a mystical "person's dharma" only serves to internalize and bind individuals in their place within a caste system. Those born Brahmin specialize as intellectuals, priests, teachers, ayurvedic physicians and protectors of sacred learning across generations, and must act accordingly. Those born Untouchables are forever cast as descendants of slaves or prisoners. Then as now. And of course, it's not simply whether the text is or is not promoting war, but the complex of the societal structure it feeds. You'd have had to grow up Hindu to feel the whole import, but here, in my mind, is a contemporary illustration of a western structural equivalent:

The future of race in America: Michelle Alexander at TEDxColumbus > <https://youtu.be/SQ6H-Mz6hgw>

You say, "...I wonder if it is not most helpful to have a text reinterpreted, so that it's deeper meaning is shown to undermine the oppressive institutions that it once seemed to support. I think of Adyanshanti's writings on the gospels."

Adyanshanti's book jacket says, "Jesus crossed all of the boundaries that separated the people of his time because he viewed the world from the perspective of what unites us, not what divides us. In *Resurrecting Jesus*, Adyashanti embarks on a fascinating reconsideration of the man known as Jesus, examining his life from birth to Resurrection to reveal a timeless model of awakening and enlightened engagement with the world. Through close consideration of the archetypal figures and events of the Gospels, Adya issues a call to "live the Christ" in a way that is unique to each of us."

That's the thing about wisdom teachers, they don't let facts get in the way of a good story.

.....
I'd like to think, growing-up, we were cooperative competitors.
That we egged each other on for the better.
But you were the leader of us.
And if you said we are going to play ball,
we played ball. As we got older,
I learned to negotiate a bit.
When you said, "Jump
on your bike and go buy me a candy bar,"
I eventually learned to reply, "You buy, I fly."
Though now that I look back,
I see I did undervalue my labor.

.....
In the winter of 1971 we were in the same *Principles of Sociology* class.
First day, you were surprise to see me there in a way that felt like
I was encroaching on your turf. It was an elective for me,
so 'satisfactory' was good enough. For you a mission,
and no doubt you aced the class. You were laser focused
and on task. Me, not so much, and you pretty much ignored me.

P'sst . . . I think I could have used some help.

"Social interaction is the basis for the construction of societies....,"
the professor told us. Did I ask if you'd be my study buddy?
Did you ever offer? I forget.

.....
Suzie and Michael just ambled by. Suzie is deep into dementia.
Trailing several paces behind her, Michael walks with a cane.
I've learned not to say her name when I say hello to Suzie.
It only confuses her.
So I simply called out, "Hello!" and waved.
She replied with a "Hello!" and wave of her own.
When Michael stepped up, I said "Hi" to him.
As he mumbled a reply, Suzie, without missing a step,
turned back once again and blew me a kiss.
And I to her.

{#moment}

.....
Appropriations: I guess it depends on where you find the edge of your identity
Appropriateness: I guess it depends on how you define *the quality* of being suitably proper in the circumstance

.....
Like my mother's father,
my oldest brother was raised to be an officer and a gentleman,
his younger brothers, his practice charges.
He became a naval leader,
we cannon fodder.
And I,
a conscientious objector.

["The goal of the COs was not to win, but to include." Kim Stafford, *Early Morning: Remembering My Father*, William Stafford. 2002]

.....
Noun. *dépaysement*, the feeling of not being at home, in a foreign or different place, whether a good or a bad feeling; change of scenery. (obsolete) exile.

*When folding a blanket, begin
with matching the four corners together.*

As a Sociologist, is it fair to say most all are a victim of fashion?

When Moses initiated the Census tax he said, *"The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, when you give the Lord's offering to make atonement for your lives."* Jesus drove the money-changers out of the , because he said, *"My house will be a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves."*

The family of Sherry Turkle couldn't afford tickets to High Holy Days at the local synagogue, so they instead dressed up and greeted their neighbors on the temple steps, careful to imply they would be attending services somewhere else, (according to *The Empathy Diaries: A Memoir* by Sherry Turkle.)

Dear Sherry Turkel, did you read Noam Chomsky's 1967 *"The Responsibility of Intellectuals"* at the time? Thoughts?

{#belonging #fashion #empathy #SherryTurkle @dépaysement}

.....
Happiness shared is
double happiness.
Sadness shared is
sadness halved.
Anxiety shared is
super-spreader viral vector.
.....

First Thought Theory

How do you decide? What is the process you use to think about thinking?

The thought is the thought.
Yes or no is secondary.

If I say,
"Don't think about monkeys."
You think about monkeys.

For or against, attend to your first thoughts.
Don't think twice, it's all right.

*"Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing
there is a field. I'll meet you there,"* Rumi

The best I can hope for is being honest with myself in trusting my perceptions, honoring the primacy of the instinct, the imminence of raw emotion, the present clarity of sensation, the truth of my feelings.' First Thoughts are the culmination, the gestalt of all feelings ever in this moment. The whole, not the divided, categorized, analyzed, prioritized segments. Not impulsive, not compulsion. But rather the distilled consensus of all time, all experience suggesting: This!

"This!" may be right, may be wrong. Perhaps a mis-take, perhaps a good on the first take. It's an experiment. Let's try This! And then we have a clear basis of an unequivocal contemporaneous trial to base our understanding on.

Steven Pinker, say no, you better stop, reflect, dissect, analyze. The problem is, when you put 'things' in compartmentalized boxes, into categories, you limit them to a finite data sets for the analysis. Your fragmented conclusions can only be constructed in a glass bell jar separate from the whole of your reality. Without the feelings that mortar the bricks of all our experience across time and place we are left with a token model of your reductive reasoning.

First Thoughts INCLUDE all feelings. Encoded in your life experience, your DNA.
The reasons are their own. How you play with them, your choice.

You can't do a double-blind test for life.
Not your own, much less life itself.

Just feel it!
.....

I need to retreat from this life.
*Can I climb into your belly for the next 10 months,
and float in your fluid ambience?*

{my wife says she wants credit on this bit.
It's hers.}
.....

We've become a society of snitches.
There used to be a stigmatism against ratting out others.
Now for every little thing, we're all like,
"Karen, 1 to 5, rate your experience with Bob!"
.....

{211031}

Most trees have many more leaves
than flowers.
To those mega-lottery winners
who say, "*I just wanted to show my kids
that you can do anything if you keep trying.
Never give up!*" I say,
it's enough to be a leaf.
.....

Could someone please buy British Prime Minister Boris Johnson a hair brush befitting a head of state?
.....

AND our technology is encouraging us to be hyper-vigilantly paranoid as well:
You know how to identify phishing emails—a cybersecurity researcher
explains how to trust your instincts to foil the attacks | November 1, 2021 | Rick Wash, Michigan State University
<https://theconversation.com/you-know-how-to-identify-phishing-emails-a-cybersecurity-researcher-explains-how-to-trust-your-instincts-to-foil-the-attacks-169804>

"The trick is remembering that phishing exists."
{#HomeAloneAndAfraid @alienation}
.....

"Intelligence is not consciousness. *Intelligence is the ability to solve problems.
Consciousness is the ability to feel things.*
In humans and other animals, the two indeed go together.
The way mammals solve problems is by feeling things.
Our emotions and sensations are really an integral part of the way we solve problems in our lives.
However, in the case of computers, we don't see the two going together."

.....
Keep doing what you're doing,
if you like it. In time,
you'll wear a groove.

Sing one more song,
just one more.
Just sing.

.....
I have to thank who ever invented free-verse poetry.
You've helped me make sense of my nonsense immensely.

.....
Fortune is a writer. The tax collector edits.
The richman gotta pay his consonant share.

The bluesman says, "I'm so broke I couldn't buy a vowel,
and still the wheel goes round & round."

.....
It tickles me
to tickle you.

.....
In the dance between the individual and society,

I'm not for surveillance and mandates.
I'm for the free flow of the truth.
I'm for well-informed, intelligent people
making good choices, doing the right thing,

.....
Is your importance measured
by the number of keys
on your ring?
The number of names
in your Contacts list?

.....
fondle the Rosemary
bush, take a whiff.
Fond of Rosemary.
Cure for the liver?

.....
Stress-free sheep,
good shepherd.
Tender meat.

{consternation! in 'kinder, gentler' exploitation}

.....
It is peculiar, isn't it?
That dog lovers will embrace
all the shades and patterns

of their pets,
but when it comes to people
all they seem to want to do is
divide by color and hue and
quibble over kibbles
and water rights?
.....

On the official *Florida Wing Civil Air Patrol* website it says,
"Thousands of young people from 12 years through age 21 are introduced to aviation through CAP's cadet program. The program allows young people to progress at their own pace through a 16-step program including aerospace education, leadership training, physical fitness and moral leadership."

The only thing I remember is standing at attention in formation on the drill field, pouring sweat, the guy next to me asking the kid leading the drill, "Sir, can I have an itch?"
And thinking (loudly to myself), 'Sure, take mine!'"

<https://flwg.cap.gov/programs/cadet-programs>
.....

On toilet.
On phone.
On social.

Shit.
Text,
shit.

.....
You don't know what went wrong raising your kids. Where in particular they went off.
If you knew, you'd of fixed it at the time. But you didn't see it,
because the very thing that broke your kids is integral to who you are. Part and parcel.
Your kids got the best of you, the worst of you, all of you.
You put your all and everything into them, they have to pull themselves out.
.....

Pope Francis said,

"We are part of a history marked by tribulation, violence, suffering and injustice, ever awaiting a liberation that never seems to arrive."

"Those who are most wounded, oppressed and even crushed, are the poor, the weakest links in the chain."

He said by focusing on the poor the Church "asks us not to turn aside, not to be afraid to take a close look at the suffering of those most vulnerable."

Unlike pop psychology's edict,

"Insanity Is Doing the Same Thing Over and Over Again and Expecting Different Results,"
the Pope supplants Insanity with Faith.

{MAYBE 'Doing the Same Thing Over and Over Again and Expecting Different Results' is how we learn?}
.....

She says in song what
she can't say in words.
What she says in words
deflects what she feels.

{#Preachin'-n-Screechin' @Adele}
.....

Enough Shiva, call in Vishnu!

{#caring @SustainablePlanet}

.....
Wild weed gone to seed.

*{There are no weeds in the wild,
only where cultivated people live.
There are no weeds in nature,
only volunteers.}*

.....
She's lived with anxiety since kindergarten.
She appears bold in the world, but inside burns
the constant corrosive fire of fear. Scorches.
Leaving her to only wonder how happiness feels.

.....
There is no right side of history.
Only the brutal legacy of animal suffering.
The story of panicked, hungry animals.

We may experience fleeting moments of relief from suffering.
Moments of Joy, moments of prosperity enough to share, kindness,
but these all came at the expense of other sentient beings.

Life must eat life to be life.
There have been great leaders who promised a way out of suffering,
but clearly these metaphysical paths can only be accessed
by a self-selecting few, not the masses mired in the toil,
neck deep in the exploit or be exploited, eat or be eaten reality.

If we are honest with ourselves,
if there is a right and/or a wrong,
we can only look at our own personal history
and recognize our neither here nor there imperfection.

We did what we must to survive as best we can
with as little harm as possible.
And we've all done more harm than good.

{We're just here for the story.}

.....
Beautiful sky this morning.
Bodes well for the day.
Somehow beauty in big places
brings comfort to the little
aches and pains.

.....
If you are a gazelle
and there is a lion chasing you
in hot pursuit, now is not the time
to ponder the meaning of life.

Such is the proletariat.

This crazyass driver barrels through the red light
swinging wide into a wild left turn,
careening right at me, now
is not the time to ponder
who's right, who's wrong.

Quick! Get out of the way.

{QuitYourJob@TheGreatResignation2021}

.....

{EXPLAINER: enjambment} *Line Break Poetry*: 'to straddle or encroach'

A line break is a poetic device that is used at the end of a line, and the beginning of the next line in a poem. It can be employed without traditional punctuation. Also, it can be described as a point wherein a line is divided into two halves. Sometimes, a line break that occurs at mid-clause creates enjambment. In poetry, enjambment is incomplete syntax at the end of a line; ***the meaning 'runs over' or 'steps over' from one poetic line to the next, without punctuation.*** Lines without enjambment are end-stopped. The origin of the word is credited to the French word enjamber, which means 'to straddle or encroach'.

.....

Driving east on interstate 8
at the intersection of interstate 5,
I can see snow in the mountains,
and simultaneously smell the briny breeze
of the Pacific Ocean at my back,
which makes me glad I'm not a pollywog,
because a pollywog wouldn't get any of that.

The phlebotomist at the blood bank tells me we produce 27 million new red blood cells a second, every second. One point six two billion, billion with a "B," every minute. I'm astounded. What happens to all the old red blood cells in the blood bloodstream, I ask. She goes off, "Old or damaged red blood cells are removed from the circulation by macrophages, a large phagocytic cell found in stationary form in the tissues of the spleen and liver or as a mobile white blood cell, and the hemoglobin they contain is broken down into heme and globin. The globin protein may be recycled, or broken down further to its constituent amino acids, which may be recycled or metabolized."

"Whoosh, scary busy world there," I moan.
I'm sure glad I don't live in my blood stream.

.....

If I had a Little Free Library
out front just off the sidewalk,
it'd declare itself in big handsome letters:

*"Random Stack Book Nook
and small picture gallery!"*

.....

Like most Americans over 70, I have too much stuff. So much stuff I don't even know what all I have.

I try to unload as I can. In that spirit, I took a couple of books, including an unabridged copy of Mark Twain's Huck Finn, to a neighbor's Little Free Library. Unfortunately, I came back with a chair. It didn't have a seat, but I just couldn't let an old well-built bentwood chair be sent to the landfill. The craftsmanship alone deserved better than that. So in the spirit of the day, I made a rule, "No new stuff," and with the child of Dr. Seuss, Mary Poppins and Martha Stewart in mind, I cobbled together a new use for the old chair. Sprayed with left-over glossy red apple paint, and with a circular hole cut in a piece of scrap plywood, I inserted an old terra cotta pot, and voila! Accented with a once bought, never used umbrella, supported by a thin 'only God knows where that came from' steel bar. My wife filled the pot with soil and a few succulent clippings from the garden, and there you have it: chair as pot holder with whimsy.

Initially I planned to finish the project to Mary Berry perfection, but as fitting the occasion, it turned out the rules called for shabby. Not shabby chic in that other Brit, Rachel Ashwell's 'sloppy, wrinkled' style, but simply shabby, or perhaps shabby comic. Funny two ways: Funny peculiar, and funny haha. More funny, less stuff.

.....

Once we met, my wife pulled me back
from the edge of being a nobody.
I never imagined I'd become somebody.
And in the eyes of the larger society,
I haven't. But in her eyes I'm everything.
And that's the world to me.

{ Dean Martin,
"You're nobody 'til somebody loves you
You're nobody 'til somebody cares [...]
So find yourself somebody to love." }

.....

In principle we are both pulling for the good
as we see it, both for ourselves and others.
We differ only on policy, the means to the ends.

Reasonable people can respectfully disagree
on how to get there, when the aim is the same.

In that 'how' is the conversation, the listening,
the learning, the co-operating that gets us
where we want, where we need to go.

How to decide? Do the next thing,
like being guided by Google Maps.

.....

More than I ever wanted to know:
with Trump about civics.
with COVID-19, epidemiology.

And then there's the unintended consequence
of how civics combines with epidemiology.

{the rights and obligations of citizens in society to study and analyze the distribution,
patterns and determinants of health and disease conditions in defined populations.}

.....

In mammals, a dominant individual is sometimes called an alpha, and the lower rank is sometimes termed a beta. Alpha Alpha, Alpha Beta, Alpha Beta Kappa . . . tastes like alotta grappa. An always mad dominance hierarchy, a pecking order, is a type of social hierarchy that arises when members of animal social groups interact, creating a ranking system. In social living groups, members are likely to compete for access to limited resources and mating opportunities. Rather than fighting each time they meet, relative rank is established between members of the same sex. Based on repetitive interactions, a social order is created that is subject to change each time a dominant animal is challenged by a subordinate one. Commanding influence, exercise control over. Rolling through stops signs like a Mercedes-Benz Unimog U 5000. It's a rage/outrage thing. Let's go Brandon! Hate for hate sake. Mean as a junk yard dog. Fighting mad intimidation rules. Amped all the time. Starting on revved, looking for a fight. The right to bred. The cultural aspects of imperialism. "Imperialism" here refers to the creation and maintenance of unequal relationships between peoples/civilizations, favoring the powerful, a more powerful civilization. Cultural imperialism may take various forms, such as an attitude, a formal policy, or military action - insofar as each of these re-enforces cultural hegemony. With the advent of feminism many demure sectors lost the cunning role of sly submission to brute force and overall the

dominating pecking order became more assertive, aggressive, mean, coming-of-age-yang. Women joined the military, pumped more iron, took to cage fighting, for the thrill of punching, being punched in the face [SEE: Halle Berry, a fighter, on "Bruised" > https://youtu.be/C_Oqx0UiS2k?t=106] It's a poverty thing. More young pregnant women pushing baby carriages with a smart phone in one hand, a latte in the holder, a tight grip on the dog lease. In control. But out of it. More dogs. "My dog doesn't bite. He's a good boy!" Yeah, right. Maybe your dog doesn't bite you. That's no good to me. Sexual assault, men assaulting women, wife-beating, men battering men, playground romps, barroom brawls, putting them in their place -- the pecking order. Boys will be boys. It's an animal thing. Useful for the conquering cultures. "That's what you get." Is it possible that there are other ways to organize than institutional hierarchical power? Measure personal relations? Prove yourself. *Are there other ways than the pecking order?*

There must be more useful ways to live, to co-exist on this planet.

.....
Take a moment,
and trace the thin line
from familiar pecking order
to cultural imperialism
for me, will you?
.....

A squirrel in one uninterrupted dash—between fast moving cars, under fast moving cars, over six lanes of traffic crosses El Cajon Boulevard. *Chutzpah.*
.....

He was authentically grateful, which is what won me over. I was taking pictures of the plants at The Hub shopping center, waiting for a job, when I sensed someone encroaching uncomfortably close to my personal safe-distance viral pandemic space. Beneath my mask I must of had my mean perturbed 'back off' face when I turn to face the invader. But he wouldn't have seen that, he is blind, and as I would learn, in search of an eye doctor office he'd never been to before. Uncertain where it was, or which way to go, he'd wandered off into the weeds next to me, his white cane sweeping back and forth in front of him. So, that's how it came to be I got the opportunity to help a blind man find the eye doctor office. Directing him this way and that, up a couple of stairs, down a ramp, he was amazingly good at following the sound of my voice. And so sweet, heart-warmingly appreciative of the assistance. I didn't know where the place is either. Not too far away I saw a security guard standing there engrossed in his phone, "Excuse me sir, sir," I call out, "Sir?" He looks up wearing a mean perturbed 'whadya want' face, which changes night'n'day to wide-eyed innocence and wonder, when he sees the white cane sweeping back and forth in front of my new found friend. Which makes me smile to myself, 'see, you're not the only one.' The guard does know where the eye doctor office is. There's two flights of stairs there, or on the other side of the building there's an elevator. "I can walk stairs," says the blind man. I knock on the glass door when we get to the eye doctor's office. No one responds to my knocking. I peer through the window and see the lights are on, but don't see anyone. The sign on the door reads, "You must wear a mask. If you have an appointment, call this number to gain access." "I don't have an appointment," still, the kind blind man taps the 'make a call' button on his phone for me to read the eye doctor's office phone number out loud for him.

My phone buzzes, I have a job to get to.
"You good for now?"
"Yes, thank you so much."
"All the best to you, my friend."

Authentically grateful. *How often do you get to put your life in perspective by helping a blind man?*
.....

My butt shouldn't be sagging,
much less my eye lids.
I'm too young,
too vital for this shit.
Sure, I won't even make NPR's two line
"Final goodbye: Recalling influential people who died"

orbit, but at least I should go out looking as good as I feel,
right?

If only...

.....
Luck favors those who make their own.
.....

Function first, then aesthetics.

Function maintains purpose in the work,
makes the thing DO what it must do.
Aesthetics addresses the human reaction
to the formal qualities of its sensory experience.
Hence, if you want the DO to do what it does,
pretty or not,
please reality first,
then the human's perception.

{#GitHub, have you been watching #HGTV?}

.....
History is written by the elite.
It's missing most of the facts.
.....

On the Nature of Rebalancing

YOU: {

"I keep thinking that those tornadoes in the midwest were part of the rebalancing."

"I hope this pandemic can be a kind of turning point for us all in some way, that we may begin to find a deeper reciprocity with nature, and a reverence for these miraculous and beautiful human lives."

"...how we might better position ourselves into balance with the natural world, rather than continue our path of manipulation and destruction."

}

ME: {

This "rebalancing" view of nature and man's relationship to it, appears to put humans somehow outside of nature.

}

If evolutionary theory is to be believed, it took over 100 million years of being bombarded by icy comets and asteroids and a lot of cooling, before our dinged-up third rock from the sun planet could hold a water-based atmosphere that would sustain the kind of life form organisms we would grow into. Even then, the first self-replicating forms on earth would be waterless carbon compounds, graphite. Though you may be enthralled with the climate and all the life that springs from the clouds, it's not unfair to say your primary person zero ancestor is akin to a #2 pencil. And I don't think anyone of us wants to go back to that.

This "rebalancing" view of nature and man's relationship to it, appears to put humans somehow outside of nature, and makes the Anthropocene somehow an event that isn't part & parcel of the planets evolution. It seems to suggest that rather than a dynamic ever evolving mega-system of interplay, there was at some point a particular preferred balanced status quo for the life forms here, an ideal garden that we should be striving to get back to. Such a view would be tenable if we accepted a Cartesian view that life and nature is at base a reductive coded machine that we can take apart like an automobile motor, rebuild and put back together again, better than ever. Not so much from a holistic view that sees if you try to take apart, rebuild and put a cat back together again, you will have lost what animates that lifeless corpse, and no longer have a cat.

In its deductive, reductionism, Cartesians fail to take responsibility for the whole being greater than the sum of its part. It fails to take responsibility for the 30 some odd trillion organism within our bodies that can be described as human, much less for the 39 or so trillion organism within our bodies that can NOT be described as human. And that each and every one of those is an intelligent individual 'life bit' with its own drive to survive, its own inherent means to do so, and its own peculiar means to express itself. That these 'cells' learn to cooperate in the competition for resources, learn to form colonies, tissues, organs of function within larger systems -- to form blood cells, livers to cleanse, blood streams, hearts to pump blood, lungs to oxygenate, a brain to coordinate sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous networks through which every human life bit can communicate its needs, as well as its current status relationship to the non-human life bits, from which the body whole can then decide its next action -- eat, shit, run, fight, love. And this expression of needs can go out in a cry, a word, a gesture to other like forms. All within coded languages that can construct inner/outer families, societies, nations, empires, and be inherited by the next generation through DNA and compounding thoughts. The neurons in your head have marvelous perceptive tools for sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, which can see and hear off into the far distance, objectify and construct symbols for what it sees, less well but like a dog, pick up the scent in the air and know something present, otherwise invisible, is near in the world, or like an ant, communicate to another direct experience without symbols by passing specific molecular compounds, such as sugar, turnips or cooked rice from tongue to tongue. It can be a grand harmonic orchestration, it can be a bloody hell civil war within and/or without. Here is where I caution: don't let a belief system hijack your lived experience. And what is within and what is without anyway? If the neurons in your gut feeling are deciphering what's called for, what's needed here next, to fuel this sovereign body wonderful, if the population in its sphere is vastly more non-human than human, what is within and what is without anyway, what is me and what is thee?

That's where I depart with Descartes. I want to assume sovereign responsibility for this holistic ship, I/we call Dan. This one man that is me ever learning to better care for this sovereign body wonderful. And take my place within a society, a body politic that chooses better and better, rather than worse and worse, and to calm the faster and faster urge to create, to destroy, to maintain, to make, to rend asunder, to sustain ourselves at every kaleidoscopic unfolding of elemental electrons, nuclear radiating, electrified anatomy, earth, sky, water faring jazz dancing, pencil pushing, car driving, plane flying citizen. And yes, I, as we, are mostly animal, hungry and afraid, grabbing inequitably, unjustly, greedily for me and mine. But I/we are more, we have potential! Potential to do it differently. To individually/collectively think it through, feel it through, be the evolutionary change agent. If we take responsibility, we can decide to align our inner/outer nature to #SustainablePlanet. And that is where we have to begin, if we are to begin our true stewardship.

We can invite the ecstatic natural harmony we feel within our personal body temple space to begin the international give and take conversation for a true form of Democratic governance that includes all sentient beings. A governance that eschews power for power sake, evades control for fear of lack of control, a governance that respects appropriate scale, sees and is humbled by our caring place within the global nature of our individual nature, the galactic nature, our glucose-powered nature. We are that nature. Wherever on balance we are, we are that nature that is becoming anew. There is no guarantee of what we become. It depends on how we choice, or if we fail to choose, if we fail to frame the answers to the correct questions. This planet will go on in perfect balance of what it is in every instance with or without us. But we are not passive observers. The 'with us,' 'with us,' 'with us' part is up to us.

If nature is ever rebalancing, it's our job first to take care of our unique autonomous sovereign "cell" selves first, yes. AND THEN expand, expand, expand to include the nature of the inner/outer 'others' in our ever expanding spheres of symbiotic influence forming togetherness. For it is life itself we are interested in saving. True, there is life in every 'thing,' but you, my friend, are captain of this ship within the tumultuous seas we are sailing in, and I am looking to you to help navigate this flotilla back to safe harbors.

.....

Let's be honest.

We don't know squat about the afterlife.
All the knowing we know of is in this one.

.....

I know for continuity of reasoning
my philosophy is messy,
but as poetry, what a song!
But you!, you can both sing and dance.
So beautifully, such a joy!
to the ears, the mind, my heart.

.....
"Not only have you made history, you've changed history for the good."

MAKING history is when in 1961 Roger Maris hit 61 homeruns in a season breaking the record set in 1927 by Babe Ruth.
CHANGING history is when Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in Major League Baseball when he started at first base for the Brooklyn Dodgers on April 15, 1947.
.....

Do you chirp like a bird, or
bark like a dog, when
you rise in the morning?
.....

In all my efforts, I've
only captured a tiny, oh
so tiny bit of the stream.
Yet this trickle reflects fully
the atmosphere it came from
and the ocean it is going to.
.....

"COVID has revealed us to ourselves, and we are sad, lonely, little people." ~Cody Brown {Sisterwives}
.....

Dear Niels Bohr,

There is something significant I want to say to you, but
as paradoxically, you've already said it, I will say this,
"What Niels Bohr said."
.....

You trust in the science, the facts,
the experts, in the God of your religion,
She trusts in the feelings emanating
from the marrow of her bones.
You may not agree, but
*"the opposite of a fact is falsehood, but
the opposite of one profound truth
may very well be another profound truth,"*
as Niels Bohr tells us.
.....

There can be only one Absolute Truth,
and no one left to contest it.
.....

Confidence is a product of experience. The more experience I have the more confident I am of the outcome and how to reach it, even in a variety of conditions. The less experience I have, the more cautious, self-conscious, unsure, but hopefully wide-eyed open and receptive of learning the ropes. There is a difference in being certain and being confident. I can be certain of an address, but misremember it. But having gone there many times, I'm confident that I can get there again.
.....

I was some 35 years into a sitting practice when I spent 10 days with Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, aka Ajahn Geoff, abbot of the Metta Forest Monastery in Valley Center, California to learn his Thai Forest Tradition style of Vipassana. A couple years before I had done a long retreat learning the "Burmese Method" of S. N. Goenka's school in the foothills of the Sierra

Nevada. I wanted to compare and contrast. In my last audience with Ajahn Geoff he complimented me, "You sit well." Then came the caveat, "*But as far as practice on the path, you haven't even started.*" "To start you must take the vows of a monk. That is the only entrance to the path." I read that as settle down and commit to a lineage, but didn't say a word. Still he must have seen it in my sparkling eyes. Not wanting my current self to encumber my future self, I had long ago vowed NOT to take any vows. Ajahn Geoff's parting words, "Make wise choices."

A few more years further down my 'not path' it became apparent that I had gone as deep as I could go on my own. It was time to let go of practice and be it, to simply live what I had learned. I traded in my depth work to live superficially care-free, as it were on the surface, just another human amazed with the mystery. If there is one talisman I walked away with, it is the preeminence of awareness.

And the light, everlasting utility of the breath as a focal point of awareness.

Science and Religion inclusive, I believe that learning is empirically, irrefutably self-evident, the everlasting utility of the breath as a focal point of awareness. And, oh so, pragmatically useful. That is, you can't take a past breath, you can't take a future breath, you can only take a present breath. And if your focus is present with your present breath, you are in This! place, this humanly scale appropriate place, that is always here and always now. And That! place is where we can begin to sink into the preeminence of awareness. You can go off and describe it, analysis it, is it an in breath or an out breath, is it a long breath or a short breath, is it a cool breath or a warm breath, but all of that is secondary. But of course, you already know all this and will soon dive deeper in your interactive online exploration designed to bring this "animating force that moves the body from within" back to the center of your awareness. Yet gratefully having this particular utility in my pocket, again and again I'm reminded, the wisest choice I can make is to come back to the awareness of the sensation of the breath curling around my nostrils, for its own sake and reside there. And that there is where I find the one that is the One, the I am me and we are we and we are all together one that is the simple neutral awareness, equanimous awareness best suited for greeting the dawn, for that inner 'hello' greeting of every stranger passing by, the ones I am likely never to see again, who hold the bits and pieces of the wonder, the splendiferous beauty, the unfathomably real we are here for. Because when it comes right down to it, what we are here for is experience, *This!* experience.

.....

To sit or not to sit

A traveller I picked up in my hippy van driving up the Pacific Highway towards Big Sur invited me to take him to the Zen Mountain Center in the Ventana Wilderness area of the Los Padres National Forest, southeast of Carmel-by-the-Sea, California. Roshi Shunryu Suzuki, whose book Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind had left an lasting impression on me, was the Center's abbot. There I'd take my first instruction in sitting in the Sōtō Zen Buddhist style, or for that matter, any formal sitting meditation. Moments before the afternoon zazen sitting session my new found friend told me, in hushed tones, that singers Joan Baez and her sister Mimi Farina were skinny-dipping just down the path in the Tassajara Hot Springs. It suddenly became one of those moments. It was the early 1970s, and with the voice of an angel Joan was at the peak of her popularity, as well an iconic inspiration for values dear to me, social justice, civil rights and pacifism. I had a choice to make. I had to choose in this moment to sit and do nothing, or go skinny-dipping with two of the most seraphic sirens on the planet. Fortunately for me, I was shy by nature. The choice was made before it arose. And thus began a 35+ year sitting practice.

<https://www.sfzc.org/practice-centers/tassajara> | <https://mahavana.dhamma.org/> | <https://www.watmetta.org/>

.....

Death is a fact of life.
Irrefutable. Perhaps,
the defining fact of life.

.....

My dearest wife,

Please don't be mad & upset
every time I do stupid, mindless things,
like putting out too many shirts
for tomorrow all at once.

Because, if you do, as
I'm losing my mind, you'll be
mad & upset all the time.
And you don't want to live like that.
Right?
Just remember,
though I'm losing my mind,
I still can feel your love.

Your devoted, adoring husband, Dan
.....

We live in an age, the Big Data age,
where there's a wild, wild west competition
for grabbing (and selling) audience.
Influencers can easily grab audience
with big dicks, tits and ass, with cuteness
and turn a nifty profit.

Above that din it becomes more difficult
to find an audience for the deeper, quieter,
more enduring qualities worth living for.

You know the popular list:

1. A sense of curiosity and wonder
2. Acceptance
3. Authenticity
4. Bravery
5. Compassion
6. Dependability
7. Drive
8. Forgiveness
9. Generosity
10. Gratitude
11. Honesty
12. Humility
13. Integrity
14. Kindness
15. Loyalty
16. Optimism
17. Passion
18. Patience
19. Perseverance
20. Reliability
21. Resourcefulness
22. Responsibility
23. Self-belief
24. Self-discipline
25. Willpower

Is the driver the difference between embracing Hedonism over Holism?
Or is it simply slipping down the easy path, going to extremes, so you can eventually
know where the balanced middle is?

{Character Traits to Cultivate list by: <https://www.goalcast.com/positive-character-traits-for-happiness-and-success/>}

.....

I can't imagine having lived
a more rich, full life.
I had loneliness, depression, rage,
alienation, and all their opposites.
Too many to list.
I had it all. Still do.
I am it. This life I've lived.

.....
Biology does not sit too comfortably within sociology.
.....

Why are all these chefs so fat?

{#CookingForTasteNotNutrition}
.....

With the outbreak of the pandemic I, like so many, got clued to the headline news. So I made a 'Chaotic Collage' project out of it, which seemed fitting, as I haven't experienced a more chaotic times out there in the world. That project will end at the end of this year, and a new, and hopefully more hopeful one will emerge with the working title: PROJECT Way Out: On the way out, a way forward {#SustainablePlanet}

To help visualize my inner states while shut away from the pandemic, I made a series of "Portraits of People to Spend a Pandemic With," mostly pencil drawings and painting on the corrugated cardboard that was piling up from all the suddenly new home deliveries. That was precious time well spent for me.

You can see the 'Chaotic Collage' project and the "Portraits of People to Spend a Pandemic With" series on the webpage:

Words & Pictures 1991-2021: an Analog to Digital retrospective
<https://www.appleeyedesigns.com/retro30/>

Now that the governor is no longer paying me to stay home, I'm out 30 hours a week delivering for Ubereats. The work pays the bills and satisfies my innate wanderlust. I get to go places, see people and things I otherwise wouldn't It also keeps my brain active solving problems which I can quickly forget about and move on. You know, use it or loss it. So that exercise is good for me, and then I get to come home and spend the afternoon, evening and weekends with the love of my life. Do simple chores. Leaving me more than grateful for the good life we live, and enjoying the heck out of what's left of it.

.....
Hug up close to the present moment,
that's where the actual living happens.

Feel the sensation of your breath
curling around your nostrils,
at the tip of your nose. Ah,
here you are ...
aware.

.....
The Promenade

I was wearing a cheap plastic grotesque old man face mask,
a black beret and a paint splattered smock,
holding a 4" brush and a paper palette.
The MC leaned in and asked,
"What are you?"
"A French artist," I shyly whispered.

It was the costume contest at the Promenade de Paris,
a Junior League fundraiser for the Beaux Arts
of the Fort Lauderdale Art Center, for which my mom
had been the mastermind and first Chairwoman
the year before.

I had just turned 10 and was the only kid
in the competition. I won Honorable Mention.

Looking back, it was the first inkling I had
that I was destined to be an artist.

The Promenade continues to be a significant
Winterfest event in Fort Lauderdale,
still benefiting the Museum of Art.

.....

Look within. Be honest with yourself.
It'll keep you humble.

.....

Sugar/Headache Theory

My best guess is that my brothers', cousins', nephews' cluster headaches, as well as my own in 5th, 6th & 7th grades, and my mother's ice pick headaches are not so much hereditary as cultural. I lay the prime cause at the feet of refined sugar. I am from an affluent family of sugar addicts. Refined sugar was cheap and ubiquitous, we bought it in 5lbs bags. loads of processed breakfast cereals to which we added refined sugar and cases of soda pop. Consuming it on demand, we began to blow out our neural sugar pathways well before we were out of the crib. For the origins of our culture's addiction to refined sugar, look to the slave driven rum trade in the 17th century Caribbean sugarcane plantations.

Refined sugar is vastly more potent than natural sugars in foods. If you chew on sugar cane to get the juice, you also get other compounds that naturally limit how much you'll consume. These so called "impurities" are what are refined out of natural sugar, including molasses, which plantation slaves discovered could be fermented into alcohol, making rum.

An increasingly important distinction among sugars as they pertain to health is whether they occur naturally in foods such as fruit, vegetables, and dairy, or whether they are added sugars, added to foods and beverages during manufacturing, processing, or preparation. Though glucose is food for the brain, our bodies do not need, or benefit from, eating added sugar. The effects of too much sugar are well documented. webmd.com says, "Chances are you already know that eating too much sugar isn't good for you. Yet you're probably still overdoing it."

In short, it's best to limit all sources of added sugar to within the recommended intake level. High refined sugar intake leads to the "sugar high"/ "sugar crash" syndrome. Habitual high refined sugar intake blows out your neural sugar pathways leading to chronic physical, mental and emotional disease. "Glucose level fluctuations affect your brain more than any other organ. Sugar causes hormonal changes, specifically with epinephrine and norepinephrine. Those shifts change blood vessel behavior in the brain, causing headaches."

Sure there are many other mitigating factors, but the high, particularly fast burning refined sugars leave us increasingly less resilient and more prone to an array of debilitating health issues, including severe and chronic headaches.

{NOTES: How common is a headache? > <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9639-headaches> | <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/headache-disorders> | Why do I get a headache after I eat sugar? > <https://www.medicalofficesofmanhattan.com/news/this-is-how-a-sugar-related-headache-happens/> | <https://www.healthline.com/health/headache/sugar-headache> | For the origins of our cultures addiciton to refined sugar > <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rum#Origins> | Natural vs Added sugars > <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/are-certain-types-of-sugars-healthier-than-others-2019052916699> | Is glucose food for the brain? > <https://hms.harvard.edu/news-events/publications-archive/brain/sugar-brain> | From sucrose to glucose> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sucrose> | Too much sugar, *Your Mood*> <https://www.webmd.com/diabetes/features/how-sugar-affects-your-body> | Neural pathways that control the glucose counter-regulatory response > <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3935387/>}

.....

I knew I was a late bloomer, ...oh, but this is ridiculous.

{211231}

Lightning Round for my cousins:

- Financial Times or New York Times?
- Individual or Society?
- Harvard 2002: Larry Summers or Cornel West?
- If you had to drink the kool-aid made with waters that historically played an important role for traders:
Dnieper [pronounced: nee•pr] or Don River?
- US Senate confirmation hearings or Kabuki theater?
- PANTONE® 17-5104 TCX (Ultimate Gray): black or white?
[acceptable answer: half-full *and* half empty]
- WTF happened to the GOP?

{220725}

I Recognize Reckoning, I so melancholy ache

("my dear Matna," as my grandfather called her)

An "I see you, I remember!" mash-up: the providence of fairness and respect

Again, that aching missing of those I will never see again
in this life time, and the wistful missing of those I hope
I will see again before long. With intimates it's all the more,
those someones who care, care deeply I am alone together with.

*"A Syrian child studies outside her family's tent at a refugee camp
in the town of Bar Elias, in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon, July 7, 2022.
The Lebanese government's plan to start deporting Syrian refugees
has sent waves of fear through vulnerable refugee communities already
struggling to survive in their host country. Many refugees say being forced
to return to the war shattered country would be a death sentence."
(AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)*

The house I've cared for, lived in for nearly 28 years was built in 1933
and needs serious plumbing and electrical updates, it's a real project
to get up to modern snuff. My landlady bought it Nov 2, 1978 for \$32,000
and pays a very low grandfathered property tax rate. Zillow says
the property tax now is \$50k/year. Back in the '90s, when the house
was valued at around \$220K my wife and I asked both her uncle and
my mom to help us with the down payment. Both declined, astonished
at the California numbers -- too rich for their blood. But the return in
the long run, I pleaded! We've put in more than 25 times the money
our landlady has into this property, yet she gets the equity and we get
the looming month to month threat of an eviction notice. In what definition
of a democratic system is the value you put into your home somebody
else's business? Apparently ours.

My landlady claims first rights, she was here first, which gives her the right to rule,
dictate when, if my toilet gets fixed. She complains of the humid excessive heat
in making the repair, though it's a relatively mild day — though she refused to repair
the air conditioning when it broke, years ago saying, "There are only a few hot days
a year, it's not worth it." My landlady claims first rights. By that extended logic
the Kumeyaay tribe should rule this land. But in mass, 'my people' took this land,
from sea to shining sea, and rained genocide down on the first nation natives,
and rewrote, and rewrote again, the rules as it served the new land 'owners'.
Is that the tactic I need to emulate to get my toilet fixed, my air conditioning back?

"As young Afghan girls are robbed of hope, denied an education, denied schooling and career prospects, they struggle with depression, medical staff warn of a rise in mental health problems," reads the headlines.

How did this become my problem? How does it not?

AGAIN, again ...you know, it's funny, funny odd, funny peculiar, ...for all of my adult life I've economically lived month to month, if not day to day, and I hardly ever worried about money. I could eventually always figure out how to make what I needed. But now that, at 70 years old plus, I'm a Trust Fund Baby and inherited a bit of my great-grandfather's wealth, a bit of a nest egg, albeit a relatively modest nest egg, I'm a neurotic mother hen with errant chicks. I already have a coop of habitual things to be anxious about, I don't need to be watching the market bobbing up & down. Or do I need to shift my priorities and give up on peace in the Middle East, and that whole other basket of goods I have no providence over?

In my eulogy that my older brother will read for me at the ceremony by Buzzards Bay this Saturday I say, "In remembering, celebrating my mother's life, I'd be remiss if I didn't heartfully acknowledge my second mother – Carlean Montgomery. In Mom's eulogy to Carlean she says, "Carlean was the most loving woman I have ever known." Carlean called me her "white son." When she sang the Gospel, which she often unrestrainedly did, when Carlean sang the Gospel, she stopped my world. I'm devotedly grateful to have had her to mother me. Carlean raised me and cared for me in a way that fortified my spirit in preparation of facing a tumultuously confusing and brutal world."

In recognizing this singular woman's place in forming my life, I call on "my dear Matna."
I Recognize Reckoning, . . . and I generationally so melancholy ache.

{**Recognize Reckoning** > RECOGNIZE: Opposite: forget Opposite: overlook, RECKONING: Opposite: ignore, disrespect}

.....

{220101}

Raw and rough-hewn,
I'll say 'good-bye' there.
And 'hello' here.

.....

An artist is one who defines success for themselves.

.....

The sun sinks
in the west,
in the red sky,
into the long night,
sailor's delight.
The moon rises
in the east
full, lighting the sky
bright, all night,
Sail on, sailor.

*Fare thee well, my little girl.
I'll see you in the morning.*

{to/for EGHLC, 03 Jan., 2022}

.....

My wife puts words in my mouth
where olives should be.

.....

If you are here tonight
to get me to sign your book,
...and I want to say this to you
as delicately, as PC PG-13 as I can,
"Fuck You!"

My heart rendering thoughts are
not an investment
for you to cash in on
somewhere down the road.

But if you've seen or read
my work and there is a certain point
you'd like to discuss with me,
I'd be more than happy,
I'd be thrilled to engage.
Even if you haven't
seen or read my work,
but rather have something
of your own, something precious
to you that you'd like to convey,
I'm right here with you.

.....

Mud in the sand.
<just add water>

.....

It felt like you were getting prickly there,
making demands of me to be other
than what I was, what I might be, but
wasn't offering. Felt like you were leading me
out of myself, an invitation to explore what
I wasn't, wasn't being, wasn't doing,
to go places I had mind to go.
So I didn't go. I didn't go there. I'm still here.
And you're no longer on my mind, except
for this one little irksome prick that wonders
where we'd be together, if you'd have let me be
as I am.

.....

We all know
what we know and
don't know what
we don't know.
Be bold, have confidence in
what you do know, and
to what you don't know
stay open.

.....

To become a member of society,
you had to be broken,
your spirit broken and reshaped
to the simple shape your family
needed you to be.

First, and foremost, remember:
you are broken. Some say,
"You become stronger at the mended parts,"
but perhaps more brittle too.

So, second, and always: be gentle
with your broken self and
move it softly to where you are
whole again.

.....

If it weren't for the news media, for social media,
books, or movies, I'd think, just like every other animal,
things on the whole are going pretty dang good in the world.

.....

A people that encourage heroes are a desperate people.

.....

{worth repeating ...Aug 20, 2018, 8:43 AM}

As we approach the Nov. 6, 2018 mid-term elections, unfortunately, this bares repeating:

Most of us can say, "I can be one nice guy, I can also be one mean son of a bitch!" We all have the full spectrum within us, from nice to nasty from badass to compassionate. It's not gender specific. When we feel our back against the wall, it's whatever is called for that is drawn out.

We've always known that there was racism and misogyny in America, but through some illusion or another didn't clearly see, had no idea it was this virulent and widespread. Trump brought it out in sufficient numbers that it's in our face, we can't turn away and not see it. It's everywhere we turn. We're disillusioned. The veil is off.

Much of the post-election sadness and despondency stems from the disillusioning of what America actually is at this time – nasty, ugly, selfish, self-righteous, hateful people. We're a binary society, we can also be the opposite – kind, beautiful, generous, compassionate, loving. We're a binary society – our justice system is adversarial, are games are win/lose, we're divided urban/rural, college educated or not, pro-life/pro-choice, haves/have-nots. We're not entertained by shades of grey.

And then there is that disillusioned, awakening civil society that lives within the shades of grey – within the nice guy/mean son of a bitch spectrum. That disillusioned, awakened civil society that strikes a balance of power, equality, and fair distribution of goods, services and respect for all. That disillusioned, awakened civil society we have yet to realize, yet so ardently hope and pray for.

.....

*"It is what it is."
"Boys will be boys."*

Seems to imply a hopeless resignation to the status quo,
giving up on evolution?

.....

I can't be objective when writing about my wife.
I wouldn't want to objectify her.
But in a word: love.

.....

Once, when my sister was getting married,
I told her and her soon to be husband,
"You'll argue. It's inevitable. Happens.

The important thing – get in the last two words.
And those two words are,
Yes, dear!"

.....

Be a species.
Be 7 generations of a species reincarnate.
Be of the world.
Be one with the world for an epoch or two.

"Think globally, act locally", as Bucky Fuller says.

Be the local go-to guy.
The guy who knows downtown like the back of their hand, as well,
knows the deep back-country, the watershed, the watercourse ways,
the guy who goes 'Botanizing,' as John Muir talks about, just for the hell of it.
(Not to label and catalog other species for exploitation),
go to see and be with, to admire, to adore the dickens out of life
living, yearning to live on, muster on no matter what comes this way.

Be the guy who doesn't sell fishhooks anymore, as Rumi says:

*Tending two Shops
Don't run around this world
looking for a hole to hide in.
[...]
Keep open the shop
where you're not selling fishhooks anymore.
You are the free-swimming fish.*

In short, be a citizen, good
with pathos-centric caring,
native of the commonwealth.
In this body, in *this* place!

.....

When the bulls fight,
the ants get trampled.

.....

I am a confluence of influences,
one choosing the other,
choosing another.
Becoming that!

.....

When The Inner Me Was My Enemy

<of poetry fashioned from borrowed book promotions contra to the theme: "***the inner me is not the enemy***">

Reached the pinnacles of success in life
only to hit rock-bottom. Lost everything –
career, family, reputation. In those moments
of darkness, nothing and no one
left by their side, they saw
the light of the Lord. They realized
God had taken away those things
that they had loved more
than they loved Him.

When that happened, they realized
God comes first.
They picked up the pieces
and rebuilt their life,
by God's infinite mercy.

They recount the events of their life
from early childhood to adulthood.
Tales of violence, alcohol dependence,
loss and self-destruction. In time
they realized that the battle
between self and temptations
could have only one winner.

If the Lord chooses to save you,
you will emerge out of the depths
of darkness to light – no matter
how impossible it may seem.

Ultimately, the trajectory of their life proves
there is something profound within
every human being. There is something
in each of us that calls us to our Lord.

You can say this is the story of every man
who journeys from a life of reckless hedonism
to a life of truth. This is the odyssey
of an ordinary man made special
by the grace of God.

{Homage NOT: Dr. Art Robinson}

.....

The Gated Community

(fear is frozen, and the bearer of death)

*Nature only happens in place. Wild or not.
Nature is everywhere and is every thing, yet
without the space in place . . . no nature. No life.*

Nature constrained is cultivated, domesticated,
fractured by fence posts and private property.

City Nature is busy, frenetic, a party orgy of selfish,
exclusive of all but me & mine and my desires.
A city is never finished, always wants more.

Nature as City, subservient to a ruthless slave dependent
hierarchy of a master class imagined uppity, all fashion
trendy – all botoxed lips and plastic tits.
Square box prison steel bars and broken glass.

The Open Source

(soil is alive, and the bearer of life)

Nature as wilderness is true, a form
of democratic governance that includes
all sentient beings.

Nature wild is inclusive, invitingly honest and open.
Brutal/Gentle, gracious. Satisfied. Satisfied to be
under the old Oak tree. Satisfied to hunt & gather.
Circle round acorns nestling in old rich earth.

Wilderness is juicy grizzly bear scat, tornado driven wildfires,
meandering rivers, sharp rocks, mild forgiving grassy meadows,
red worms in loose loamy soil, June beetles flying crazy, rabbits
escaping foxes, hawks swooping raccoons, screech Owls
bringing tiny Texas blind snakes home with them to clean-up
the nest – burrowing into the debris at the bottom to snack
on critters like ants, termites or larvae. Symbiotic parenting?
Until the tiny snakes are eaten by the owlets (and they don't survive
well once the nest is vacated). Perhaps, a commensal relationship,
where one species reaps a benefit and the other does its best
to deal with the situation. (*Like the domesticated human Proletariat.*)

.....

Why is it that those who have more money
than they ought to, don't want to talk about it,
and those who don't, do want to talk about it?

{#EthicalLimitarian @IngridRobeyns}

.....

It's sad when you realize
you can be replaced by
an if/else Boolean string.

.....

What would your 73 year old self say
to your 37 year old self?
What would your 37 year old think
of your 73 year old?
If you're not 73 yet, we'll talk later,
when you are.

.....

There is no right way
to do a pandemic. None.
There's no way around it.
You have to go through it.
 A psychotic break
 is the cure, what caused
 a psychotic break
 the disease.
 One man's break with reality
 is another touching the face of God.

Disorganized, de-ranged,
seeing things that are not there, is
perhaps a supranatural visionary
planning the future with wise imagination.
Perhaps a looney tune — pitchy, off key.
Who's to say? There is no right way,
an orchestra without a conductor
plays on.

.....
Waving away the fog,
kissing the hard ice.
No fish below,
no birds above.
Grey stillnesses meet.
Grey still. . .
.....

I hate to be the one to spring this on you, but
we're all renters on this planet.
.....

the wild within
the wild without
the way of the leader,
who seeks no followers.
the wild without followers...
.....

What's eating you? We revere the top of the food chain, the large predator carnivores. We heroically imagine we are the top of the top. Man up. We eat, life to be life must eat life. We eat it all. Omnivores. Ninety-nine percent of what we eat we enslave, we confine we control on farms. Chickens, chard, pigs, strawberries. If a dandelion volunteers to grace our yard, we pluck it out, spray it with poison, call it a weed. We make domesticated pets of other predator carnivores, putting them in their beta place, "Who's a good boy?" "Bad kitty, bad" It's big business: Bad Kitty Gets a Bath · Bad Kitty Meets the Baby · Bad Kitty for President · Bad Kitty School Daze · Bad Kitty's Purrfect 8 Book Box Set by Nick Bruel at Costco. Big business breeding. The 'List of dog breeds' wikipedia page is divided into 'extant breeds' and 'extinct breeds, varieties and types.' Neither the Alpine Mastiff nor the Sleuth hound will ever again be best of show. This makes us sad, we donate to the American Kennel Club. Adorable AKC Yorkshire Puppies for sale - 8 Weeks old. Sold on cuteness. So dress-up fascinated with being the alpha to our pets beta we put a tiara on our little princess' head, "Sit, Ubu, sit," We command. Tigers, wolves, white sharks get special territories set aside for their domain, special 'endangered' status to safeguard their wild ways. We keep an adulating eye on them. With GPS we track them in the wild. Or at least, we 'give' them a special installation in the zoo, where we can go a take a selfie with them. We'll donate big time to the rescue mission, to the veterinarian's Pet n' Vet Support Services. If America's dogs and cats established a sovereign nation, it would rank fifth in global meat consumption. Producing that meat — which requires more land, water and energy and pollutes more than plant-based food — creates a lot of greenhouse gases: as many as 64 million tons annually. And pet ownership is on the rise, which means the demand for meaty pet food is, too. Even as our interest grows in the environmental impact of our own meat consumption, there has been almost no effort to quantify the part our most common pets play. ONE FOOD FOR THOUGHT, the backyard pet chicken trend . . . pet chickens ARE protein and daily MAKE loads of easily accessible protein in eggs, while dogs and cats only eat protein, demanding more and more. BUT back on the farm, nada, nothing. No compassion. We don't want to look, don't want to see the dark side of our nature. We'll leave the neglectful treatment, the cruelty, the barbarism, the slaughter to the lowest rungs of our Proletariat. *It's just business.* Animals on factory farms endure constant fear and torment: They're often given so little space that they can't even turn around or lie down comfortably. Egg-laying hens are kept in small cages, chickens and pigs are kept in jam-packed sheds, and cows are kept on crowded, filthy feedlots, treated with antibiotics, antiseptics, bactericides, fungicides . . . And that's what we eat. In agriculture, in defiance of the wild we monocrop, we grow a single crop year after year on the same land. Corn, soybeans, and wheat — no weeds. "Organophosphates are the most common agrochemical poisons followed closely by herbicides. Many agricultural poisons, such as parathion and paraquat are now mixed with a coloring agent such as indigocarmine to prevent their use criminally. In addition, paraquat is fortified with a "stenching" agent," reports the National Center for Biotechnology Information. Organophosphates cause severe pollution problems, loss of fertility, acidification of soil, nitrate leaching, increased resistance of weed species. The circular battle with whatever we call 'weed's goes on. And that's what we eat. Healthy 'Organics', even to the level common in conventional farming before World War II is now reserved for the well-shoed, Whole Foods ("*Whole Paycheck*") elite. Then there's the over-tilling of the soil breaking up, devastating microbiotic communities. [Doubling down on our 'war on the wild' versus the 'heroic cultivated' dichotomy — a 'cultivator' is what we call the tool used to

mix loose soil. Cultivators do not churn as deeply as tillers and are often used between rows, keeping the weeds at bay. So much for being open to volunteers.] *Is the scale of microbial communities below our notice?* Namely bacteria, archaea, fungi (yeasts and molds), algae, protozoa, and viruses. The Coronavirus recently got our attention, didn't it?! But not in a good way. We don't happily eat Coronavirus, it eats us. See how that feels? And we're in the wild. Imagine how it'd feel if we were shut down, shut-in, home alone and afraid. And then there's that looming question, "What's happening to conifers?" And the Amazon rainforest. And, and, and . . . *What's eating you?*

{#HomagePETA + (one semi-comic piece of the answer: the dermatophytes fungi eating the keratin of my big toenail)}

.....

"How many people here have pronouns?"

That's the defining question of our times.
If you identify with particular pronouns,
chances are good you still have enough
time left to change this world. Me?
My pronouns are *We/Us*, but
time's running out...

{LGBTQ2S+ ...wxyz: politically correct sexual identity insists on being called by the correct pronoun. I don't need to know your orientation, just be who you are. If I don't have your number I won't be calling you anything anyway.}

.....

Ya gotta cut through the noise
to get to the signal. Is it there?
Hope so. No hope? Listen up!

.....

Honey, you didn't commend me on my artisanal mowing of the lawn,
which is not good operant conditioning. What?
Are reinforcements **not** on the way?

.....

Loud, sudden noise behind you in the dark saying,
"Don't be scared, don't be scared, don't be afraid."
The mainstream media during a global pandemic
when totalitarian authoritarianists are on the rise,
giving *you* a rise. Giving you a start. "Jump to it!"

When nerves turn to tears.
Too much.

{#KamilaValieva2022Olympics}

.....

With no memory
there is no future,
just the now.

.....

(220222)

Just when you think you're out of the woods,
a tree falls on you.

{#Omicron-BA.2}

.....

To walk down the busy sidewalk never looking away from your phone
requires exceptional peripheral vision and extraordinarily poor judgment.

.....

Years after my death, will an influencer discover my life's work and declare, "Eureka, a wit hath past here!?"

.....
"If Leo Tolstoy had been one of us he could have entered a triathlon—a Baby Boom innovation of the middle 1970s. By then we knew we couldn't run away from our problems. But if we added cycling and swimming ..."

{P.J. O'Rourke, *The Baby Boom: How It Got That Way (And It Wasn't My Fault) (And I'll Never Do It Again)*}

.....
She's a semi-Semite, a secular Jew.

You can't tell her what to do, but she'll unceasingly tell me how to be.

{best spoken with a Bob Dylan nasal twang}

She's a soft-hearted hard-headed woman, won't trade her for a barrel of puddin'.

{best spoken with a Elvis Presley "Keep your cotton picking fingers Out my curly hair" hip swivel AND a Cat Steven's "And when I find my hard headed woman, I know the rest of my life will be blessed" ride on the Peace Train}

.....
I so melancholy ache ("*my dear Matna*" as my grandfather called her) for this planet, and all of her inhabitants.

In late 1999, Terence McKenna described his thoughts concerning his impending death: "*I always thought death would come on the freeway in a few horrifying moments, so you'd have no time to sort it out. Having months and months to look at it and think about it and talk to people and hear what they have to say, it's a kind of blessing. It's certainly an opportunity to grow up and get a grip and sort it all out. Just being told by an unsmiling guy in a white coat that you're going to be dead in four months definitely turns on the lights. It makes life rich and poignant. When it first happened, and I got these diagnoses, I could see the light of eternity, à la William Blake, shining through every leaf. I mean, a bug walking across the ground moved me to tears.*"

{The Guardian tell us, "Insects have declined by 75% in the past 50 years—and the consequences may soon be catastrophic."}

So, yes, each next moment becomes all the more precious, doesn't it? I mean, me too, though my health is relatively good, in mass, all of our planet's inhabitants' is not . . . a bug walking across the ground can easily move me to tears.

.....
A mother walking 3 kids home from school passing me by unnoticed, saying, "Not the brightest bulb in the bunch, uh, not the brightest crayon in the box. You know, those are called idioms. I usually don't get them right, but I use them a lot!"

.....
Who knew a promising possible remedy for dealing with an increasingly complex world is to do nothing. *Let it sort itself out.*

.....
I'm a bulging eyes shut baby bird — featherless, flapping useless appendages, screaming, "Feed me, feed me!"

Russia invades Ukraine!

Towhead kid shoots my mother dead with his dad's twelve gauge shot gun, just for kicks.

.....
My primary physician is an Ukrainian immigrant.

She's a brilliant, salt-of-the-earth, authentically kind person and mother of two preteen special needs children.

I went to see her at the beginning of the pandemic, before the medical center closed to in-person visits. When people were first panicking and buying up all the toilet paper. I asked my doctor if she felt safe with the new protocols Kaiser Permanente had put in place, and more generally for her family. She said she did, "and besides, we have a large dog, if things get too bad we can eat him." As she said this, she laughed involuntarily, but she wasn't kidding.

.....

With only tooth & claw

the tiger travels light.
With only long beak & flourish wing
the brave Arctic Tern gathers berries.

With an opposable thumb & an abstracting brain,
I marvel at the wild life *'that travels with great strength
and will carry love & hope to wherever you wish it to go'*.

Now more than ever.

{Homage to the art and vast heart of my cousin, Barbara Huidekoper}

.....

When first facing a global pandemic together,

you don't know how you don't know you're neighbors
until push comes to shove. When the push comes,
they'll surprise you, but all the more, you'll surprise yourself
about what surprises you about your neighbors.

.....

The CDC (and most every other US institution)

sure made a mess of their messaging,
didn't they? Why bother with disinformation,
when they'll do it for you?

.....

The Marriage of Man & Caffeine ...more than any other

from Arabesque mathematics during the Golden Age of Islam
to the advent of the Industrial Revolution in 18th century Britain
to the precise Silicon Valley coding of the 21st century *Information Age*, ...

coffee (*caffeine*) is the drug
that most defined the hyperactive,
focused, efficient attention to detail
drive that powers and characterizes
the modern era.

{HOMAGE: Michael Pollan, "...your Self is caffeinated!" > <https://youtu.be/mAPG18zNtXk>}

.....

For all his conquering power and ostentatious wealth, Louis XIV, King of France, "the Sun King" never turned on an electric light bulb, never flushed a toilet, never rode in a 200 horsepower combustion engine car, stepped onto a train, flew in a plane, played a video game nor ascended Eiffel's "*La dame de fer*" Tower.

The average American blue collar worker, by far, has more personal practical creature comforts and labor saving devices than King Louis XIV ever did. Yet, most Americans are unsatisfied with their job and life in general. With "the best we've ever had," why are Americans getting increasingly more miserable?

.....

Yes you can have a heavy heart and a lightness of being.
.....

The being dead part isn't the problem.
It's the being alive, fully alive part,
the day-to-day grind, the embracing it all.
.....

If you're paying attention,
when you wake up early in the morning
and take a shower, you feel refreshed,
light, your psyche enlarged.
Again when you go outside
and breathe the clean air,
you feel larger, lighter,
the growing connection to something bigger
than your former self just moments ago.
.....

I may not know what I'm doing, but I can do what I know.
.....

Speaking truth to reality:
just as a hypothesis is only true until it's disproven,
your daydream is possible until it's not,
including your world peace messiah complex.
.....

At 70, my bladder is the size of a shriveled, desecrated walnut. I don't pee much, just often.
.....

America is the wealthiest, most innovative country in the history of the world. Yet,
with only 4% of the world's population the U.S. has 20% of the COVID deaths,
and 20% of our families needed food assistance last year.
We call ourselves the 'United' states, but we're anything but.
.....

Money. *The global standard medium of exchange*

The singular most powerful myth in which all people faithfully trust is not God, not a particular nation-state, not what's true or fair or right or wrong, nor what's good to eat, nor when to sleep . . . no, . . . the universally singular useful fiction in which most all people so devotedly, faithfully trust? *Money. The global standard medium of exchange.* And without our shared collective belief, money wouldn't exist, couldn't survive. We keep the myth alive with every transaction.
.....

It matters where you put your zeroes.

Zero is a nothing, a placeholder, like space.
It holds an imaginary place in place.
Like the AutoCAD architectural drawings
of seventh floor condo apartments
with hardwood floors, polished stone kitchen islands,
and plush sofas yet to be built.

Like the hand-traced contour lines on a map,
that defines and names it a county, even
when in reality it remains a river,

a mountain range, the edge where
the forest meets desert.

The map is, in realty, useless, a waste of paper,
a big fat zero. The tree holding its ground is the thing.

But in those imaginary useless spaces, those *useful fictions*,
it matters where you put your zeroes.

If you have *useful fictions such as* a thousand digit digital dollars,
and are allowed to add one zero for free anywhere you want,
it will serve you best to put your big fat 'nothing' zero last,
putting your zero first will do you no good at all.

.....

Remember those Magic Eight Balls? You shook it up
upside down, turned it around and the answer
to your yes/no question floated to the top?

Your questions always asked to foretell the future,
while the answers given were of what is and what was,
of the here & now resurrecting fading, jumbled memories.

.....

In a time before Trump, I was working a temp customer service job at the beginning of tax season for some financial
service company or another. The majority of my fellow temp workers were young black women. Which gave me an
opportunity to see how it feels to be in the minority, even when everyone is playing nice. First day, the admin gave us
our seating assignments by posting our initials on the outside of our tiny little cubicle. Mine read DCL. The cubicle across
from me read Kabil Kaikara Kerr, and boy was she aghast. *Can you imagine?*

.....

Jump up out of all those tiny little labeled boxes you've been hiding out in,
and just be a person. We'll work out what personage is
together somewhere down the road.

.....

Don't do futures, don't make promises.
Your imagined futures are predicated on your memory of the past.
Even if your memory was reliable and comprehensive,
the pace of change is going way too fast
for that to be a credible benchmark to predict evolving outcomes.
Even your most thorough risk assessment is a wild ass bet,
a shot in the dark. Better to aim for targets that are within reach, targets you can see clearly.
Lick your finger, feel which way the wind is blowing in the here & now before you cast your fate.

.....

Picked up five Chick-fil-A meals with five large drinks to be delivered to a room at the Airport - Harbor Motel 6 on Pacific
Highway. The drink holder only held 4 drinks, the fifth filled my other hand as I climbed the Motel Six stairs with the five
Chick-fil-A meals in an insulated bag hanging off my elbow. As I reached the top of the stairs, the room door opened to a
family of five, including three blonde preteen daughters. I handed them the drinks to free up my hands. The delivery
required a PIN number, I explained, what is your PIN number? No one spoke English. Holding up 4 fingers, I said it's
usually the last four numbers of your phone number, I repeated 't e l e p h o n e number.' The eldest daughter caught
on and showed me her telephone number in her phone. I entered the last 4 numbers and it worked, the transaction
completed. Good. They closed the door and I was half way down the stairs when I realized I still had their food hanging
off my elbow. As I reached the top of the stairs, the room door opened again. I apologized as I handed over the meals.
The mother said, "Da, something something" and closed the door. I was half way down the stairs when it occurred to
me. I went back up and knocked gently on the door. "Are you Ukrainian?" The mother, with her three daughters
crowded closely around her, nodded her head and said, "Da, something something." I fished out my wallet and gave her

all my cash, saying only, "Bless you!"

My next food pick-up was from the IHOP on Fenton Parkway. The middle aged Mexican American server there asked me how my day was going. From his accent, it was clear that English is his second language. Excellent I said. I told him I had just delivered food to a Ukrainian family of 5 at Motel 6 who didn't speak English. "Wow!," he heartfully gushed. As I was leaving he smiles at me, "Bless you!"

The fare for the food delivery to the Ukrainians was \$6.74. They gave me an upfront tip of \$7.70, and after the delivery they added \$4.09 to the tip. The first time I've ever received an upfront followed by an after delivery tip.

.....

Team loyalty?

I'm for the Home Team
showing the Away Team
great hospitality.

.....

Classic scene @ Ivy & 5th, 92103:

Muscular shirtless white raving maniac
arms flailing wildly confronting a dozen
calmly stoic blue collar Hispanic yellow jackets.

.....

As kids, we were schooled in a high degree of skepticism.
We learn this by talking back to our 3rd parent, the TV,
especially the commercials. We procured this voice in part
because we weren't allowed to talk back to our first two parents.

.....

If you compliment me one more time on my writing style,
I'm coming over to your place, sit you down and read
you the whole of Roget's Thesaurus in one go.

It's a humble abode, but I've made myself comfortable
in this noggin, and often, the words come trippingly.

.....

I can't tell you how much effort I made over the years
to differentiate, make myself stand apart distinct and unique.
But as I tool around town these days and catch a glimpse
of my image in the glass from this angle and that, I see
in the postures, gestures, body language and facial expressions
my older brother Dick. Which leaves me to only recognize
how powerful the formative years were in shaping me,
and that everything that followed was merely bells & whistles.

.....

The more you do something, the better you get at it.
The better you get at it, the more you enjoy it.
The more you enjoy it, the more you'll do it.
Positive feed-back loop. So, get after it.

{NOTE: this principle doesn't apply to drugs or other neurostimulants as they have a built-in tolerance factor}

.....

Consumer: you are a terminal end in the supply chain!
Drop your demands off at the door.

.....
Life is an epic event, even as the days are fleeting.
Then again, life is short and the days are long.
It's that kind of paradox. Eternal in that way, in that loop.

You lose yourself when you sleep at night
and wake anew to start again. All you know of
is contained within you, forever lasting, outside of time.
Yet in time you die and the world goes on without you.
.....

I reach out to my nieces by email, smoke signals in a hurricane.
They've moved on to new platforms.
.....

It's obvious from your tone and tenor, from the words you sing,
you have a good heart. But it's badly broken. For your art's sake
I recommend you attend to your heart, feel it. Your heart may never mend,
but dancing around the pain will never bring you home.
.....

Pray for my family.

Do you know what prayer is?

Asking.

Yes, in small part, prayer is asking.
And prayer is giving, but more over
prayer is love.

And when you pray, who are you asking?

God,

the Almighty. The Universe, all that is.
Even your deepest needs, in your grandest desires,
you don't need the Almighty, nothing even near all that is.
All you need is love, and even then, only a tiny fractal.
To fulfill your grandest desires, you need to ask only
for the amount of love proportionate to your need,
and give your whole heart.

Thus pray:

Pray for the love needed to sustain the family of life on this planet.

Pray for my family.
.....

Humility

*"Where did I get this recognition that humility is power?
How did I learn to be common, ordinary, is to be safe,
impossible to defeat?" ~Kim Stafford*

As a courier, a humble job, delivering food for Ubereats, I make my living from the *seven deadly sins*,
mostly gluttony, avarice and sloth. According to the standard list, the seven deadly sins are
pride, greed, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony and sloth, which are contrary to the *seven heavenly virtues*:
chastity, temperance, charity, diligence, kindness, patience and humility.

Humility is the quality of being humble.

Outside of a religious context, humility is defined as being "unserved",
a liberation from consciousness of self, a form of temperance that is neither

having pride (or haughtiness) nor indulging in self-deprecation. Serving a virtue which centers on low self-preoccupation, my Humility is an outward expression of an appropriate inner, or self-regard, and is contrasted with humiliation which is an imposition, often external, of shame upon a person. I have no shame in all the gyrations my overly fat and unhappy customers put me through to leave an extra-large bucket of deep fry with 13 packets of hot sauce at their front door.

And that's a slice of the humble pie – that's the edge to the living I *make* serving the appetites and laziness, or rather more often, the just plain worn-outness of others.

{NOTE: looking in my rear-view mirror I am surprisingly stunned how deeply these 7 vices and virtues were branded into my formative psyche. The concepts predate Christianity, but that's how they were delivered to me, and I swallowed them hook, line and sinker – devotedly embracing the religiosity. That religiosity became the structural conditioning that informed my fundamental moral values and shaped my character into almost slavish obedience until I learned to say "no!" out loud.}

.....

You can resist gravity, you can resist death.
You can always try. You won't win,
but it's worth the while – that trying.
Until it's not.

.....

Will someone please explain how being a 'badass' became a badge of honor?

.....

Insurrectionists

Did you ever get over being mad
at your boy for mowing down
your Primrose patch?

Even my toenail has turned against me —
the one that got infected with fungi.
I tell it, despite appearances,
we are not a democracy.
Not every part gets an equal say.

Especially when they mow down
what is precious to us.

{#NaomiShihabNye "Someone I Love"}

.....

Soaring Rents

During a raging global killer pandemic is not the time to uproot and move to save on inflated rent. I'm dug-in and know where everything is here. I know which neighbors I thought I knew I could trust to act sensibly and to be there for me, and I them; and which ones to cross the street for. I know where everything is, both inside my cozy safely bolted house and on the shelves at the stores I shop — even if they run out of stock on toilet paper and baby formula. Not that I need baby formula, but still you know, I know where else I can shop to fill-in my pantry as a hedge against the surge, the surge of both the dearth of essential goods and common sense.

It's definitely not time to move to Winslow, Arizona and bake my last days in the high plateau above the Painted Desert. I can still get out and about here and make enough to make ends meet. As pretty as it might be in Winslow, I don't know anyone or where anything is there. How would I find my way? Especially if I'm perfectly happy right where I am.

On losing my religion, scientists told me religion has no equivalent record to science of discovering hidden truths. But as the media statements by Fauci and the directors of the CDC has proven, even science's truths are so, so transitory. What method could I hope for, could I trust with the bit of life I was saving for the last?

In the run-up to the toxic Coronavirus landing in America in a big way I heard people saying concerns were overstated, "the current dire models radically overestimate the ultimate death toll." The president himself had a hunch that the numbers were false, and "this is their new hoax." Having no faith in the empirical evidence, such denials kept us from learning from what China and Italy were experiencing.

A month later, waiting for Baron's grocery market to open an hour early for seniors, next in line ahead of me was a former dean of UC San Diego's elite Medical School. She said a world renowned epidemiologist friend had cautioned her well in advance to "get all of your money out of the stock market, stock up on supplies and prepare for a long isolating stay at home." Advice the retired dean pooh-poohed and ignored.

If scientists have no faith in science, what is science for? Soaring rents?

The grocery markets don't open an hour early for seniors any more. Still I get up at the crack of dawn to get there when their doors open and can see for myself as they put out the fresh produce, and be the first in line to see what all is left on the shelves. At least I have the ease and comfort of knowing where to look.

.....

Four squirrels scamper across Lincoln Ave, single file. The fifth tried, apparently, to get me to run it over, . . . until one single-filer comes back for encouragement and guidance.

.....

— *hot damn your jam!* —
Are you juicing up the May grey
in anticipation of June gloom?

.....

Blemishes on my Public Face

I see in my Spam folder that I have "negative items" in my public record. Good! Maybe this will further encourage them to leave me alone.

Apparently even a private person has a public face. [Click here!](#)

Again I see in my Spam folder that my private parts aren't large enough. Good! Maybe this will further encourage she/hers/theys to leave me alone.

.....

When I started into adulthood,
I set out to determine how little I needed.
I didn't plan on falling in love with someone
whose level of required comfort was substantially
more than my cardboard box on the sidewalk.

.....

It's a common Landrum family practice to say nothing when you mean "no!"
So, please remain silent if I have misinterpreted you.

Which reminds me,
"Don't respond if you don't know what you're talking about," she insisted.
[You might not be hearing from me for a while.]

.....

The inevitability of death looming so closely tends to crack me open like a chestnut roasting on an open fire.

.....

I went to the TJ Maxx of life and tried on a lot of clothes.

The dressing room was stark and ample, but too confining.
Ended up leaving in the not a stitch rags I came in with.

That's naked, baby, naked.

.....
On my good days I know just enough to ask questions.

.....
If your eyes had only seen what Noam Chomsky's has...

.....
When you're on a two-lane highway and Google maps tells you to take the center lane...

.....
If healthy is handsome, I'm healthy enough.
...wanting the long, good life for everyone.

.....
Is the comedian funny without an audience?
Is the comedian funny without an audience?

Even the best of productions tends to fall apart if everyone doesn't pull their weight, do their part, check the gun before pulling the trigger. It's not required to be like Jesus when your role is Judas. The vast majority of people are far more intelligent than the work they do for a living. But if the work needs to be done, it needs to be. Someone has to do it. Jesus needs to be Jesus. A carpenter, a carpenter, a farmer, a nurse, a garbage collector —each to their own. Life is sad, life is a bust, all you can do is do what you must, you do what you must do and you do it well, as the song writer sings. The highest most exulted, the most lucrative, ...the lowest, most distained, the dirtiest — the glamour work, the grunt work — we all do our piece and life goes on. None are better, none worse, just necessary, essential.

.....
But, anything but

Maybe euphemism, maybe aspiration.
Civilization is anything but civil.
Humans are anything but humane.
Given a chance, we've always enslaved,
exploited, taken advantage of others.
Like any other animal,
we take what we can get.

All this talk of higher angels and
good fairies is make-believe. And
make-believe is what gives us human
animals our power. Our power
to invent, our power to destroy, our power
to imagine, to seek revenge, to hate, to love,
to poison. The power to poison ourselves,
our relations, poison the good and the pure,
poison the only planet that might be our home.

Human civil society is poison, the antidote —
anything but. The remedy? Honestly,
...even the wild life fares more true.

.....
Subject: RE: **Racism Issue in Martin County** :: *Principles for Dealing with the Changing World Order*

We don't have a form of self-enforcing government that can effectively respond to intentional malice and subversive actors that hold the power of office. Our law making elected officials are not beholden to voters, as much as donors. Money not morals rules. More and more the character of a dangerous subset of politicians shape shifts to appeal to the

discontent of an oppositional base, which in turns creates its own self-fueling fire storm of degradation. Our seat of power is in decline.

The structure of our aspirational 'democracy' were shaped in ideals framed in a horse and buggy technological era of—exploiting field hand labor and house servants, where the very notion of a 'free man,' a person who is free; a person who enjoys personal, civil, or political liberty referred to a self-selecting 'land owning white men' few, NOT at all as we would think it today of. The authors of the US Constitution never saw a 200 horsepower automobile, a train much less a plane, nor electricity, flush toilets, or labor a saving washer/dryer or a dishwasher. Much, much less a mobile phone and Twitter – and the shit-storm of ensuing social media. When they granted the rights of States to form militia and to bear arms, they were thinking about the Brown Bess musket, which could fire a single shot ball per load, not Uzi or AK47 fully automatic assault rifles like the one Payton Gendron, the 18-year-old in Buffalo, used in his racially motivated mass murders. Payton Gendron was clearly radicalized by the long simmering hate rhetoric, that now has in the internet, the most powerfully unfettered, unregulated communications platform in history – Thomas Jefferson could never have imagined it. It's up to us to imagine it forward and guide the dialog towards the common good.

I agree, the incident in Martin County may end up being a very good teaching moment. BECAUSE, and significantly because "a family member who is one of the parents has asked that the students become part of our youth group and work on projects that will help them understand the significance of their actions." That's the key. The family unit by law and custom is foundational to our society, both legal and civil. Unfortunately not everyone has a good one, a good healthy, secure family unit. One Hope is in dialog that fosters the parents that ask that their children/students become part of experience altering youth groups and work on projects that will help them understand the significance of their actions.

There has always been a disparity in both the class and caste systems within the USA in a family's ability to care for themselves in terms of wealth, health and education. Post WW2, as the USA emerged as the primary superpower a remarkably historic prospering took place in our 'model for the world' K-12 general educational system and the development of the world's premiere Universities – though the system did not and still is not equitably provided to all citizens at any level. And with the erosion of the middle class over the past few decades, our K-12 systems are woefully in decay and now are under political attack by those very same dangerous disingenuous politicians previously mentioned, which in turn puts more strain on the already beleaguered and faltering working class families to take up the slack. The burden can't rest solely on the family unit. We need more global guidance and support. The world is changing in big ways. We need to develop unifying understandings to get our collective heads around it. I recently stumbled across Ray Dalio, who provided me with the kind of cogent real world thinking that I think could prove to be such a starting point: *"I believe the world is changing in big ways that haven't happened before in our lifetimes but have many times in history, so I knew I needed to study past changes to understand what is happening now and help me to anticipate what is likely to happen. I shared what I learned in my book, Principles for Dealing with the Changing World Order, and my hope is that this animation* gives people an easy way to understand the key ideas from the book in a simple and entertaining way. In the first 18 minutes, you'll get the gist of what drives the "Big Cycle" of rise and decline of nations through time and where we now are in that cycle. If you give me 20 minutes more to watch the whole thing, and I will show you how the big cycle worked across the last 500 years of history—and what the current world leading power, the United States, needs to do to remain strong."*

{**Principles for Dealing with the Changing World Order* by Ray Dalio > <https://youtu.be/xguam0TKMw8> | Raymond Thomas Dalio (born August 8, 1949) is an American billionaire investor and hedge fund manager, who has served as co-chief investment officer of the world's largest hedge fund, Bridgewater Associates, since 1985. > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ray_Dalio}

.....

UPDATE on the downside of what's up:

Global killer virus and economic inflation are surging, stock markets and our dreams are plummeting. Stagnation looms as prices go through the roof, growth grinds to a halt, radicalized hate kids with guns increasingly shoot masses of 'the other', as violent crime rates rise – standardized numbers for Part II crimes are not available, even though these crimes may be sizeable in number and require substantial attention and resources from law enforcement.

The CDC now does recommend you wear a mask.

Crime in the San Diego Region: Part II crimes that previously wouldn't have been captured in these statistics are now Part I crimes. **Overall crime:** There was a total of 61,013 Part I crimes in the San Diego region in 2020, [...]

.....
But where?

Room for improvement.
On the sun nuclear explosions may be an improvement.
Not here.

.....

I don't make friends. I'm friendly enough,
but I don't *make* friends. I've had friends
in the past, but they've all gone by the wayside.
Relationships are a lot of work. A lot of work
to establish and a constant vigil to maintain.
I do have one friend, my best friend, who doubles
as my lover, confidante, cook, gardener and wife. She's all
that stands between me and getting what I want, me and always
having the last word. Between me and being alone.

.....

I can't think of anyone who takes me seriously, including myself.

.....

This unripe pear is more like an apple, which
is the name the tech mogul took from the musicians who
took their name from an insect — my favorite of which being
the fig beetle, a Southwestern species, it is said, that careens
through the air with the grace of a charging rhinoceros. Much
like this pear between my teeth and tongue.

.....

Do you remember the promises we made? The promises written on cocktail napkins wearing penny loafers. Promises to
hide those very same penny loafers we were now polishing late on Saturday night just before everyone left the big party
and we'd have to go to bed saving the clean-up for the morning before going to church. The promises to hide the penny
loafers where no one would think to find them in those few sparse, frantic moments before we'd have to leave for
church and be grilled on the Ten Commandments. And everyone would look. Everyone would be told to stop what they
were doing and look. But they'd never find them. They'd never find the penny loafers, because we'd hid them where no
one would ever think to look. Now it was too late. They'd have to go on without us. They'd have to drop everything and
go without us and leave us behind with dad, who usually stayed home alone on Sundays to read the Sunday comics and
masturbate to the Playboy magazines hidden under his bed, which is where we hid the penny loafers knowing he'd be
too hung-over to whack off. Sure mom knew where the magazines were, which is why no one would ever think to look
there, and we could sneak upstairs when everyone had gone to church and retrieve our penny loafers under dad's
snoring nose. It was a good plan, a seamless plan. It should have worked, it would have worked, we would have pulled it
off and kept our promises to each other, if only Monday afternoon just before we got home from elementary school, the
maid hadn't taken a commercial break from her soap operas and found the napkins we'd written our promises on in the
back pockets of our ratty old blue jeans as she rifled through them before putting the jeans in the washing machine.
Even then it might have worked, if she'd only simply thrown the wadded up napkins in the trash and forgot about them,
if she hadn't carefully, preciously unfolded those napkins and then feel obliged to correct our spelling. So what if we
didn't know how to spell that word, that word we weren't supposed to even know about.

.....

We are NOT intelligent enough as a people, I'm quite certain,
to design a fair, just, sustainable society for all living creatures

on this planet all in one go. Especially given our historically most prominent self-centered tendency to aggressively pursue advantage for me and mine above doing the noble right for the common good. We're just not intelligent enough, but if and when we are honest with ourselves, if we take it one bit at a time, *we can sense the right direction* in all things large and small. And we can choose to head-up, as it were, into the wind, in that right direction even when it costs us, especially when it's at our own expense. A simply kind long-term investment in life on this planet. One that may or may not pan out, but is certainly worth the risk for those of us who clearly have more than enough for now.

.....

I don't have ambition to be a poet.
I still have a passion to write poetry.
Same with doodling. I don't need
to be recognized. I just need to do it.

.....

Given the technology we currently have,
if we equitably distributed the essential tasks
that need to be done and the goods and services
produced by those tasks, we could provide
for the health and welfare of all the people
on the planet, AND have the time to do those tasks
in a well-formed thoughtful, even enjoyable manner
with time left over for leisure and the pursuit of other
playful non-essentials.

If only we could get past the despots and their crowd.

.....

My barber says it's overblown in the media,
she never sees violence from the Sinaloa cartel
and that's where her mother grew up. Whenever
she goes down there it's calm and pleasant, good for long walks.
Maybe like occasionally you'd hear of a fatal car crash or something,
you might hear of a drug gang killing or kidnapping, but not very often.
The violence and missing person reports are overhyped by the media.
Besides, my barber loves, loves, loves Sinaloan-style ceviche.

.....

If you ever ask any grocer in the city,
 "When are you getting it in?"
 they'll reply, "Tomorrow!"

.....

Politics is the new religion.
Money the new God.
Podcasts the new pulpit.
Podcasters ala Joe Rogan,
like the evangelists of yore,
must come up with new hot sermons
to keep the congregation fired up,
week after week, if not day by day.

It takes a lot of juice to stay relevant.
Viralness is next to godliness.

.....
"Yelling at the customer service robo on the phone isn't going to help."
"Well, it helps me."

{ #instaclassic }

.....
You're as clear as a bell in my head, though
you don't even know I exist. Unless
you received my random letter inviting
you into this conversation.

*Oh my goodness, what
a befuddling surprise that letter
in your hands must have been. Who
is this guy who thinks he knows me just
because he's read my poetry?*

You'll have to excuse me.
Poetry is such an intimate form.
Though outdoors I know you not at all,
in here!, ...I feel ...I know you ...all too well.

.....
"I love you so much!"
"Why do you love me so much?"
"Because you."

.....
What? You think I'm a dog? That
I'll come running whenever you call?
Cat's don't do that, and

I'm a hep cat — hep cat, Jack...
don't have a heart attack.

"All right already, I'm coming!"

.....
There's a national debate
that's been going on for decades,
centuries, on what it means
to be humane.
We don't know.
We've never tried.

.....
Q: Are coronavirus long-haulers still contagious?
A: It's not very likely, but it's a sticky question to answer.

.....
Organization: the difference between
a collector and a hoarder.

{ #MarthaStewartTagSale }

When I was a kid, we had heroes & goats. Heroes did good, goats not.
If Charlie Brown caught the fly ball, hero; if he dropped it, the (scape)goat.
When the ball's in the air we'd yell, "Don't let'm get your goat."
With the advent of the Millennial stereotypical *Participation Trophy* —
merely showing up became grounds for an accolade, and
goats have become The GOAT, as in Greatest of All Time.
As if there were such a thing.

.....

They told me, "Choose the lesser of the two evils."

They didn't give instructions on what to do with the endless barrage of evils, all of piece, each worse than the other.
The ones they keep slinging at you in the name of the daily news.

.....

I'm for animals staying in their skins until they die of natural causes.
I don't want to wear leather. Work gloves are the exception.
Especially for gardening. Sure I have metal tools to deal with unruly
prickly plants, but sometimes hands are the best tool for the job,
and cotton gloves just won't cut it. When the aim is to prune the bush,
it's not useful to shred the skin.

.....

I got sloppy, I guess,
forgot to lock the door.
A thief broke in
stole my heart.
Laid down beside me
for nearly 34 years,
smothered me
with kindness,
as a kind of atonement
for breaking my lock.

{#OurMeetingDayAnniversary25June22}

She attacked like a mechanized division,
obliterated all thoughts. Couldn't make a decision.
She stole my heart with a surgeon's precision,
make me love her. Make me love her to death.

.....

6oz of H₂O

Q: *If you have one ounce of water, how wide is the cylinder containing it?*

A: A one inch high cylinder containing 1 fl oz, an area of 1.804688 in³, has a 1.51588 inch diameter.

Q: *If you have one inch of rainfall, how many ounces fell in one square foot?*

A: One inch of rain equals 3 cups of water (24 ounces) based on the area of a standard rain gauge.

An inch of rainfall on a square foot of surface area yields 79.744 ounces.

{#ButCanMathBePoetry?}

.....

More than change, the *only* constant in life is its weirdness. The miracle of weirdness.

{#AlanWatts "Limits Of Language" :: *Existence is Weird* | #Heraclitus: (1) everything is constantly changing and (2) opposite things are identical, so that (3) everything is and is not at the same time. | "If more of us learned to embrace the weirdness that we are in our daily lives, that would truly be miraculous, and it will take such a miracle to heal the world." ~Dr. Jamie Marich}

Like my mother's father, my oldest brother was raised to be an officer and a gentleman, his younger brothers, his practice charges. He became a naval leader, we cannon fodder. And I, a conscientious objector.

{“The goal of the COs was not to win, but to include.” Kim Stafford, Early Morning: Remembering My Father, William Stafford.}

.....

{worth repeating ...FROM: *danYello Seas: reminisces of an intensely laid-back wandering hippie* | 2011}

The Color Yellow – redefining courage

They talk about rose colored glasses, but have you ever worn yellow tinted glasses and noticed how remarkably they ‘brighten’ your view? Like our sun and highlight markers, yellow is all about illumination. From physical characteristics, being a long-haired blond danYello easily identified with the color. Being out in the sun a lot his hair was often a range of hues from golden to straw to canary yellow.

But by far the most significant identifier was socio-political — danYello wore the color as a private badge of melioration. Sometimes a term may begin as a pejorative word, a term of abuse and eventually be adopted in a non-pejorative sense, as a melioration. For a time, danYello drove around in a Ford Econoline Hippie van with 3 foot lettering: “No More War(s)” and “Love One Another” painted on the side, for which he’d be called “Yellow” (in the South, “Yella”) or “Chicken” — meaning a coward.

To the larger population it was a sign of cowardice to be opposed to your country’s wars. But danYello was a steadfast non-violent, civil disobedient, conscientious objector to war and imperialist oppressions of all kinds. Sure it helped to be on the right side of history, and supported by a growing sub-culture and anti-war movement, but still he had to summon a special something to take such an ardent non-violence stance in opposition to a mainstream so inured to brutality. But he was no hero. To bare their insults and threats and turn their terms of abuse into a more respectable meaning, danYello had first to make it his own and change himself, from within. Hence he embraced the color yellow as a constant reminder not to capitulate to the old fear-based conditionings, but to illuminate new ways to brighten the world. For danYello, yellow was the light of a new dawn.

{#Ah!–theReminisces }

.....

[I wonder

an ant without a queen

la de da de oo la la

I wander]

After the Big Wind: How Long Do You Believe Ants Live Without A Queen?

I don't believe in much. I'm not a believer. Sure, if the wind blows my hat off my head, I believe it'll eventually fall back down to the ground. Even in a big wind – a hurricane, a tornado – gravity will win in the end. And even though taken miles away, I could find my hat again. If not on the ground, then snagged in the branches of a tree, or perhaps, stretching credulity, floating on mythic trade winds to the Firth of Tay just south of my ancestral home near Dundee, or such. And that's what makes me a coward. If I don't really believe in its gravity, I can't get behind a cause, won't sacrifice my freedom of choice, my living. My ease and comfort. And I don't believe in much. I've yet to meet a state, a government, an institution, a corporation, a school board or homeowners association, for instance, I can get behind. I shy away from virtually all 'two or more' believers who have gathered in some name, some righteousness too good to be true. Yuval Noah Harari says a small group of five working in concert can do more than 50 individuals working alone. Five can be more efficient, more expedient than 50. Then again, the efficient and expedient can serve the evil as much as the good. Such evil compounding evil leads to the ultimate evil, war. And history tells us again and again in the same way a cyclone blows, when expedient efficiency gains hegemony, evil yielding to temptation is not far behind. Unless the 5 are saints (and I've yet to meet a saint) I'll trust more the wild, crazy, raucous consensus of the 50 to return my hat to me in good order – if not roughed up a bit with added character, after a big wind. Or even if I have to walk lonely

unable to digest food properly and walk myself to an early death in search for my own true three cornered hat. .
. I do believe, I have faith, I ain't gonna study war no more.

.....
if what you want is more babies...

"So if you <governments> want to own people's bodies, you need to pay for them!"

<Without mentioning that the Supreme Court has voted to strike down the landmark Roe v. Wade decision, according to an initial draft majority opinion written by Justice Samuel Alito circulated inside the court ...>

I've heard Margaret Atwood tell Margaret Hoover on the 5.27.22 Firing Line that there are 75 different kinds of feminism. I believe her. Though I'd personally loathe to parse the difference. But let's get to the crux of the matter, which is, *"Does the state own your body?"* If the state owns your body, they should pay. These words are from the renowned author. When you have the military draft [or if you voluntarily forfeit your Civil liberties, rights guaranteed by the Constitution, to join the professional armed services], the state is claiming to own your body. It's saying, "You shall be in the Army." But if the state makes that claim, it then has to provide your food, your lodging, your clothing, your medical care, and your education, your training. So if they're going to claim women's bodies and put in enforced childbearing, the government should pay for that, too.

If the state owns your body, they should pay.

They're gonna make you have a baby — they should pay for your food, your lodging, your clothing, your medical care, and your training. And if they're not prepared to do that, I would say that it is a dereliction of duty of the — of the largest order. The United States already has a rather shocking maternal and newborn death rate. How come? How come? And you're just going to see that go up (*after Alito's opinion claims women's bodies*). So if you want to own people's bodies, you need to pay for them, I would say to people who want to bring in enforced — enforced baby-making. And it's been done. You can go to Ceausescu's Decree 770 in Romania. He mandated that women of childbearing age had to have four children. You had to take a pregnancy test every month. If you didn't get pregnant, you had to explain why. [Chuckles] *As if anybody can explain that.* And that meant that the orphanages filled up with neglected children and people jumped out the window. So if you're not going to pay for this, you're just going to cause a situation like that. I think some women would like to have more children, but they can't afford it. So give them the money, and they probably would if what you want is more babies.

{Margaret Atwood | Full Episode 5.27.22 | Firing Line with Margaret Hoover | PBS > https://youtu.be/Qpz_n9M7WHs}

.....
Recording my Findings

Have you looked closely at the design of the crow
feather left outside our kitchen door? What genius! What beauty!
If only the crow itself would be as such. But then, maybe it's connected
to that larger place where no leaves fall out of place. Much less feathers.

.....
Rough hewn. Victim of my own petard. (*Aren't we all immigrants here?*) There's a chance that life is 49.999% NOT good, best left to rest from the start. And a fifty point zero zero one per cent chance that life is good, worth living. With, in actuality, an infinite number of zeros after the decimal point, before the one. A very slim chance. It's an unstable experience erupting from nowhere to undergo certain decay back into nothingness, with only a hope, a slim hope that there is something next, something larger, more meaningful coming after, coming next — interesting particularly and only to you. Or in my case, me and my god. Hell, I can't even attract Jon Batiste or Naomi Shihab Nye's interest in sharing, illuminating this ephemeral event before me, what even slimmer chance do I have with an eternal almighty that will ultimately take the wobble out and make this overall worthwhile? A glimmer of a glimmer. I don't mean to whine exploding in my own petard, to simply be a firecracker celebrating the empty jingo of survival, but why? The moment you're born, you're busy dying. What first cause? When the true purpose? Who's bigger picture? What's it all about, Alfie? Where do I belong? Is it just for the moment we live? Are we meant to take more than we give? Or are we meant to be kind? If only fools are kind, if life belongs only to the strong, Alfie, what is love? You say, without true love we just exist, until you find the love you've missed, you're nothing, Alfie. When you walk, if you let your heart lead the way will

you really find that love, Alfie? *Can you tell me, Alfie, what is love?* Was it all but a poem, a song — just for the moment
...did we live, do we live on in love?

.....
Overheard outside Giant Pizza King:

"You know that thing I posted yesterday that got over 35,000 likes?"

"Yeah"

"Not one subscription."

{conjoined laughter}

.....
Soon after the first two organisms had to vie for resources, power struggles began .

And the power struggles have only grown exponentially.

Co-operation is a societal strategy to better compete against the others.

Zero-sum. . . to the end of life on this planet.

.....
Invite the Twins: Adaptability & Flexibility

Don't expect your body to maintain a steady state given all the forces of the cosmos and the local pressures exerted upon it, both inside and out. Invite the twins: Adaptability & Flexibility

.....
Sure there are the invisible rays that zap you and you wither away into mysteriously weird dying, and then there's the head on sudden crash of a souped up sports car powered by an adrenaline crazed kid careening out of control that flattens you and turns out the lights with a flip of the switch. But then there's also that tall glass of cool water after spending too much time hoeing too long a row in the midday summer sun that reminds you you are fully absorbed, in the agonal gasping, ...gasping on the ever of the ever after.

.....
William Stafford says, *"Some haystacks don't even have a needle."*

I'd say most don't. But that doesn't stop us from looking, does it?

{Something loves the hunt, the finding of the one, that particular One, haystack where we left our straw needle in last night's drunken stupor. Finding the *right* haystack before we can even find our precious needle. But we don't know it's the right haystack until we find the needle. Going from haystack to haystack over and over again, surprisingly, optimism springing anew that we'll find our needle in *this* one. In the same way we look for our lost keys under the streetlight because *"this is where the light is"*, or as the clinician would say, "a compulsive or obsessive pursuit of 'reward' and lack of concern over consequences." Something loves the groove, the addictive certainty, the R.D. Laing *Knot* of our hopeful misgivings about our own misgivings.}

{Alan Watts, "the basic form of the double bind, which is imposed upon all children – you are required to do that which will be acceptable, only if you do it voluntarily.}

.....
Like teachers, gardeners never know when the work is done.

But builders of skyscrapers, drawers with pencil, they know.

When it all comes together. . . the creation is done.

{William Stafford once lamented, "Maybe I should have made shoes, like Tolstoy. With shoes, you know when your work is done. With teaching, you never know." "How about with writing a poem?" "Oh, I know when I'm done writing a poem. I put the poem aside when the process of revision stops feeling like the wild adventure of the first writing – creation. When it's not creation anymore, I don't do it."}

.....
{VISITOR: from Kim Stafford's, *Early Morning: Remembering My Father, William Stafford*. Pages 99 & 170}

About poets: Most people don't realize the stupendous attempts we think we are making – to overwhelm by *rightness*, to do something peculiarly difficult to such a perfect pitch that we catch the universe, understand it,

ride it, and live. Think of the discrepancy, now, between this overweening impulse and the role given in society to poets. No wonder they sometimes act humble, the verse-maker, and sometimes act godlike, like criminals.

"That poem is best that is most congruent with who you are."

We don't see well what we see with.

Looking for our eye glasses when they are on our face.
How our parents taught us by being themselves.
What our early school days taught us able getting along.
And *where* to look. We hardly ever see our backside.
When we do, it's backwards, in a mirror. We can only imagine
what we're really like flipped right. Unless someone takes
a picture back there in flattering light at just the right moment, when
we're at our best. Then we see in that tiny stagnant likeness, we see
that we see through the eyes of kindness what we want to see.

My dear Kim Stafford,

The Way of Smoke is merely air polluted.
Please, no need to cough clarity. The Holy Spirit
is not found in a cigarette, a bonfire, a pipe, not in
joints, blunts, bongs, not even in *the whiff* of a spliff –
nor in feminism – as Margaret Atwood says, there
are at least 75 different kinds of feminism –
and not one of them is Black Lung Yin Men.

Fresh air, my friend, fresh air – breath deep.

Practice taking no action that is not in accord
with the natural course of the universe. After all,
there is no action that is not in accord
with the natural course of the universe.

Your pal in the Wei Wu Wei,
Dan Landrum

{Dan Landrum, like Kim Stafford's father, and I suspect Kim himself, was and is a conscientious objector to war. For all the good that does. He too cultivated a path of least resistance in his daily life – for all the good that does – that few, very few noticed. Here Dan is splitting hairs of means and methods of metaphor, not the pure intent – poking at the added fine particles of carbon in solidarity, leaning hopefully, more simply, towards a more perfect union.}

**Today, I looked again at the list of wars that were fought
in my name since I was born in 1951. The military wars,
the economic wars, the 'diplomatic' wars. The aggressions.**

*I looked again at the over-reaching spirit of the Monroe Doctrine, going back before to my ancestor Thomas Rogers and his 17 year old son Joseph and the other Puritans, fresh off the boat, the Mayflower, in their greed and avarice decimating their Pokanoket Nation hosts — the tribe who taught them, saved them from certain annihilation from the cold harsh winters. The sad source of our fabled Thanksgiving Dinner. (Thanksgiving for whom?) I looked more closely, taking a deep dive into the complex actions and consequences of the Monroe Doctrine today. As Ambassador Chas W. Freeman reminds us in *Why Spheres of Influence are Established*: "U.S. secretaries of state have recently taken to declaring that "the United States does not recognize spheres of influence." In light of Americans' continued insistence on the validity of the Monroe Doctrine, this is more than ironic. The United States may refuse to recognize or respect other nation's spheres of influence or their right to establish them, but it insists on enforcing its own, which, though officially undeclared, is no longer limited to the Western Hemisphere but worldwide."*

I looked again at the list of wars,
not the least weighing the U.S. Invasion of Iraq against Russia's Putin's Invasion of Ukraine,
and all I can say is:

To all those wars I couldn't prevent: I'm sorry. I'm so very sorry.
To all these ongoing wars: I'm sorry. I'm so, so very, very sorry.
To all these and those wars I couldn't stop: I'm sorry. I'm so, so very, very, very sorry.
*To all those wars we wage in all our ever expanding
greed and avarice, I'm so, so sorry.*
Oh God! I'm sorry.

{List of wars involving the United States: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wars_involving_the_United_States}

.....
{worth repeating ...FROM: *danYello Seas: reminisces of an intensely laid-back wandering hippie* | 2011}

Non-Violent Civil Disobedience

It's said the Mohandas "Mahatma" Gandhi looked to Henry David Thoreau and Martin Luther King Jr. looked to Gandhi for inspiration and guiding principles to liberate their people from their respective oppressors. Gandhi pioneered satyagraha, defined as resistance to tyranny through mass civil disobedience, a philosophy firmly founded upon ahimsa, or total nonviolence. danYello was a steadfast non-violent, civil disobedient, conscientious objector to all the wars America played a part in during his lifetime and, at the time, Vietnam in particular. The U.S. under Nixon had reinstated drafting young men into the military using a lottery system for induction. Even before he was assigned the 32nd round in the draft, danYello had written to his draft board, "Fuck no, I won't go! I am a sovereign nation of one. Fuck you and your imperialist war!" Mystifyingly, given the tone of his refusal, and after weeks of near catatonic days of petrified fear in facing long prison time, danYello was granted the conscientious objector (CO) status with no service required, which is good because that too would have been refused. It's been said, "History is written by victors." But, then who does the rewrites, if there are no winners in war? Eventually, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara in the documentary film "The Fog of War" would state, "We were behaving as war criminals." "What makes it immoral if you lose and not immoral if you win?" Which underscored the then post-danYello sense that not only was he on the right side of history, but also on the right side of the evolution of compassionate human consciousness ...which is to say, reality as it is.

.....

Responsibility: Give & Take wake up!

*Tell your unborn sons and daughters,
"Don't take birth here,
if all you want is to be right,
if you're all take and no give."*

In real world terms,
you have taken more than you have given,
you have done more harm than good.
Both as an individual and as a citizen of this country.

Yet, still, you imagine you, yourself and
your country are on the right side of history.
Hence, the dream of the American Dream — the promise
of an awakening, *that promise* which is currently dividing this country,
encouraging our children to self-harm and mass massacre strangers.

*Tell your unborn sons and daughters,
"Don't take birth here,
if all you want is to be,
if you're all dream and no woke!"*

.....

Up against the clock, baby. Tick tock, tick tock.
Time is running out, baby. Rock, baby, rock.

.....

There is no right side of history

Only the brutal legacy of animal suffering.
The story of panicked, hungry animals.

We may experience fleeting moments of relief from suffering.
Moments of Joy, moments of prosperity enough to share, kindness,
but these all came at the expense of other sentient beings.

Life must eat life to be life.

There have been great leaders who promised a way out of suffering,
but clearly these metaphysical paths can only be accessed
by a self-selecting few, not the masses mired in the toil,
neck deep in the exploit or be exploited, eat or be eaten reality.

If we are honest with ourselves,
if there is a right and/or a wrong,
we can only look at our own personal history
and recognize our neither here nor there imperfection.

We did what we must to survive as best we can,
perhaps, with as little harm as possible. But ...
In sum, we've all done more harm than good.

{We're just here for the story.}

.....

How I learned to care deeply for another human being. What is war good for?

My first wife, Herta was a child of World War II. She was born in 1939 into a family of "Danube Swabians" – ethnic German colonists who had been settled by the Hapsburg Monarchy some two centuries before near the region where the Danube River runs through Novi Sad, then, Yugoslavia. By the time she was two, a tiny, frail, shy child, Herta was living a horrific existence of chaos, malnutrition and stultifying fear. As a result of the complicated allegiances, her father uprooted the family and left their home just ahead of the worst of the genocide carried out on the Danube Swabians by the Tito Partisans, only to be conscripted into the German Nazi army. At the decimating war's end, home again, Herta's father would fashion sandals out of scrapped truck tires for her mother to trade for a cardboard suitcase full of cherries to feed the family of five ...on a good day.

Virtually every night of the 9 years I spent with Herta, she awoke at least once in a cold sweat in abject terror from a relentless, unending nightmare of war. And every night I held and rocked her in my arms reassuring her that everything was alright. But, I didn't have the language, much less a way of comprehending the effects of a post traumatic experience of such magnitude. As much as I tenderly rocked and reassured her everything was alright, I was never able to reach and dissolve its core. My intentions were misguided. I yearned too hard to be the one who took her pain away. A pain too large for me. It broke my heart. Herta being Herta broke my heart wide open in a way that could never be repaired. I was wrong when I told her, "everything was alright." Clearly it was not alright. Never was, never will be. Unable to purge the hell that was within her, Herta sadly surrendered, died in my arms. She was only 49 years old, had lived only half her life, and the worst of it at that. She taught me intimately, viscerally the results of war. What war actually is. What war does to a tender human spirit. What it is to live with the long tails of hell. And in that shared hell I learned to care deeply for another human being. To share a pain larger than self itself. And hope, only hope that sharing pain is not all there is to being human.

.....

For a while I gave up on Hope. But
now through the darkness I hear it's wiggling
it's way back in. Only because it has to,
if there is to be any hope that we survive at all.

{Can I only hope that sharing love is not all there is to being human?}

.....
Feel the Hum

Did you know there are no words to the national anthem of Spain?
The "*Marcha Real*" anthem isn't sung, it's hummed. Although the "Royal March" had lyrics in the past, they are no longer used. Isn't that a great idea for uniting a people? Especially us in the US. Instead of blowing shit up — bombs bursting in air — before every ball game, we could just feel the hum.

.....
Remember way back when on Sunday, April 01, 2001, April Fool's

Ed Bradley trashed Dr. Andrew Weil on 60 Minutes because, more or less, he was a leading advocate for alternative medicine? Ed's big indictment? The undercount in some of Dr. Weil's supplements. *As if* the good doctor was sitting at home alone shorting the count of pills going into each bottle. But then, perhaps, this hatchet job might, just might, have been divine karma for young student Andy Weil's take down of professor Dr. Richard Alpert — revenge for Alpert not letting Andy in the backdoor of the Harvard Psychedelic Club, for Bogarting the mescaline.

.....
Big Mind, Open Mind

You can't help change a mind that isn't looking to change.

.....
On the economy of Kindness

*"Every person you meet has a god
and is an animal. Find both."
~William Stafford*

My god is rare, not unheard of among fearful animals, but more rare. Elusive, with only surprising unpaid cameo appearances, *my god is kindness*. A more prevalent god among the herd is money, "in money we trust," they say. "Whoever said money can't buy happiness isn't spending it right," teases the Lexus ads. But then, Time magazine retorts, "why *aren't* your lucrative promotion, five-bedroom house and fat 401(k) cheering you up?" When is enough enough? Kindness, by turn, *is* the outward reach of happiness, *is* agreeably lenient of the impulse to defend and offend, and rich in love, or can be. Invite the gap that can possibly fill you with feeling what the other feels. For a moment. For a moment of '*being with*' can resist the temptation to buy into the selfish lack, invest in the 'not enough' grab, the empty anxious want for more — a moment connecting deeply with another can spend generously and never be at a loss, the surplus embrace of kindness.

.....
Strong Silent Type, the legacy

I couldn't stop the march to war, I couldn't stop the war, not one war.
I couldn't stop, my father from killing himself with alcohol. Wasn't my place.
I was too little, didn't know enough. Thrown off by how sensitive this manly man was beneath the brooding. Too sensitive. Like me.

*Don't get me wrong. Sometimes there was hope
in the silence. There were moments of peace.
Laughter in the garden hose. Wonder. But ...*

Inside, the raging wars, no sign of grief. No relief. I take his place. I can't stop. I can't stop grieving. Weak. I'm too little, don't know enough. Even sober, too sensitive to face the face of deeply sad,

darkly menacing wars marching on, unstopably
marching on, out there – out there forcing their way in,
marching on in here. In this silent dark, I'm still
too little, still don't know enough. Inside out, I can't
stop. I have no children to pass on the baton.

Thank God.

{#Roots of a conscientious objector}

.....

Okay! Did you buckle down? Buckle up? Or unbuckle?

Restraining aggression, my eye!

I too hear the wilderness listening, still...

No, amigo, the time for politeness has passed,
it's time to converse — heads-up! Abandon restraint,
let it out, let the caged bird sing. In the absence of ruth –
ruthless, mission, scheme or guile, the wilderness too,
in its unbridled way, talks back bloody.

If you can't share your grief with the ones you love,
how can you share your love with the ones you grieve?
It can't be "*the self most centrally yours*" minus the mad,
sad and afraid. It's the whole kit and caboodle.

{#RobertBly@TheDarknessAroundUsIsDeep #MayaAngelou@IKnowWhytheCagedBirdSings}

.....

Appropriateness, the Difference Between: Dear William Stafford,

Restraining aggression invites its expression, the passive wallflower invites hostile picking,
non-action invites the party poking fun at your expense.

Ultimately more useful than *restraining aggression* is *asserting appropriateness*,
What the Buddha might call *Right Action*. It's not doing nothing – turning the other cheek,
it's not reacting vindictively – an eye for an eye, it's asserting honesty, care, and concern,
facing shared truth with the face of peace, love, kindness and compassion in the difference between.

Difference Between: *Assertive, Aggressive and Passive*

Assertive behavior is characterized by honesty, confidence, care, active participation, and concern for the rights of others. A person who displays assertive behavior is always honest and speaks confidently. He actively engages in the situation and deals directly with the problem. Such behavior is often considered as superior and a better method of dealing with situations. A person with assertive behavior is concerned about the rights of others and does not violate them. They express their desires and opinions openly which leads to better understanding. They are not only confident of their opinions but also of themselves. This allows them to be satisfied with the manner in which they handle situations. When it comes to relationships with others, their honesty and straightforwardness allow them to improve their relationships and strengthen them.

Aggressive behavior is characterized by violence and hostility towards others. Unlike those with assertive behavior, an individual who has an aggressive behavior is not concerned about others. He is selfish and very opinionated. He does not listen to others but approaches the situation from his point of view alone. Aggressive behavior and assertive behavior share a certain characteristic. That is expressiveness. Just as an assertive individual, an aggressive individual also expresses himself. However, this can be full of hostility.

Passive behavior is non-expressive. They do not express their opinions or their needs. They do not play an active role and allows others to make choices for them. They are usually indifferent to others and are isolated. Unlike an aggressive person, a passive person does not directly express the anger but keeps it within. He lacks confidence and can be abused by others due to this characteristic. Another key feature in such an individual is that he would not face the situation or the problem, but prefers to avoid it.

Between Face-to-Face and Back-to-Back: Appropriateness

Appropriateness, the quality of being suitable or right for a particular situation or occasion.

That's the art, isn't it? Knowing when. . . "right" actions spring from compassion.

Knowing when to face head on, to confront or handle directly with determination,

or knowing when to turn your back on the face-to-face and ameliorate, mediate, arbitrate, intervene, intercede with the finesse of the heart, the heart of the matter.

{SEE: <https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-aggressive-passive-and-vs-assertive-behavior/>}

Sociability

Little storms you can weather quietly alone. Okay.

But for the big tornado, hide in the potato cellar with a hand to hold. A hooting and a hollering in unison.

I know you're busy. But that doesn't stop me
from wanting to interrupt
you. I know you have important
things to tend to, because I'm one.
Dad? ...Dad? Sir?

The jacaranda blossom hit my windshield like a dart as I waited for the arrow to turn green. The blossom dart blows me off as I make my turn. This isn't a metaphor, it's a blossom turning left, going down.

Don't fret our pending demise, sweetheart, piece by piece. We'll continue to do what we can all the way to the end. Picking pocket posies all along our merry way. Laughing, laughing, we all fall down.

{ "Ring Around the Rosie" may be about the 1665 Great Bubonic Plague of London and 'Pocket Full of Posies' may be stuffing your pockets with the flowers to help ward off the stench of death. Ashes, ashes as in "ashes to ashes, dust to dust"...well you get the drift ...we all must die — <all along our merry way: "Merrily We Roll Along"> }

On the Sidewalk, In the Street, show me a sign

What, girl? You think I need to see your pubic in public, every sinew, every rippling muscle around your spandex tight bony ass? I'm not your bait. You're not my date. Take your junk advertising somewhere else. Further down the street — a one index finger salute to the Yellow Jacket who holds the "SLOW" sign.

{COMMENT: There's very little that wouldn't be improved by slowing down and considering others.}

There's a time in 1989, a few months after I met a smart, pretty girl. A potential girlfriend? She's on the off ramp exiting the I-8 freeway in a 'big boat' 1976 Plymouth Volare, when on the cloverleaf interchange another Volare, exactly like hers, went past in the other direction. *What are the chances?*

Thought I'd run a gullibility check, got all excited, "Did you see that? That was us! That was us going the other way? What? What? How is that possible? What are you talking about? That was us three years from now? Did you see it? Really? That was us? Must have been a rift in the time-space continuum."

I forget it if was before or after, but she called me. She was up in L.A. and needed to get back to San Diego, but if she took her foot of the gas, the Volare would stall out. I drove up and followed her, white knuckled, as she drove back home non-stop.

Strangest thing is, just a few years later she would become my wife.

{#Volare is Italian meaning, 'to fly'}

For the longest time I thought it was me.

Now I'm convinced, it's life. *Life is strange.*

They only want to hear what they already know. Pay the ticket price to bob their collectives heads, "Yep, that's right." When they ask you to be the featured speaker at the "Find Your Voice!" symposium, don't tell'm 'You already have a voice, go with the one you've got.' If you do, you won't be invited back to next year's erudite event, "Learn to Listen".

{#KimStafford @ Early Morning: Remembering My Father, William Stafford. + #RamDass}

Can the Circle Be Unbroken (By and By)

I was standing by my window
On a cold and cloudy day
When I saw the hearse come rolling
For to carry my mother away.
Will the circle be unbroken
By and by Lord, by and by
There's a better home awaiting
In the sky Lord, in the sky.

Well, I went back home, home was lonely
For my mother she was gone
And all my family there was cryin'
For out home felt sad and alone.
Will the circle be unbroken
By and by Lord, by and by
There's a better home awaiting
In the sky Lord, in the sky.

Undertaker, undertaker, undertaker
Won't you please drive slow
For that lady you are haulin'
Lord, I hate to see her go.
Will the circle be unbroken
By and by Lord, by and by
There's a better home awaiting
In the sky Lord, in the sky.

Can the Data Be Unbroken (Bye and Bye)

I was mousing 'round in my Windows
On a cold and cloudy day
When I saw the crash come rolling
For to carry my motherboard away.
Will the data be unbroken
Bye, bye Lord, bye and bye
There's a better back-up awaiting
In the cloud Lord, in the cloud.

Well, I went back to boot-up, boot-up was lonely
For my motherboard she was gone
And all my files there was cryin'
For boot-up felt sad and alone.
Will the data be unbroken
Bye, bye Lord, bye and bye
There's a better back-up awaiting
In the cloud Lord, in the cloud.

PC repair tech, PC repair tech, PC repair tech
Won't you please save my drive
For that programs you are restorin'
Lord, I hate to see'm go.
Will the data be unbroken
Bye, bye Lord, bye and bye
There's a better back-up awaiting
In the cloud Lord, in the cloud.
There's a better back-up awaiting
In the cloud Lord, in the cloud.

There's a better home awaiting
In the sky Lord, in the sky...

Can the Circle Be Unbroken (By and By)
Songwriter: Alvin Pleasant Delaney Carter
Published: June 1935

.....

What happened? What happened?
What happened to this day?

It got away, got away.
It got away.

.....

Young mothers chatter in the predawn
elementary school playground
in the dizzily rain, doing
the warrior pose.

.....

My wife has two bibs, one cloth and
one paper. Still, the potato soup
gets through.
Her teachers told her,
"You must show your work."

{#HazmatSuit??}

.....

{Thursday, June 09, 2022}

It's not that I turn up my nose when I hear,
*"The prestigious Brookings Institution placed
its president, retired four-star Marine Gen.
John Allen, on administrative leave Wednesday
amid a federal investigation into his role
in an illegal lobbying campaign on behalf
of the wealthy Persian Gulf nation of Qatar."*
It's that I've become so used to nothing becoming of it.

.....

SELF as an ever evolving network of networks

*If you have a self, don't take it personally.
Be in yourself as if you lived here. A guest.
Shop, yes, but first, before you buy, get to know me.*

The expression of self is not fixed, it's not one thing, it varies with conditions, context and the weather. Self is not one thing, it's not a 'thing' at all. Think of your Self as a personal shopper who goes from store to store in the mall buying this and that, putting together outfits for you to try on, adding in accessories, mixing this style with that. She's paid for her opinion. Your personal shopper has nothing to lose except her reputation, her credibility, and that's what she feeds on. Your personal shopper is an ever evolving network of networks. *This* self is both an individual, a distinct node on your virtual simulated neural networks, yet borrows from all the others, and is ever in debt to the whole, is a shape-shifter.

Forming *even* a temporal self is a complex of relationships. A newborn get its sustenance, its reason for being mostly from mother, and that relationship grows as neurons signal one to another, 'Ah! *this feels good!*' or not. A newborn's relationship with its mother is one expression of self, with father another. Father is a different kind of stimuli. As are siblings. On goes the compounding expression of self within the family unit, an exercise ever unfolding, reaching out well

past when our precious baby forms an identity as her/she and receives her terminal post graduate degree, and begins to contrast her new formed self with the self in the marketplace of greater society she yearns to become.

The relation of the self-informed Self, once again, ever reconciling, forming and contrasting, testing new boundaries, consolidating . . . consolidates around what? Around what brings more life. And there's the rub. If a strong confident majority of the factors going into forming our Self are not a peace with one another, if they war, that war will turn towards less life, not more, which is why this proportionately is the point in time most prone to suicidal ideation. The end of self. Suicidal ideation is not a diagnosis but is a symptom of some mental dis-orders – cognitive dissonance, perhaps in response to adverse events that don't fit the picture in the matrix of the mind of the ready to blossom Self. Nothing is as precious to self, so life affirming, as the clarity appropriate to the instance of belonging to this moment.

You are, then, after all, the dizzying agency of your personal shopper – the near infinite permutations of the interchange between the body responsible for the basic elemental, biological structure of select neurons interchanging with the constructed feed-back reality layered plastic survival structure of your environment's mythic government – the rules that govern in the hierarchy of each social grouping – the synthesis of each cell of your *inner neural networks* with the interlaced core nodes of *outer social networks*, the ever evolving network of networks you consistently know as 'me.'

Why is a **poetry reading** so different
from **reading poetry**? *Voice.*

The ready voice within, or
an affected drone without.

The voice within, more simply: "*I & Thou.*"

{#NaomiShihabNye@BecauseOfLibrariesWeCanSayTheseThings + #MartinBuber}

Voice Within: *constructed by the raw and natural, not artificially by the lyrical or melodious, contrived meaning or any other imposition; True sound "sounds true" ...as it is. Such!*

For years, I used to take the same walk every day. Same streets, same turns. At roughly the same time of day. I never took the same walk twice. There was always something new, something changed. something I had seen before. I would learn a new plant's name, and there it was — appearing magically. And it was be colored by feelings, both subtle and gross, I brought to the walk, the conversation I might have with my beloved. Both inner and outer happenings. That too is what reading poetry aloud can be. The same words, the same turn of phrases, the same ideas and concepts different every time it's read — fresh for what you bring to this moment. That's the way to read a poem, both when read with inner or outer voice. After all, that's the way poetry is created.

It's not a matter of opinion.
I don't criticize, I critique.
Maybe you *could* have a stone in every chapter.

{#NaomiShihabNye@EditorialSuggestions}

"Did you like that lunch?"
"Yummy, yummy, yummy,
tummy, tummy, tummy!"

Aren't all lives exotic?

In Those We Trust: Can you think of a single institution where Child Sexual Abuse is *NOT* prevalent?

...family, teacher, priest, sports coach, scout leader, healthcare facilitator, foster care provider, other custodial, armed forces command, as well the rank & file . . . including home, school, or work (in places where child labor is common). Child marriage is one of the main forms of **child sexual abuse**;

UNICEF has stated that child marriage "represents perhaps the most prevalent form of sexual abuse and exploitation of girls".

{#ChildSexualAbuse@institutional}

.....

If all I want is peace, and
all you want is to fight, why
would I go to that convention?

.....

Stocked. Stacked. Stoked. Grocery shopping is done.

.....

The upside of being anonymous, I can keep the acknowledgements brief.

.....

I can't tell the truth anymore. I can't tell truth from fiction.
They tell me we're in a 100 year drought, and I can't flush my toilet.

.....

You say, "*I never would have taken your father's home!*"
That would hurt your heart. Yet when your cronies come
in the dark of night and by proxy do just that, do you ask
them the next morning, about the recent history
as they hand the keys over to you, insisting
you don't look a gift horse in the mouth?

Do you read history when you can't sleep,
or hear the wall's wailing?

{#NaomiShihabNye@DoublePeace + [A 'Forgotten History' Of How The U.S. Government Segregated America](#)}

.....

Ukraine's teen drone hero "*I was happy that we destroyed someone*"

His father was happy to leave the piloting to the boy.

As Russian and Ukrainian forces battled furiously for control of Kyiv's outskirts, Ukrainian soldiers finally urged the Pokrasa family to leave their village, which Russian troops subsequently occupied. With all adult men up to age 60 under government orders to stay in the country, the elder Pokrasa couldn't join his wife and son when they fled to neighboring Poland. They came back a few weeks ago, when Andriy had finished his school year. "I can operate the drone, but my son does it much better. We immediately decided he would do it," Stanislav Pokrasa, 41, said. They aren't sure how many Russian targets were destroyed using information they provided. But they saw the devastation wrought on the Russian convoy when they later flew the drone back over the charred hulks of trucks and tanks near a town west of Kyiv and off a strategically important highway that leads to the capital. "There were more than 20 Russian military vehicles destroyed, among them fuel trucks and tanks," the father said. "I was happy that we destroyed someone," Andriy said. "I was happy that I contributed, that I was able to do something. Not just sitting and waiting." Andriy Pokrasa, 15, and his dad, Stanislav, are being hailed in Ukraine for their volunteer aerial reconnaissance work in the early days of the invasion, when Russian troops barreling in from the north made an ultimately failed attempt to take the capital and bring the country to its knees.

{FOUND: <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-kyiv-politics-1115558b2d4db5a1146a2bc65ec8a275>}

.....

That's what I'm saying here

Do you have me on speed dial? Take me off!
I'm stewing, slow food BBQ* style.
Don't make me have to come over there
and clean your clock.

{*BBQ, but the way "BBQ" stands in for, is an abbreviation for, the word *barbecue*, which itself is derived from the language of a Caribbean Indian tribe called the Taino. The way the word '*barbecue*' stands in for, is appropriated from, the Taino word for 'grilling on a raised wooden grate', *barbacoa* – pronounced: baar-buh-kow-uh — but not meat. I don't eat meat. I don't eat meat for reasons beyond the scope of this rant. Reasons too intricately interwoven into the web of life to explain in anything less than an unabridged Wikipedia. Actually, I don't grill either. More like pan fry. Not wok style. More like an omelet in a non-stick skillet. Eggs are okay. Not ideal for the added stress and pain they cause hens to lay for me, and million others just like me, an egg for breakfast and not to become a chick of their own. But not simply an omelet either, more like a *frittata* with green & red bell peppers, lightly sautéed onions to make your eyes water, spongy, earthy mushrooms, button or perhaps *Shitake* – on a happy day – tomato ketchup and goat cheese. Goat cheese is okay in the same way chicken eggs are okay. Not ideal for the added stress and pain it causes mama goats that should be going straight into raising their own kids. But simply, a well-endowed omelet cooked slow on a low flame that's more like a frittata, an Italian word that roughly translates to "*fried*." As in, "it's fried egg day". **That's what I'm saying here** when I say "BBQ style." I'm saying, "*It's a low and slow fried egg day I'm a stewing. Buzz-off, don't rush me, or I'll have to come over to your place and blow the dust out of the cogs of your overly greased gears, because you're clearly just spinning your wheels, killing time, going nowhere fast, too fast. If you got the message, hang-up the phone and get a life!*"}

.....

Two bits:

Planning a trip I'll never take

June 12, 2022

Right track, wrong train.
Cars are the way to go to see the sights.
Planning a trip I'll never take is a trip in itself.
Planning a trip to celebrate my mother's life,
my mother who passed away last December.
The inflating gas prices alone makes the drive,
the 3,000 mile drive – one way – through the July
Arizona desert, through Oklahoma, Missouri, Ohio
to New Bedford, Massachusetts prohibitive. For
a one day stay by Buzzard's bay. But imagining the drive,
a delight. Probably the last time I'll get to see such sights.
Also, the again surging Coronavirus pandemic is at the highest
risk of unchecked community spread everywhere I'd go.
Airplanes, airports are mega spreader events in their own right.
Airlines cancel flights willy-nilly because their staff is down and out
with COVID. What chance would I have not to have my ticket cancelled?

Regrets

July 12, 2022

Family, I've been keeping my eye on the situation. With the continued and growing number of new COVID cases, hospitalizations and deaths, the persistent concern over the effects of long-haul COVID, and underwhelming response and protocol in general, and in particular of Delta Airlines, especially on long flights and in airports, I regret to have to say I won't be traveling to mom's Celebration of Life event in Nonquit. I've really enjoyed the run-up of '*looking forward*' to our all too brief extended family gathering, and am sad to have to bow out – one way, or another, it's not a time for me to travel to celebrate. It's a time to merely celebrate. Alone together.

.....

"It's late but everything comes next," Naomi Shihab Nye

{#SynanonFounderCharlesDederich@ "Today is the first day of the rest of your life."}

.....

"Don't you think oblivion is a little hard to take? Shouldn't we play with it a bit while we're still on this side?"
"Actually, I never really think about oblivion."
.....

From the heart of top chef José Andrés:

I believe you are an honest actor. **I believe in you, Tom Colicchio.**
You've nicked the hard shell, marinated the ambitious and now savor
a mouth feel of kindness. Judgments once tough love, now 'wet heat' softened.
Recipes inclusive, showcase a mixed bag of humanity. Plating a feast, your table presentation
appeals to an eye of a world Internationale. I'll never taste your food, but I believe you are an honest arbiter.
I believe you, Tom Colicchio can parse the difference, discriminate to one grain of salt. And that keen sense
you show on your Show takes on the wider issues of the day, 'wet heat' softened, savoring a mouth feel
of compassion, that clear keen sense taking charge of the community kitchen feeds us all.

{José Ramón Andrés Puerta is a Spanish chef, and founder of World Central Kitchen, a non-profit devoted to providing meals in the
wake of natural disasters. Thomas Patrick Colicchio is an American celebrity chef. He is also the founder of Crafted Hospitality.}
.....

"Are you a man after my own heart?"

"Like a hound on the scent!"
.....

Opening Morning Salvos

Do you get orders from your wife?

Anticipated start date, June 13th,
(I guess they're not slurring our street.)

My darling man child.

(That's like a child talking,
that's like a two year old.)

I hear the music in my legs when I talk.

*Right, babe?**

Don't think I don't love you,
just because I poop.

"Sorry, honey. That poem's closed."

Honey?? <Upward Inflection>

{*#NaomiShihabNye@OneBoyToldMe: "Music lives inside my legs. / It's coming out when I talk." <https://youtu.be/JYCZSLSPISq> |
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/56601/one-boy-told-me> }
.....

Dear Cousin,

I have just the place for these Moonflowers!

In a fresh pot in the found red chair on our south side fence line.
When we first moved into this property, on the north side perimeter
there was a 'screen' of purple Morning Glories ten feet high
shielding our exposure to our 'good fences make good neighbors' neighbors.
These invaders had travelled along the power-line from our other neighbors
to the northwest two doors down. Eventually their weight caused the power-line
to sag so much SDG&E came out and hacked'm back to kingdom come.
After further events, we would build a bamboo fence to screen us from the neighbors.
And by now, the glory of Morning Glories have crept back. Now we have to regularly, judiciously
prune these pernicious invaders to maintain a delicate balance. And
in the interim be dazzled by moments of elegant beauty.

Your lovely gift of white Moonflowers seeds are a species of Morning Glory, cousins to our northern invaders. I know their type, and have just the place for them — contained! Frost-free, they'll be perennials here. I'll take out the pot of succulents in that red chair to the south and replace it with a fresh pot of the same size and, starting cautiously, will gently place 4 seeds dead center, one half inch down in rich new potting soil, watering appropriately for our semi-arid micro-climate and patiently wait the ten to twenty days for them to emerge. As they vine vines divine, we'll work out where they go next.

"Deer resistant. Caution: All parts of this plant are poisonous if ingested." Ha! The package of seeds you sent reads like poetry, "Enjoy moonflower's evening performance and heady fragrance by training it on a porch column, or a trellis under a window. This Florida native has magnificent flowers that unfold within 2 to 3 minutes, an event worth inviting guests!"

Cousin, pull up a chair. Consider yourself invited!



Like most Americans over 70, I have too much stuff. So much stuff I don't even know what all I have. I try to unload as I can. In that spirit, I took a couple of books, including an unabridged copy of Mark Twain's Huck Finn, to a neighbor's Little Free Library. Unfortunately, I came back with a chair. It didn't have a seat, but I just couldn't let an old well-built bentwood chair be sent to the landfill. The craftsmanship alone deserved better than that. So in the spirit of the day, I made a rule, "No new stuff," and with the child of Dr. Seuss, Mary Poppins and Martha Stewart in mind, I cobbled together a new use for the old chair. Sprayed with left-over glossy red apple paint, and with a circular hole cut in a piece of scrap plywood, I inserted an old terra cotta pot, and voila! Accented with a once bought, never used golf umbrella, supported by a thin 'only God knows where that came from' steel bar, my wife filled the pot with soil and a few succulent clippings from the garden, and there you have it: chair as pot holder with whimsy.

Initially I planned to finish the project to Mary Berry perfection, but as fitting the occasion, it turned out the rules called for shabby. Not shabby chic in that other Brit, Rachel Ashwell's 'sloppy, wrinkled' style, but simply shabby, or perhaps shabby comic.

Funny two ways: Funny peculiar, and funny haha. More funny, less stuff.

It's nice being half of an adult couple. Then we get to take turns being children again.

.....

An Ode to Ambiguity

Ambiguity is a fork in the road not taken.
A branching in the tree rooted in the earth
of possibilities. Roots intertwined with neighboring

roots. Open to more than one view —
ambiguity is a window clearly inexact.

.....
Turns out, "I love you almost as much as water"
isn't what a girl wants to hear while
you're proposing marriage.

.....
Dear Federal Judges, if the defendant participates in a plot to overthrow the government, even if he's just
naively left holding the bag at the end of the day, it's irrelevant whether or not he has a prior criminal record.
You don't get a second chance to make a first impression, much less overthrow the people's democracy.

(SEE: [U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan](#), "In Jan. 6 cases, 1 judge stands out as the toughest punisher")

.....
I'm not sure if I know all of what I can do,
but I'm quite confident I know what I can't do.

.....
There's a few things you should know before I go. Don't feed the cat. We don't have a cat.
The cat belongs to the neighbors. And that goes for the squirrels too. The squirrels, the hummingbirds,
the raccoons and the opossums all belong to the neighbors. All they do is eat and shit and look cute.
Don't fall for that crap. We're not a youth hostel here. Give'm an inch, they'll take a mile.
You can feed the Geraniums, if you'd like. They'd like that. But don't encourage the Bougainvillea.
If there's a lightning storm and you hear thunder, turn-off the computers.
One time a lightning strike hit that telephone pole at the corner of the property, blew out the computers,
and sent my wife flying across the room like that little girl in The Exorcist.
You know, that 1973 film where that little girl spit up the green pea soup and her head spun around.
Just turn-off the computers. Even if there isn't a lightning storm, just turn-off the computers.
They're not good for anything anyways. That's about all you need to know around here, really.
I could go on, but you get the gist. Oh, yes, and don't make lists. You'll never get to the end of 'em.
Ticking boxes ain't all what it's cracked up to be.

{#MakeItEasy@content: fulfilled, satisfied, easy -- the opposite of goal-oriented}

.....
{VISITOR: #Alive@NaomiShihabNye}

Dear Abby, said someone from Oregon,
I am having trouble with my boyfriend's attachment
to an ancient gallon of milk still full
in his refrigerator. I told him it's me or the milk,
is this unreasonable? Dear Carolyn,
my brother won't speak to me
because fifty years ago I whispered
a monkey would kidnap him in the night
to take him back to his true family
but he should have known it was a joke
when it didn't happen, don't you think?
Dear Board of Education, no one will ever
remember a test. Repeat. Stories,
poems, projects, experiments,
mischief, yes, but never a test.
Dear Dog Behind the Fence, you really need
to calm down now. You have been barking every time
I walk to the compost for two years
and I have not robbed your house. Relax.

When I asked the man on the other side
if you bother him too, he smiled and said no,
he makes me feel less alone. Should I be more
worried about the dog or the man?

.....

Dear Ubereats, if I drop my phone into the toilet, how am I going to tell you I cannot complete the delivery?

.....

My wife has a condition. Red, soar, cracked lips at the corners of her mouth are the symptoms. Rosemary extract provided relief, for a while. Then needed more and more until it stopped being effective. She's found another treatment, the one thing so far that makes it better. Cookies. Not just any cookies. Uncle Eddie's Oatmeal Walnut, with or without chocolate chips. Unfortunately, Uncle Eddie is re-doing his packaging, or at least that's the word from the grocer, so they're out of stock. I can only hope it's not really a supply chain issue and this product line isn't sinking on a big boat far out to sea like so many others as a consequence of the pandemic that has been ravishing the world. I'd very much like my wife to get her cookies and be all better.

.....

May Gray and June Gloom, seasonable weather for semi-arid San Diego.
Which is A-OK with me. The rest of the country is baking in a heat wave.

{*May Gray and June Gloom*, sounds like a setup for an old vaudeville routine, right?}

.....

Speak as if your masked, speaking through four layers of cloth and a filter.
Elegant like an elephant. It's a good time to be a misanthrope.
I hope you're not thinking life is linear, you'll never get to the end of the line.

{HINT: don't turn poetry into a Sudoku puzzle!}

.....

I don't believe fantasy role playing is a path to your true self. I was there in the beginning in the *Chainmail*, when the stoner hip "heads" at the university were pushing *Dungeons & Dragons* as this great way to explore possible identities, create new social options. I intuited for myself its make-believe is more likely to distract, a way to lose yourself rather than confront what troubles you deeply, construct an alternate reality separate from what's dear to your unique core, split worlds — living fully in neither, and fracture our consensus societal reality. Even before I started down that path, before I could name it "*magic-thinking*," I closed the gate, never looked back. Until now, now it's how my niece makes her living, *Forbes* has added her to their list of 30 under 30 to watch. I only see my niece in the far off distance, and then only rarely. I doubt, for her costume changes alone, I'd recognize my niece if I passed her on the street, much less, how she frames the world we inhabit together. Still, I have to wonder what imagining impossible things brings us, and what we miss putting our collective focus where there is nothing to see but our own unexamined shadows.

.....

Welcome to the Metaverse

Tired of the same old worn out, home alone, maladaptive reality? Welcome to the Metaverse!
Here you can craft the skills that craft reality just the way you like it. The world is your oyster -- punch it!

"What i would recommend is to see if you can punch a pig, because what we want is some food, right? Getting started in minecraft you're going to need some food, and the best way to do that is to get a, you know, kill a pig or something..."

As you get your footing and dive deeper into the radial categories, you win, we win — twin win.
You get endorphins hits, we get your data bits. As you punch pigs, we track your every click for our clickbait.
After all, the foundation of the metaverse is surveillance capitalism . . . and ...tag . . . you're it!

{#Tom Boellstorff@ How we describe the metaverse makes a difference – today's words could shape tomorrow's reality and who benefits from it | June 15, 2022: <https://theconversation.com/how-we-describe-the-metaverse-makes-a-difference-todays-words-could-shape-tomorrows-reality-and-who-benefits-from-it-182819> + The Complete Minecraft Beginners Guide for 2022: <https://youtu.be/6XLk9uUjuFU> > The Breakdown, 400K+ subscribers}

.....

Hypothesis & Make Believe: *where to place your faith & loyalty*

Both religion and science are **belief systems**
principally built on a supposition or proposed explanation
made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation.
Science is predicated on observations made through our senses – empirical evidence.
Religion is rooted in supernatural make believe attributed to *some force* beyond scientific understanding
or the laws of nature. Beyond nature, of course, is an oxymoron,
the only way out is through the nature of a wish & a prayer.
To be believed, both belief systems require faith & loyalty.
For both suppose a core tenet so preposterous only a true believer *could* believe.
Such as, "All I can sense, all I perceive is all there is, I think therefore I am." or
"I am the voice for what is beyond understanding, may the force be with you."
Which only delineates which camp you're in, ...as if you need a camp.

.....

If you're looking for the **applicable truth**,
don't look to a research scientist, look
for a competent structural engineer.

.....

How in the world could this tiny battery powered thumb size **keyless remote fob**
transmit a data stream containing system commands, (and for security, rolling codes,) with enough 315MHz frequency radio waves in all directions to chirp my horn, flash my lights and unlock my car door before I even get out of the house? And how the heck does Google Maps use satellites and the magic of Wi-Fi networks to triangulate my (and a billion others) moving position so accurately? Forget about beaming me up Scotty, with all these radio-frequency *electromagnetic fields* aren't we confusing the worker bees, the drones, the queen — and not just me.

.....

Follow the thread: *one thing leads to another ...*

.....

{220617}

Relations between the two countries became hostile after the 2014 Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity, ...

Russia bombards Ukraine,
Ukraine's artillery fires back.
Who are you rooting for?

I'm rooting for the United Nations
to get their collective heads
out of their collective asses
and stop this madness.

Once and for all.

.....

Astute Husbandry

To the top pinky knuckle deep, plant four Moonflower seeds
in moist potting soil. I'm told, they need heat from the bottom
to get excited about life. I hope the seeds aren't upside down
and sprouting their way to China.

.....

I don't trust predictions. I trust change. Trust change will change organically. Predictions are a creative fiction. I can only follow 'supposers' so far. Memories fade. Can't trust re-collection, much less historic second drafts. Change, change however, happens presently. Change happens. Count on it. However, if the preacher politician predicts "It's time for change" . . . it's not to be trusted. Beware the soothsayer, roll out natural with change.

{*"Everything is always in transition, honey."*}

.....

One of Two, *Media*:

Mass Media, Media Culture, Consumer Culture

Media culture refers to the current Western capitalist society that emerged post WW2 under the influence of mass media. The term alludes to the overall impact and intellectual guidance exerted by the media (primarily TV, but also the press, radio and cinema), not only on public opinion but also on tastes and values. Media culture, with driven by advertising and public relations, is a system centered on the manipulation of the mass of society. Corporate media "are used primarily to represent and reproduce dominant ideologies." Media culture is associated with consumerism, and in this sense called alternatively "consumer culture." The news media mines the work of scientists and scholars often emphasizing elements that have inherent appeal or the power to amaze. Both scholarly facts and news stories get modified through popular transmission, often to the point of outright falsehoods. Driven by markets -- constantly immersed in trivia popular culture is "dumbing down. As a result, "tepid, the glib, and the senselessly cruel" topics become the norm. The concentration of media into a handful of large, multinational conglomerates decreased the amount of actual news or information and replaced it with entertainment or titillation that **reinforces "fears, prejudice, scapegoating processes, paranoia, and aggression."** This for profit media increasingly influences other institutions (e.g. politics, religion, sports), which become constructed alongside a media logic. "All mass media in the end alienate people from personal experience and though appearing to offset it, intensify their moral isolation from each other, from reality and from themselves," argues Van den Haag. Emphasizing shock-value and superficial thrills and themes that focus on the "basic instincts of aggression, revenge, violence, and greed formulaic media inaccurately represents the complexities of real life, **promotes and fosters the unreal, celebrates the surreal.** Media culture takes the place of the old traditional religions. The fervent exaltation for a given product, a characteristic consumerist phenomenon, compares to the "ecstasies of the convulsions and miracles of the old religious fetishism". The products consumers purchase create a story about who they are and whom they identify with. Conveyed to consumers through advertising, the creation of a "lifestyle" association through consumption buys into a 'makeover' with the new 'in crowd.'

The 'In' Crowd, 1965

Songwriter: Billy Page, Artist: Dobie Gray

*I'm in with the in crowd | I go where the in crowd goes
I'm in with the in crowd | And I know what the in crowd knows*

{Media Culture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_culture}

.....

Two of two, *Media*:

Social media is a rapidly evolving platform for people to communicate, express themselves and share content of all kinds regardless of the distance that separate them. As a tool, social media is a double-edged sword; while it has many benefits, it can also influence people in unhealthy ways. Social media has become a major part of our lives. It has totally affected our cultural practices in both positive and negative ways. There are so many positive impacts of social media on culture. Social media has increased connections between people and created an environment in which you can share your opinion, pictures and share knowledge on different spheres of life been academic, spiritual materials and just about life in general. On the other hand social media has influenced our cultural practice in negative ways. People can share whatever they want to on social media and some of this information might be inappropriate. The ugly part of social media is that there tons of unnecessary information shared by people and also bullying and harassment on social media has been increased. People can make brutal and negative comments about anything and anyone. Kids might be affected and are manipulated by some sites in which there is inappropriate information. For example the positive influence of social media on children is that it allows them to be competent citizens in a digital age where they can fully participate in the broader society and learn the social skills of that generation while the negative side of social media on children is

that screen relationships also detract real-life relationships and building social skills in children and teenagers. This happens as they grow up without learning how to read non-verbal cues and facial gestures of people. Social interaction is critical to developing the skills needed to understand other people's moods and emotions. Hence children growing up interacting mostly with social media may turn out non-empathetic and also become poor at communicating verbally and nonverbally. In line with its findings, the study made a number of recommendations to policy makers and parents; government should restrict on what should be posted on social media, to work hand in hand with mobile providers in monitoring of social media and bring to book for those found wanting and that parents should also monitor what the children are doing on social media.

{THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CULTURAL PRACTICE

<http://155.0.3.194:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/148>

CHATYOKA, AUDELL, 2019: [a dissertation](#) submitted to Cavendish University of Zambia as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Bachelor degree in Journalism and Mass Communication (BJMC)}

.....

Three of two (POSTSCRIPT) *Media*:

Did TV mortally wound God?
Will *social media* finish'm off?
Not if the White Trump Evangelicals
can hold it together.

.....

One Room Addition

Port-a-Potty dropped off in the neighbor's driveway.
Doesn't look good. Seven months later, still
doesn't look good. How long does it take to make
a room?

{#aCityIsNeverFinished}

.....

Dear Young People's Poet Laureate Naomi Shihab Nye, I found your book in the San Diego Library Children's Room. It was *Cast Away: Poems for Our Time*. I read between the lines, 'our times are trash'. So sad, so deeply, profoundly sad. Clearly you need a pep talk.

Remember when we were growing up? The "litterbug" shaming ad campaigns? The Crying Indian? Give a Hoot – Don't Pollute? Be part of the solution, not the pollution? Did any of that do a Hoot of good in the tradeoff between mounding trash and consumer gluttony? Even still, for ourselves alone, we chant 'Reuse, Reduce, Recycle'. According to Mother Jones' Bradford Plumer, "According to Heather Rogers' *Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Garbage*, the entire anti-litter movement was initiated by a consortium of industry groups who wanted to divert the nation's attention away from even more radical legislation to control the amount of waste these companies were putting out. It's a good story worth retelling." Sorry again to have to go all cynical noir real on you. But is it really worth retelling? Maybe as a cautionary tale, but please, please sweetheart, not as a roadmap for whitewash, rinse and repeat. Really, let's NOT make another generation of kids have to feel the full weight of the trash heap on their heads? Aw, precious one, don't they already have an overwhelming number of other things — bullying, antidepressants, TiKTok, mass school shootings to be depressed about? Do we need to heap it on? Can we just take a long collective sigh of relief, let the kiddies off the hook a smidge. Stop, stop, stop telling them our woes and listen, listen, listen to their heart songs.

Remember when we were kids in the 'leave your front door unlocked' wholesome, if not in actuality, hypocritical 50's? When the mass media culture was just taking root and we had, for the first time shared, unifying models for the triumph of wide-eyed innocence, playful humor and moral backbone in such third parent narratives as *Leave It to Beaver*, *Father Knows Best*, and *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet's* kids. Before the sly corporate mass consumer culture polluted our heads with jingles to buy, buy, buy, ...buy our way into oppressive wars, buy, buy, buy, discard, repeat — before our own ignited seven deadly sins sank us into ever empty despair, into violent protests, drug abuse and '*deterioration of social and family values*', as Barry Goldwater might preach. Way before President Bush's remedy for tragic push back to our gross excess from the larger world we exploit beseeched, "We cannot let the terrorists achieve the objective of

frightening our Nation to the point where we don't conduct business, where people don't shop ...don't to be afraid to go shopping for your families," encouraging Americans not to face cold, hard facts, not to face reality, but to "go to Disneyworld," as part of broader appeal to renew confidence. Embrace the surreal, not the real, such a deal.

After three generations of mass indoctrination diverting the nation's attention away from capital greed, do we really, really, really want to pile more such bullshit on top of these fresh impressionable little baby millennials? Ever too soon squash the heart of innocence. Yes, our times are full of trouble and disappointment, as all the previous times have been — only at a much greater scale, more urgently afire. Though in some instances it is getting better and better, it is also getting worse and worse, faster and faster. Alarmingly worse. Do we have to pop the bubble even sooner and rob the cradle of its own small precious time to play with sticks and stones and mud in garden hoses before handing over this seriously awful, aching mess to 'Hey Siri' devices for concerns too large and buy into Amazon home delivery to accumulate waste too high, and by such conveniently misguided virtue castaway the souls of our toddlers? Do we really have to? Isn't that the wrong rite of passage for now? Isn't there any ray of hope, unadulterated hope?

Can we all, old ones included, get the pure good news straight from the mouth of babes and simply *Press 3 for a pep talk from kindergartners*. Amid a crush of heavy news from around the world, who couldn't use some sage advice right now? A new hotline which gives you such options for joy — encouraging words from a resilient group of kindergartners. Just what our gloomy country needs. The kids at West Side Elementary in Healdsburg, California's *Peptoc hotline!* Help spread the word, spread the joy! And perhaps when we reach critical mass, promoting kids like these to scale, they will be bold and strong enough to both emotionally pick us up AND wise enough to pick up after themselves.

Listening.

{The Origins of Anti-Litter Campaigns,

<https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2006/05/origins-anti-litter-campaigns/>

Bradford Plumer | May 22, 2006 | *Press 3 for a pep talk from kindergartners. A new hotline gives you options for joy*

<https://www.npr.org/2022/03/06/1084800784/peptoc-hotline-kindergarteners>

Adrian Florido and Hiba Ahmad | March 6, 2022}

.....

Fran Lebowitz

public speaking

wit, humorist really lazy,

doesn't do hard things

sardonic, brash,

strong opinions

about everything,

including opinions

makes her living

giving opinions

reserves all fear

for writing

Fran Lebowitz

a famous writer

famously doesn't write

wrote hilarious,

elegant columns

for Andy Warhol's

Interview magazine

said Andy made fame

too famous jokingly coining "superstar"

for Candy Darling and Ultra Violet

"This is what happens when an inside joke gets into the water supply"

Fran didn't especially like Warhol, Andy

sought out the psychologically fragile

saw him every day, never talked that much

In her last year of working at *Interview*
Warhol paid her in paintings. She liked his paintings
about as much as she liked him, sold them cheaply
to pay the rent, two weeks later Andy died,
sending his prices stratospheric
"I will always believe that he did that deliberately"
"Yes, he knew I'd sold them and he said to himself:
'This'll show her!'" Fran Lebowitz is an only child
living in New York City

She walks everywhere she goes

{Public Speaking (2010) | Fran Lebowitz, Martin Scorsese | #Documentary: <https://youtu.be/G46BVjjkDfA> + Fran Lebowitz:

'If people disagree with me, so what?' <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/aug/28/fran-lebowitz-if-people-disagree-with-me-so-what>}

{FOOTNOTE: Warhol jokingly coined the term "superstar" to encourage the grandiose behavior of Factory regulars like Candy Darling and Ultra Violet. **Candy Darling** (1944 – 1974) was an American actress, best known as a Warhol superstar and transgender icon. She starred in Andy Warhol's films *Flesh* (1968) and *Women in Revolt* (1971), and was a muse of The Velvet Underground. Isabelle Collin Dufresne (1935 – 2014), known professionally as **Ultra Violet**, was a French-American artist, author, and both a colleague of Andy Warhol and one of his so-called Superstars. Earlier in her career, she worked for and studied with surrealist artist Salvador Dalí. Dufresne lived and worked in New York City, and also had a studio in Nice, France.}

.....

A Case of You . . . I must ask

The form you were born into, not bad,
not bad at all. But what really makes you beautiful,
Joni Mitchell is unrelenting grace. A beauty which
never grew old.

Words & pictures, songs & portraits.
And that voice! With all your ventures
and adventures in the world,
what makes L.A. your workplace,
B.C. is your heartbeat?

{#nosy@fandom}

.....

The Marriage of Man & Caffeine 2

Coffee Achievers: follow the bouncing bean

(Or: Study shows caffeine causes jitters, L-theanine soothes mood)

Before coffee neurostimulation Gregorian chanting focused
the associative mind remembering long passages
connected 2 and 2 and oddly 3 cognitive performance and mood
Before coffee men got the juices going
wrestling in the mud women had crying babies

Now read coffee history out of Africa to Arabic stars, tiles and algebra
to western art, enlightenment and industry to exploding atomic bombs,
consumerism and waste ...over-neuro-connections gone berserk

Beware Chinese specialty coffee boom—millions of young coffee aficionados searching for new cafés.

{STUDY HISTORY: The **first coffeehouse** in Constantinople was opened in 1475 by traders arriving from Damascus and Aleppo. Soon after, coffeehouses became part of the Ottoman culture, spreading rapidly to all regions of the Ottoman Empire. Skip two centuries to Paris in 1689, Procopio Cutò opens the Café Procope, this first coffeehouse still exists today and was a major meeting place of the French Enlightenment; Voltaire, Rousseau, and Denis Diderot frequented it, and it is arguably the birthplace of the Encyclopédie, the first modern encyclopedia. It was 1988 when Nestlé first sold instant **coffee in China**, a pitch-black liquid with an aroma reminiscent of rebellion—credited by some as the rise of Western food culture in the Far East. By 1999, freshly ground coffee was presented to Chinese alongside a dose of drama (cue Sex and the City). Starbucks opened its first shop in Beijing, selling not only coffee, but the allure of a different—Western—lifestyle. ~ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coffee#Society_and_culture Since then, China's coffee market has developed on pace with China's broader economy and society, if not faster. Chinese millennials and Gen Z are

particularly open-minded and hungry for new experiences. This is a major factor in the Chinese specialty coffee boom seen throughout the last decade—millions of young coffee aficionados searching for new cafés to try. ~ <https://sca.coffee/sca-news/25/issue-13/an-emerging-market-the-rise-of-chinas-coffee-drinking-culture> The L-theanine and caffeine combination improved both speed and accuracy of performance of the attention-switching task at 60 min, and reduced susceptibility to distracting information in the memory task at both 60 min and 90 min. ~ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18681988/> }

.....

Antonyms of Goal-oriented

Context: without a specific purpose, meaning or goal; lacking direction

- content meaningless
- fulfilled insignificant
- satisfied hollow
- easy wandering
- carefree careless

aimless, pointless, purposeless, meaningless, senseless, fruitless, hollow, drifting, frivolous, inconsequential, redundant, superfluous, **useless**, valueless, **worthless**, adrift, futile, **irrelevant**, unproductive, random, haphazard, desultory, directionless, erratic, indiscriminate, capricious, flighty, **goalless**, heedless, **lost**, pointless, vagrant, careless

{
Maybe you're home, the chores are done, you have everything you need plus a full closet – more than enough, maybe it's not much compared to the Jones, but your fat and happy.
Maybe you've reached the mountain peak and are enjoying the view.
Maybe you have a great passion for what you do, yet no ambition that it be more or other than what it is.
Maybe your meaning isn't found in striving, but in being – in the appreciation *that* you are.
So to review – being *careless* is negative, it means not giving the necessary attention or thought to your words/actions. And being *carefree* is positive; it means feeling nice and light, without stress, worries, or heavy obligations – *goalless*.
}

.....

"I'm tired of trying to set right in two minutes what the radio and the papers and the movies have been setting wrong for years."

{#Lennie, conscientious objector during WW2, from **Down in my Heart – Peace Witness in War Time**, by William Stafford}

{220517}

These three Naomis: a benign foraging
for conversation around sustainable agriculture in an effort to build economically and socially just communities

I have to wonder if Naomi Shihab Nye and Naomi Klein
know Naomi Starkman like best friends, like bosom buddies do.
I hope so.

Founder and editor-in-chief of *Civil Eats* —
a daily news source for critical thought about the American food system —
University of California Global Food Initiative 30 under 30,
Starkman, is an avid organic gardener, having worked on several farms.

I have to hope that these three Naomis have secret handshakes.
Handshakes for foraging, searching for sustainably wild food resources,
as it plays an important role in an animal's ability — an animal such as ours —
to survive and reproduce in response to the ever changing environment
where this animal lives, ...planet earth.

As a founding board member of the *Food & Environment Reporting Network*,
and as the director of communications and policy at *Slow Food Nation*,

what does this Naomi, Naomi Starkman bring to the table?
The Ethics of the "organic whole of nature"?
I have to hope. I can only hope. In the nick of time.

{#NaomiStarkman @ <https://civileats.com/about/who-we-are/>}

.....
"There are three types of persons -- the realists (who say our senses tell us all), the conventionalists (who say there is something more, some power we should keep in good with, if it's convenient), and the third type, those concerned, really concerned, with going beyond the senses, with finding out what you can't see--which is what really matters."

~William Stafford's summary of Gerald Heard "divisions of men," from Down in my Heart – Peace Witness in War Time.

"Reports that say something hasn't happened are always interesting, because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns—the ones we don't know we don't know." ~Donald Rumsfeld

Okay then, somewhere in the ...in the gaps between the **Realists, Conventionalists and the Mystic** there is a path for **fantasy role-playing** within the unknowns that are possible knowables just this side of the impossible *unknown unknowns*. But, I don't know, ...where does it lead, ...is it akin to a raving maniac?

{SEE: "*I don't believe fantasy role playing is a path to your true self.*" DEFINITIONS: #Realists believe that there are no universal principles with which all states may guide their actions. Instead, a state must always be aware of the actions of the states around it and must use a pragmatic approach to resolve problems as they arise. > akin to:> A **Scientist** is someone who systematically gathers and uses research and evidence, to make hypotheses and test them, to gain and share understanding and knowledge. #Conventionalism is the philosophical attitude that fundamental principles of a certain kind are grounded on agreements in society, rather than on external reality. Unspoken rules play a key role in the philosophy's structure. > akin to:> **Clergy** are formal leaders within established religions. Their roles and functions vary in different religious traditions, but usually involve presiding over specific rituals and teaching their religion's doctrines and practices. A #Mystic is a person who seeks by contemplation and self-surrender to obtain unity with or absorption into the Deity or the absolute, or who believes in the spiritual apprehension of truths that are beyond the intellect. >> *finding out what you can't see* > akin to:> a raving maniac}

.....
Control is an adaptation to fear. Making safe within your sphere of influence.
Looking for the bright side. Letting go, going with the flow is faith in the power of love.
Beyond boundaries into ever larger spheres. The dark side of the moon is the moon, too.

.....
I particularly liked **Carl Jung's notion of individuating**,
an undertaking likened to his description of the creative process —
the road of integration between parts of the self that are conflicted, assimilating
juxtaposed opposites. Bringing into harmony the parts of the psyche, the symbolic content
rising from both the unconscious to consciousness, that are at odds. That notion served me well
when I had a Great unCivil War raging red hot within my young psyche, unsure which side I was on.
And if on the road to integration, shoes are symbolic of what you stand for, what do your red shoes represent?
Are they red shoes of your own design? Or are you squeezing your feet into someone else's shoes,
and being led a merry dance? And then sitting at peace with your very own red shoes on,
what would a red chair represent? Your seat at the table? If so, which table?
The kitchen table? The boardroom table? The crap table?
Lions, and tigers, and bears. Oh my,
but can I get really carried away
in the symbols of myths. . .

{#Symbols #Reality #Myths}

.....
Between food orders, I'll wait in an area near restaurants that regularly are busy. If no bites, I'll move on.
Often soon after I've moved on, UberEats will send me a job to a restaurant near where I just left.
Could be a coincidence, but it happens more than the law of averages.

Not exactly, "You don't know what you've got 'til it's gone," but there's something to be said for getting what you want by giving up on it, and moving on.

.....

How do you know when you have to shit and piss?

It's not as time certain as an alarm clock.
You can pussy foot around, deny the signals,
dismiss the signs . . . for only so long.
Not interested in testing for who's the alpha.
(Particularly with dogs, much less cats.)
When it comes to my bowels and bladder,
however, I surrender. I know who's boss.

.....

Lost my sense of humor. Couldn't find it anywhere.
Looked in the Comedy Store, no luck. In comic books,
nothing. This skater came out of nowhere,
tried to emergency stop, her board squirted out,
smashed me in the shins. In excruciating pain,
fell to the ground onto my elbows, hitting both funny bones,
simultaneously. Electric jolt. Had to laugh. What else could I do?

{#TheFunnyIsInTheBones@CoughingUpKafka}

.....

When push comes to shove?

**Reluctant defender, take the low road,
make peace.** Sink to the bottom of the bowl.

Dear heart, clean your seeds, live another day.

Is Tacitus a pragmatic tactician when he says,
"He that fights and runs away,
May turn and fight another day;
But he that is in battle slain,
Will never rise to fight again?"

Is Jesus a pacifist when he proclaims,
"If anyone slaps you on the right cheek,
turn to him the other also. And if anyone
would sue you and take your tunic,
let him have your cloak as well.
And if anyone forces you to go one mile,
go with him two miles?"

In advance of the extra mile, are your shoes sturdy
enough to make peaceful inroads, build fire stops, mend bridges . . .
nip the bad seeds before they bud? *To clean your seeds,*
add water — the elixir of life. Healthy seeds will sink to the bottom
of the bowl, and the debris on top will float away.

.....

What's leading you on?

Rest in that space.
What's eating you?
Be specific.
Then act

as if you own the place.

Squirrely Reasoning

Science suggests that words aren't strictly necessary for reasoning.

Going down to rake the leaves under the Orange tree, the other day, I inadvertently interrupted a squirrel munching an Orange on the ground. Startled by my presence, he dropped the Orange, scampered some 15 feet away towards the Avocado tree, paused to turn to look back at me with a miffed expression on his pointy little face -- leaped up in the air a good ten inches and spun around mid-air 270 degrees. With my rake and deft aim I flicked his half-eaten breakfast to land right at his feet. Surprised the squirrel took a few seconds to examine his Orange before gathering it up with great delight and scurried on past the Avocado tree.

{SEE: <https://www.livescience.com/can-we-think-without-language>}

This is a string of symbols that make sounds in your head! Sounds you think of as your inner voice, as you. I have a good idea what the sounds in your head sound like as you read this right now, but have no idea what they mean to you. I type, you interpret. There is no call to action here, but even if I type, "Say this out loud," though I am confident of the sounds reverberating in your head, there is no way of me knowing what you'll do with those sounds. Do you call that free will? I don't know. I'm only making noise here. You decide. It's a funny place -- being inside your head, don't you think? My typing making noise in your head and you keep sitting there scanning and reading the symbols not knowing what's next, thinking I'm in your head, using your voice to tell yourself you have free will. Ha ha ha . . . just kidding! You're hypnotized, you're an automaton scanning source symbols assigning meaning via a predetermined set of coded instructions. Intrigued, you can't pull yourself away. I've got you by the short symbols and I've stopped typing a long time ago. There's nobody here but you. Wouldn't it be funny if I wrote a whole book from this "in your head" perspective and finally in the last chapter it occurs to you that you're still sitting here listening to . . . listening to nothing really. (See what I did there with bending time in your mind?) Okay, truth --- sorry, no message here, sorry for wasting your time. Hope you were entertained. Did you really get this far? Really?! Are you kidding me? What are you looking for? Whatever it is, look somewhere else. Okay then, here is a call to action for you: *stop reading this!*

{220626}

AMERICA, America: divided,
never was one nation, there is no God.
"Like sheep to the slaughter,"
a cunning, ruthless few *always have* and continue
to dominate the many. The rule is not justice, nor
freedom for all. We live a lie, *always have*. Dreaming —
hoping it weren't so. It is.

{Michael Podhorzer details a case for thinking of the two "red" and "blue" America blocs as fundamentally different nations uneasily sharing the same geographic space. "When we think about the United States, we make the essential error of imagining it as a single nation, a marbled mix of Red and Blue people," Podhorzer writes. "But in truth, we have never been one nation. We are more like a federated republic of two nations: Blue Nation and Red Nation. This is not a metaphor; it is a geographic and historical reality." <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2022/06/red-and-blue-state-divide-is-growing-michael-podhorzer-newsletter/661377/>}

Decided to change my name to "I. Forgot". My mind's a sieve, can't remember a thing.
So when people ask me my name, I can say, "Hmmm, I forgot.."

demonOcracy ameriKana, by the numbers: a government of lessor evils, such as the government,
which in some mythologies, exists in Hell: *Like the way the color gray interacts with yellow.*

In 1967, under the rule of the Democratic Party,
one in six children grew up in poverty.
It's still true today. In the same period,
the share of wealth held by the working class fell

by a third. Since 1967, under the domination of the USA,
The World Lost Two-Thirds Of Its Wildlife AND
Insects have Declined by 75%*

Winston Churchill famously said: "...*democracy is the worst form of government,
except all those others that have been tried from time to time.*"

"Not perfect, but better than the alternative,"
is what they tell you when you stand in line to vote.
Like the way the color gray interacts with yellow,
it's odd, but sometimes it's the best of the only choice you have.

{*SEE: <https://www.npr.org/2020/09/10/911500907/the-world-lost-two-thirds-of-its-wildlife-in-50-years-we-are-to-blame> AND
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jul/25/the-insect-apocalypse-our-world-will-grind-to-a-halt-without-them> AND
<https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/a-guide-to-statistics-on-historical-trends-in-income-inequality> AND A
Demographic Portrait of Child Poverty in the United States > <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK547364/>}

.....

{220626}

The Bit

*"At this point, if it wasn't weird, **that** would be weird."*

Write that down."

"What? Now I'm your secretary?"

"Well, you're up, ...and it's a good bit."

{Happy 34th Anniversary My Love!!!}

.....

As it all turns to dust,
I don't want what I do
to be all that I am.

.....

I'd like to keep my shop open, but
business is slow. Not much demand
for my services. And my side-job
itself is moonlighting on my freelancer.
Fortunately, what I do for myself is in full bloom.

.....

Just a few steps on **Ted Kooser's**
Red Stilts, the summer in my hair,
and I'm there. Somewhere
in a mid-west geography classroom, or
a mid-eastern weather studio—going
a long way for just a few yards.

{The walk through the apartment complex maze to find the unit
and make the food delivery seems to take forever—
the walk back, a breeze.}

.....

She taught me not to trust my senses, which
didn't work out so well getting through high school, but
just fine when I got as old as her mother.

.....

I tell my wife, "You're my dispensary!"

She tells me I'm indispensable.
.....

It's your theory...

As soon as it was clear I'd be shut-in from the pandemic for a while, some of the gardening tasks fell into my lap, including the daily picking up of the leaves under the Oranges trees. The darling of the 3 Orange trees we inherited more than a quarter century ago somehow developed root rot, which stunted its growth and caused a lot of the bark to peel off. It nearly died, but eventually made a brave recovery as a self-forming bonsai, with a periodic patch of mushroom sprouting around its trunk.

Unbeknownst to me, with the Orange tree leaves I was raking the live fungi spores left by the mushrooms onto my open toed flip-flops, especially covering my left big toe, which resulted in a fungal infection feasting on the fibrous protein keratin in my toe nail. I was slow to recognize what was going on as my toe nail became thin and turned a chalky yellow. I eventually got an equally slow anti-fungal treatment and started wearing socks when I raked up the Orange tree leaves.

When I told my wife my theory of how I got my toe nail fungal infection, she pooh-pooh it, "Nah, that's not it." One early morning when I was going down to do my raking, I got a bit lazy and didn't put on socks. My wife catches me going out the door:

"Aren't you going to put on socks?"
"You've already refuted that theory," I cry.
"It's your theory, and you're sticking to it!"
.....

{220704}

Southern Hospitality *in patriotic Americana song*

Make up your mind,
the way you make your bed.
Hospital corners.
Be hospitable, be kind.
Be kind to your web footed friends.
A duck could be somebody's mother.
She may go off, yet...
she's always on my mind.

The lone dove on the wire above my head,
as I wipe the dew from my car, tells me
there is much to mourn in America.
Doves used to be plentiful here,
until they were run off by the encroaching hoards
of aggressive black crows. A conundrum felt too
by us Conscientious Objectors to war of all stripes.

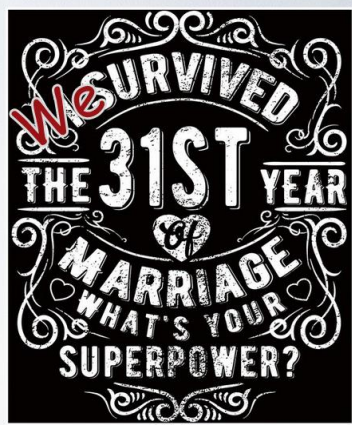
{The Stars and Stripes Forever, Parody lyrics: the 1942, John Church Company "Duck Song" version >
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Stars_and_Stripes_Forever#Parody_lyrics + "Always on My Mind" is a ballad written by Wayne Carson, Johnny Christopher, and Mark James > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Always_on_My_Mind + Amdt1.2.3.6 Conscientious Objectors, "Historically, Congress has provided for alternative service for men who had religious scruples against participating in either combat activities or in all forms of military activities; the fact that Congress chose to draw the line of exemption on the basis of religious belief confronted the Court with a difficult constitutional question, which, however, the Court chose to avoid by a somewhat disingenuous interpretation of the statute." https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/amdt1-2-3-6/ALDE_00000719/}
.....

Please go to the nearest window,
open it wide, and scream out,
"Is everything alright out there?"
.....

I have enough to be anxious about. I don't need to be watching the stock market bobbing up & down.

.....

{220706}



Happy happy 31st wedding anniversary, super duper Honey P Pi Pie! Best years of my life, thank you!
Together we've survived the Bushs, the Clintons, Trump, racial reckoning, the great recession, the not so great inflation, fire, flood, plague and the shopping channel.
Now we're primed to get all the way to the end together — one way or another — in style. And if we continue to do it right, we'll get there ...with Love, your not so chubby, yet, fat'n'happily adoring, one & only hubby.

.....

Cyber Rage

"Semi-nude, completely rude!"

The 'Dan Landrum' on the internet
is NOT this one.

{*Cyber Rage*: "Relieving pressure by ranting and raving in a blog, tweet, text message or other posting. The Internet has become a popular venue for venting frustrations. See *rage*," <https://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/cyber-rage> Zulu video game developer, "*Cyber Rage*: Retribution is a cool 3D side-scrolling fighter game in which you and your friend can battle your way through the streets and try to take out the bad guys using a combo of punches, kicks, and special moves. You can also pick up some amazing weapons on your way to dish out more damage."}

.....

Happiness is dying. There is no joy.

Hope, hope itself is on life support.
Even if you can weather this depression,
summon what it takes to find your treacherous way
to a new dawn, a new babe, a new crop of plenty,
you'll fairly have to ask, *"Is it all worth it?"*

My enduring answer, at least for now,
"I'm still here."

If you haven't heard from me in a while,
don't come a knocking on my door.
Unless you're really curious.

{*"Winding road up ahead, help me find a place to rest my head."* —a line from one of my *Walking Songs* ...still askin'.}

.....

Two young girls roll slowly past on their bicycles on a lazy Sunday afternoon,
"Our teacher suggested we have a dress up — Devils and Angels.
Everybody wanted to be devils. My teacher says,
(the girl's voice going up an octave higher,)
Why doesn't anyone want to be angels?"

{#indicative??}

.....

As I pick up the fallen Avocado leaves, why is it every succeeding generation of adolescent squirrels

perched on the branches above thinks it's their duty to screech at me *as if I'm the invader?*
I'm not the danger you should be worried about. Or so I tell'm.

.....

You've been algorithmized & monetize. Even the Blood Bank feels it has the rights to my personal data. I donate my blood, a commodity for which they should be paying me handsomely – *"Your blood donation saves lives,"* they tell me. The blood suckers take my data with my blood and sell all at market as if I were chattel. Like every other internet corporation. The New York Times entices me to accept their cookies, watch their ads, to get the news, then moves behind a pay wall. The price of entry – besides the recurring subscription fee – is my personal data. That's the cost to get the horrific news. For entertainment, NBC brings their old Peacock to life with a streaming service, which offers as bait, a free tier that allows you to stream shows and movies on-demand at no cost, or you can choose to sign up for a Peacock Premium Plus paid subscription to unlock super-fantasyland-escape-reality content with the caveat that *"*Due to streaming rights, a small amount of programming will still contain ads."* They just love to interrupt us with ads, which they now can selectively target to preferences we didn't even know we had using our very own algorithmized personal data. You've got to pay to play with yourself. You've been monetize. Right down to the marrow in your chattelly bones.

.....

White Gun Poem: *five times more frequently*

Symbolically, guns in the U.S. have historically been linked to defending the interests of white people. In her book *"Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment,"* historian Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz documents

how
America's Founding Fathers
originally conceived
of the Second Amendment as protection
for white frontier militias
in their efforts to subdue
and exterminate
Indigenous people.
The Second Amendment
was also designed
to safeguard Southern slave owners
who feared revolts.
As a result, the right to bear arms
was never imagined
by the founders
to be an individual liberty
held by Indigenous people
and people of color.

As illustrated in Richard Slotkin's book *"Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America,"* the popular film and literary genre of the Western glamorized white, hypermasculine cowboys and gunslingers "civilizing" the wild frontier to make it safe for white homesteaders. Drawing from this lore, contemporary gun culture romanticizes the "good guy with a gun" as the patriotic protector of the peace and a bulwark against government overreach. Contemporary gun laws reflect a historic racial disparity concerning who is authorized and under what circumstances individuals

are allowed to use lethal force. For example, so-called “stand your ground” laws have been used historically to justify the killing of Black men, most notably in the Trayvon Martin case. Gun control advocates [Everytown for Gun Safety](#) have found that homicides resulting from white shooters killing Black victims are “deemed justifiable five times more frequently than when the shooter is Black and the victim is white.”

{FOUND: *Militant white identity politics on full display in GOP political ads featuring high-powered weapons* <https://theconversation.com/militant-white-identity-politics-on-full-display-in-gop-political-ads-featuring-high-powered-weapons-185671>
Published: July 11, 2022 | Ryan Neville-Shepard, University of Arkansas, Casey Ryan Kelly, University of Nebraska-Lincoln}

Ode to Fran Lebowitz, sung a cappella

I'm not an influencer.
I don't occupy a seat of power,
making policy or laws.
My opinions are my own.
Who cares?

{ ...it feels as if today people see opinions as a statement of who they are, and therefore a disagreement of opinion feels seismic. **Fran Lebowitz**, “I think that’s true. It’s replaced morality. But I never cared what people think of what I think. I’m not saying I don’t care what people think about me, because I’m human. But if people disagree with me, so what? I’ve never understood why [my opinions] anger people. I have no power, I’m not the mayor of New York, I’m not making laws. These are just opinions!” ~ <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/aug/28/fran-lebowitz-if-people-disagree-with-me-so-what> }

A Tug of War in the Light of Bling

Apparently, it's not useful for artsy people to have a yard sale on *Gay Pride Day*. The bulk of your customers are out parading and partying, while you schlep your stuff from here to there and back again in a hot muggy summer daze. You'd stand a better chance of subduing thieves who broke into your house by stunning'm with your 'elevated' design taste in the light of gently used bling.

{“**What is good taste in design?** We consider 'good taste' to be rooted in a subjective context of inherent values, whereas 'good design' arises from competence and is based on professional skill. 'Bad taste' is here exemplified by products associated with the lifestyles of rap artists and the subculture of bling.” From *Good Taste vs. Good Design: A Tug of War in the Light of Bling*” <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.2752/175630612X13258652805095> | *The subjective theory of value?* The subjective theory of value maintains that the value of an object is not fixed by the amount of resources and the hours of labor that went into creating it but is variable according to its context and the perspective of its users. In fact, the theory argues, the value of any object is determined by the individual who buys or sells it. This economic theory suggests that a product’s value is decided by how scarce or useful it is to the individual. The subjective theory of value was developed in the late 19th century by economists and thinkers of the time, including Carl Menger and Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/subjective-theory-of-value.asp>}

"Where's my Roy Cohn?" — fight all charges, never concede defeat

Cohn was already a legend in 1973. Representing the likes of Cardinal Francis Spellman, New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner and the New York crime bosses Carmine Galante and John Gotti. In the early 1950s, Cohn would be lead counsel for Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy when the first-term Republican from Wisconsin was chairman of a Senate committee looking for communists in government. Although McCarthy never actually unmasked any actual communists, he destroyed many careers and lives. Along the way his name became synonymous with an era and with the tactic of making baseless but damaging accusations that did real damage despite being untrue. Cohn was known for telling clients to fight all charges, to counter-sue when sued and to never concede defeat. Trump has followed this formula and will adhere to this formula to the bitter end, and that has come to matter a great deal to the nation. "Big protest in D.C. on

January 6th," the president tweeted. "Be there, will be wild." In 1986, a panel of the New York State Supreme Court's Appellate Division disbarred Cohn for unethical and unprofessional conduct. A short while later, Cohn died.

{FOUND: *Through all Trump's legal wars and woes, one lawyer's influence still holds sway*, July 17, 2022.
<https://www.npr.org/2022/07/17/1111715068/in-all-trump-s-legal-wars-and-woes-one-lawyer-s-influence-still-holds-sway>}

{220719}

Mortgage Calculator

When I checked in March, Zillow had the value of our house at \$1.4 million. Today, \$1,567,700. With the Fed just raising interests rates, mortgage payments are through the roof, not to mention property taxes. I don't have a subscription to NYT so I can't use theirs, but using Bankrate's *Mortgage Calculator*, the down payment at 20% would be \$313,540, the PITI monthly payments for 30 year@ 5.73% would be \$8400. More than double our current rent. The house was built in 1933 and needs serious plumbing and electrical updates, it's a real project to get up to modern snuff. My landlady bought it Nov 2, 1978 for \$32,000 and pays a very low grandfathered property tax rate. Zillow says the property tax now is \$50k/year. Back in the '90s, when the house was valued at around \$220K we asked both my wife's uncle and my mom to lend us money help us with the down payment. Both declined, astonished at the California numbers -- too rich for their blood. But the return in the long run, I pleaded! We've put in more than 25 times the money our landlady has into this property, yet she gets the equity and we get the looming month to month threat of an eviction notice. In what definition of a democratic system is the value you put into your home somebody else business? Apparently ours. If you can beat'm, join'm. By becoming sublords ourselves, we can rent out a third of the property at market and in return get more than half the rent paid. Ah the joys and woes of the market economy. I've long suspected I was born on the wrong planet. . . You know, it's funny, funny peculiar, ...for all of my adult life I've economically lived month to month, if not day to day, and I hardly ever worried about money. I could eventually always figure out how to make what I needed. But now that I have a bit of a nest egg, albeit a relatively modest nest egg, I'm a neurotic mother hen with errant chicks. I already have a coop of habitual things to be anxious about, I don't need to be watching the market bobbing up & down. Or do I need to shift my priorities and give up on peace in the Middle East, and that whole other basket of goods I have no providence over? Thanks for the visit with numbers. Something just loves running wild with numbers. Even if it circles with love as the multiplier.

No matter how bad it gets around here,
we've got it good.

{220725}

I Recognize Reckoning, I so melancholy ache ("my dear Matna," as my grandfather called her) *An "I see you, I remember!" mash-up: the providence of fairness and respect*

Again, that aching missing of those I will never see again
in this life time, and the wistful missing of those I hope
I will see again before long. With intimates it's all the more,
those someones who care, care deeply I am alone together with.

*"A Syrian child studies outside her family's tent at a refugee camp
in the town of Bar Elias, in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon, July 7, 2022.
The Lebanese government's plan to start deporting Syrian refugees
has sent waves of fear through vulnerable refugee communities already
struggling to survive in their host country. Many refugees say being forced
to return to the war shattered country would be a death sentence."
(AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)*

The house I've cared for, lived in for nearly 28 years was built in 1933 and needs serious plumbing and electrical updates, it's a real project to get up to modern snuff. My landlady bought it Nov 2, 1978 for \$32,000 and pays a very low grandfathered property tax rate. Zillow says the property tax now is \$50k/year. Back in the '90s, when the house was valued at around \$220K my wife and I asked both her uncle and my mom to help us with the down payment. Both declined, astonished

at the California numbers -- too rich for their blood. But the return in the long run, I pleaded! We've put in more than 25 times the money our landlady has into this property, yet she gets the equity and we get the looming month to month threat of an eviction notice. In what definition of a democratic system is the value you put into your home somebody else's business? Apparently ours.

My landlady claims first rights, she was here first, which gives her the right to rule, dictate when, if my toilet gets fixed. She complains of the humid excessive heat in making the repair, though it's a relatively mild day — though she refused to repair the air conditioning when it broke, years ago saying, "There are only a few hot days a year, it's not worth it." Of course she was wrong about that. My landlady claims first rights. By that extended logic the Kumeyaay tribe should rule this land. But, sadly, in mass, *'my people'* took this land, from sea to shining sea, and rained genocide down on the first nation natives, and rewrote, and rewrote again, the rules as it served the new land 'owners'.

Is that the tactic I need to emulate to get my toilet fixed, my air conditioning back?

"As young Afghan girls are robbed of hope, denied an education, denied schooling and career prospects, they struggle with depression, medical staff warn of a rise in mental health problems," reads the headlines.

How did this become my problem? How could it not?

You know, it's funny, funny odd, funny peculiar, ...for all of my adult life I've economically lived month to month, if not day to day, and I hardly ever worried about money. I could eventually always figure out how to make what I needed. But now that, at 70 years old plus, I'm a Trust Fund Baby and inherited a bit of my great-grandfather's wealth, a bit of a nest egg, albeit a relatively modest nest egg, I'm a neurotic mother hen with errant chicks. I already have a coop of habitual things to be anxious about, I don't need to be watching the market bobbing up & down. Or do I need to shift my priorities and give up on peace in the Middle East, and that whole other basket of goods I have no providence over?

In my eulogy that my older brother will read for me at the ceremony by Buzzards Bay this Saturday I say, "In remembering, celebrating my mother's life, I'd be remiss if I didn't heartfully acknowledge my second mother – Carlean Montgomery. In Mom's eulogy to Carlean she says, "Carlean was the most loving woman I have ever known." Carlean called me her "white son." When she sang the Gospel, which she often unrestrainedly did, when Carlean sang the Gospel, she stopped my world. I'm devotedly grateful to have had her to mother me. Carlean raised me and cared for me in a way that fortified my spirit in preparation of facing a tumultuously confusing and brutal world."

In recognizing this singular woman's place in forming my life, I call on "my dear Matna."
I Recognize Reckoning, . . . and I generationally so melancholy ache.

{Or as Bill Watterson asks in his *Calvin & Hobbes* cartoon,
"If good things lasted forever, would we appreciate how precious they are?"}

.....

The Nature of Nature

If I am to claim success, I'll need to make my own definition.
Even then, it would be a subset of the potential. For a larger, 'verified' success, I'd have to take someone else's measure, ...and that would be wild.

{["Enric Sala"](#) wants to change the world--and in *The Nature of Nature: Why We Need the Wild*, he shows us how. Once we appreciate how nature works, he asserts, we will understand why conservation is economically wise and essential to our survival. Here Sala, director of National Geographic's Pristine Seas project tells the story of his scientific awakening and his transition from academia to activism—as he puts it, he was tired of writing the obituary of the ocean."}

.....

Urbit, Curtis Guy Yarvin: *“a longing” for a “more powerful chief executive.”*

Moving away from our old horse & buggy form of government through the technological prowess of a decentralized personal server platform + too easily veer into mob rule – best managed by a single executive: winner take all!

<CAUTION: Run-on sentence>

StarWar-like travel fantasy framed in medieval European social structure, classifying users as "lords," "dukes," and "earls," [divided into three social orders: the First Estate comprising those who ruled or fought, the Second Estate were those who prayed, and the Third Estate comprised those who worked"] – the rejection of empiricism in favor of deduction from first principles, – through Urbit's technological prowess of a decentralized personal server platform, seeking to deconstruct the client-server model in favor of a federated network of personal servers in a peer-to-peer network with a consistent digital identity to defend against what's often characterized as the “marketplace of ideas,” which is actually a “monoculture” that props up an oligarchy: “the cathedral” – Yarvin's term for the U.S. ruling regime, arguing that virtually all opinion-makers, most notably those in academia and journalism, are essentially “reading the same book.”

<CAUTION: self-contradictory logic>

The cathedral is self-reinforcing: Individual journalists and professors are rewarded when they follow the ruling ethos. Those who do otherwise risk being punished or at the very least face diminished career prospects. With *“Unqualified Reservations”* Yarvin produces a prodigious corpus of political philosophy, which cites his political influences who disdained democracy, as it could too easily veer into mob rule; convinced that elites would come to control the country's politics while couching their interests in democratic rhetoric; opining **how all organizations – irrespective of size – are best managed by a single executive**. Financed by venture capitalist Peter Thiel, an investor who has an authoritarian streak – *“a longing” for a “more powerful chief executive.”*

Thiel, like Yarvin, expresses frustration with American democracy, “America's constitutional machinery” prevents “any single ambitious person from reconstructing the old Republic.”

Epilog: In 2013, the Silicon Valley entrepreneur, Peter Thiel invested in Yarvin's firm, the Tlon Corp., best known for developing a decentralized personal server platform. Yarvin largely stopped updating his blog, and began to focus on Urbit; in April 2016 he announced that *Unqualified Reservations* had "completed its mission". After seven years of working on the Urbit project, Yarvin departed Tlon in 2019. In May 2022, Vanity Fair reported on the relationship among Yarvin, GOP megadonor and venture capitalist Peter Thiel and U.S. Senate candidates J.D. Vance. Though Vance once denounced Trump, he has since embraced the former president and now calls for a “De-Ba'athification program” for the civil service – a reference to the purging of Saddam Hussein's loyalists after the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq. He cites Yarvin as a friend and mentor.

{'Found' NOTES: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curtis_Yarvin | <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urbit>}

.....
Don't miss your life for your ambitions.
Live your passions.
.....

Isn't it amazing? How often and
how thoroughly your heart can be broken, and
yet the beat goes on.
.....

In a dog eat dog world,
if you're not the top dog,
you're somebody's bitch.
It's a dog eat dog world.

{Applicable to playgrounds, farms, schools, small offices, corporations, as well as empires.}

.....
"He's packing!"

That's all you have to say.

We know what you mean.

(He's not going on a trip, or at least not that kind of trip.)

"Weapon! Weapon! Watch out!"
Duck and cover. Run!

"We have a situation here!"

He's not packing oatmeal, or Quinine.
He's not a donkey, a camel, a beast of burden.

He's a threat.
"This guy's loaded!"

An equalizer – a smaller man can take down
a much larger man, no hand-to-hand required.

Speaking of manly men,
what does "he's packing" mean in slang?

*"Where I come from packing means to
either have a massive penis or to wear
some sort of padding so as to give
the appearance of having a massive ..."*

Penis, gun, missile ...
same thing. Phallus,
obelisk, skyscraper...
ditto, my man.

ALSO, if you *send* someone packing,
you make them go away. As in,
"I decided I wanted to live alone,
so I sent him packing."

Assault rifles are good for that.

{Tropes used: · "He's packing!" · "Weapon! Weapon!" · "This guy's loaded!" · "We have a situation here!" }

.....

ISBN 978-1-9821-0662-1

Just breezed through *The Best American Poetry 2021* edited by Tracy K. Smith.

Realized why no one wants to read *my* poetry.

No one really wants to read *anyone else's* poetry!

Everyone wants to use the spittoon on the saloon's sawdust covered floor,
but no one wants to wash it out. Ditto other people's poetry.

(The best part of this poetry anthology is the prose introducing it.)

All else is broken line echo chamber insanity of a collective catharsis ignored.

All else is other people's soiled underwear on the saloon's sawdust covered floor.

I belly-up to the bar, order one:

"Don't miss your life for your ambitions, live your passions" ...for two.

.....

Long grass stems wrap around his spinning head, the weed wacker
chokes on this rope and dies. Would still be cutting with that old human-powered scythe.

{*She's the light of his delight.* #paul-bunyan-vs-john-henry}

My résumé should read, something like:

*"He was too sensitive for the world,
so he went into the arts.
He aimed to cultivate ESP.
He settled for watching ESPN."*

{My wife says, "But that's not you." Rally caps inside-out and backwards .}

{220822}

Drop your mask, Relax your butt-cheeks

says the Center for Disease Control

*So much of what is being said in modern poetry could go unsaid
and not be missed, like the shot heard around the world went unheard
by the vast silent majority who just wanted to keep their heads down,
nose to grind stone and bring in the autumn harvest ahead of the bitter winter storms.*

I think of you Katy Lederer, of money, your strategic gambling kin,
your *Anguished English* Jew father, your gentile, maybe, sometimes
perhaps, gentle mother who raised you not Jewish, your work at a quantitative hedge fund
in midtown Manhattan, which provided much of the inspiration for *The Heaven-Sent Leaf*,
taken from the second half of Goethe's Faust and describing paper money, your references
to the works of John Kenneth Galbraith, Nietzsche, and Edith Wharton, and heady matters
registering poor self-esteem so richly deserved by the scribes of the transplanted
kings and queens of industrial oligarchy, the poker faced model-slaves of the aristocracy,
tight cheeked celebrities—American royalty as the empire fades, dis-membered
by willful nonsense presented in non-rhyming couplets.

Profiting from patience, my dear,
I wait with you as you say *That Everything's Inevitable "in the temper and the tantrum,
in the well-kept arboretum I am waiting, like an animal, For poetry."*

Then again March 18, 2020 uncoupled, dear Katy, prescient you predict
New York's Food Distribution Networks Brace for an Unprecedented Threat—Organizations
expect labor shortages—just as an influx of ill and unemployed people hit the emergency feeding system.
Alexander Rapaport, the executive director of the kosher Masbia Soup Kitchen Network, started worrying,
you say, "Every day is different," said Mr. Rapaport, in his office at Masbia. "Nothing is predictable."

"It's also important, if people are quarantined, that they don't go insane, right?" he added,
packing up a box. "Even if you put in a little box of cake mix, it's cool. You're staying at home.
Make your house smell good. You know what I mean?"

{Homage Katherine "Katy" Lederer: <https://katylederer.com> | https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katy_Lederer |
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/18/business/coronavirus-food-supply-kitchens.html>}

21st-Century US Foreign Policy Is Shaped by Fears of China's Rise, Noam Chomsky Says
There's no shortage of vital tasks ahead.

The fears are far-reaching.

Needless to say, there are no reciprocal rights.
Logical illogicality.

[The same doctrines of logical illogicality reign today as the U.S. defends itself from Eurasian threats. . . . the U.S. defends itself by expanding . . . the aggressive military alliance it runs, NATO. . . establishing a ring of "sentinel states" to "encircle" Russia, China, armed with high precision weapons. . . aimed not very subtly at Russia, China. ...the enduring hegemony of the Atlanticist power system ...has become the most successful economic system in the world.]

<important!>

The question of Eurasian integration in a common European home . . . **The German-based integrated production system in Europe**, stretching from the Netherlands to Russia's former Eastern European satellites, has become **the most successful economic system in the world**—It relies heavily on the huge export market and investment opportunities in China, and on Russia's rich natural resources, even including metals needed for transition to renewable energy—the temptation for Europe to join China's Belt-and-Road Initiative (BRI) system, already strong, will likely intensify.

[Trump's triumphs??]

The general implications for global peace and security seem clear enough.
Trump's triumphs in this domain were to greatly enhance
the two major threats to survival of organized human society:
environmental destruction and nuclear war.

Neither were spared his wrecking ball.

He pulled out of the Paris agreements on impending climate catastrophe,
and did what he could to eliminate regulations
that somewhat mitigate the effects on Americans.
He carried forward the GOP program (started by G.W. Bush)
to dismantle the arms control regime
that has been laboriously constructed to reduce the threat
of terminal nuclear war. He also wrecked the Joint Agreement
with Iran on nuclear policy (JCPOA), violating the UN Security Council
endorsement of the Agreement,
again enhancing global threats.

What he might do on particular issues is anyone's guess.
Perhaps what he had just heard on Fox News.

The idea that the future of the world might soon again be in such hands almost surpasses belief.

[/Trump's triumphs??]

There's no shortage of vital tasks ahead.

</important!>

{FOUND @ Truthout: C.J. Polychroniou, August 4, 2022 >

<https://truthout.org/articles/21st-century-us-foreign-policy-is-shaped-by-fears-of-chinas-rise-chomsky-says/> }

.....

Whole cloth.

*The whole cloth of Elizabeth II fading—
Next generation Union Jack Looms
My place in unraveling an empire's child—
America, Oh, America shreds thy grace on me.
(Indra's net post supernova)
...set you free*

over and under

each tight warp,
each running weft
 intersection,

that's where I sit

a mirrored disco ball
nothing special
holding my place
in and on, around
and through richly
patterned, highly
textured, globally
reigning fabric
stretched loose
over every massive
curve under every
county and country, all
terrains' fundamental
structure, any process
or system, weaving back in
"that which is thrown away"
a brilliant sparkling round
reflector nested within
this ideal parabolic reflection
revolving around its axis – a precisely
focus-balanced promise
draping over rugged
topography, under-estimating
this overly caffeinated obsessed
mind-only tainted row and column grid
divergent convergence: a corrupted weave
inelegantly, woefully carelessly
unraveling, ripping,
violently tearing
terribly losing
the grace of its hang,
coarse and vulgar,
mean-spirited dark, clinging
vacating grabbing, *loudly quitting*
the pledge of the whole
of the we, the me in us,
the love of life
adjoined together.

Whole cloth.

.....

I'm Right spew

(a trendy modern coffee table built on the char of a gnarly vintage redwood burl)

I tried to tell the truth.

 Didn't do me any good,
 didn't further my agenda.

So I joined the alt-right
and made up shit, mean
hateful shit, bullying
intimidating, threatening—

throwing a social tantrum shit.
Made me feel big, a part
of something bigger, *!important!*, dis-
ruptive. Shaking up the tree to see
what *strange fruit* falls out.

Death to liberals! Smash and crash diversity and
your 'proper use of gender identity pronouns.'

How dare they
critically think for themselves. For all those
who don't look like me -- this is my nation,
under my God ...for liberty and justice for
my unkind, spit in your face,
run you down you with a pickup truck,
shoot you en masse with Russian designed AK-47s,
rape your children and make'm have my babies
kind.

*Fuck you! Don't do me.
Don't do my immature and spoiled millennial ass.*

So what? So what if I'm being played by stealth-net
foreign powers, if I'm an agent pawn for ginned up
unreasonable reasons, for rage and outrage,
bullshit unverifiable fantasy lies and dis-
ceptions prompting self-destructing violence, imploding—
that our fallen rubble can serve to rebuild
the new world order
in the name of some fascist totalitarian dictator
whose name, yet unknown, I can't pronounce.
So what. I tried to tell the truth.

Didn't do me ...

{Definitions from Oxford Languages > **alt-right** /,ôlt' rīt/ noun: (in the US) a right-wing ideological movement characterized by a
rejection of mainstream politics and by the use of online media to disseminate provocative content, often expressing opposition to
racial, religious, or gender equality. "some are seeing this as a victory against the vitriolic online presence of the alt-right"}

I think the universe is a really mean cat, and
I'm a loosely wrapped ball of yarn. I thought
I was going to finally rent the sublet today, and
only managed to catch a cockroach after
moving the chaise lounge away
from the rest of the sectional.

The last thing I'd imagine—a 34 year old German
woman with a PhD in economics, consulting
for *Cognizant*, a global data business service,
teaching at the local university, with whom
we had several friendly, promising
conversions both by phone and email,
to *ghost* us.

I fear she might have died on the highway, next
to a dejected cockroach. Or was swatted

by a really mean cat.

{#GrandioseDreams #dejectedSwatted #SavorSmallVictories | 'Ghosting' is a relatively new colloquial dating term that refers to abruptly cutting off contact with someone without giving that person any warning or explanation for doing so. Even when the person being ghosted reaches out to re-initiate contact or gain closure, they're met with silence. Sep 14, 2020 @ What Is Ghosting? - Verywell Mind: <https://www.verywellmind.com> > . . . > Relationships}

.....

What I'll give you since you asked
Is all my time together;
Take the rugged sunny days,
The warm and rocky weather,
Take the roads that I have walked along,
Looking for tomorrow's time,
Peace of mind.

What I'll give you since you asked
Is all my time together;
Take the rugged rocky roads,
The warm and sunny weather,
Take the roads that I have walked alone,
Looking for tomorrow's time,
Peace of mind.

{#VISTOR: Judy Collins, "Since You've Asked"}

{#ADAPTED: Judy Collins, "Since You've Asked"}

.....

There's no doubt I will die. Some day.
The only questions are when and how.
I don't want to die without joy in my heart.
That'll be the measure.
I'll know when.

How?

{"If it's peace you find in dying, well, then let the time be near, and all I ask of dying is to go naturally, only want to go naturally."
Laura Nyro - *And When I Die*}

.....

...down the road,
I'm hoping most to be fodder
for someone else's
ample heart
and curious mind.

.....

fuss and finicky

the young squirrels race up and down and
all around — my neighbor's massive tree, heavily over bent,
split through the trunk with a resounding CRACK, crash-toppling
the one below, uprooting the fence between us and them and taking down
the leafy bridge the young squirrels used to leap to and from our Orange tree and
suck the juice of our zesty near ripe fruit . . .

And now, fuss and finicky squirreling
about the sap oozing stump, the gaps between the old gymnasium
apparatus, discovering what, excitedly discovering what — racing around —
discovering what is left, and what is what.

.....

Tolerance: the fine art of scope creep,
"Just say no!" ...to flirting with the devil

I'm not usually one to write reviews on books I haven't read, but
you be flirting with the devil.

If you MUST go,

...may I creep
into the back door
of your psyche
...and loud whisper:

Make 'tolerance to neurostimulants' your Masters
of Fine Arts thesis. Start with *Drug Tolerance*,
the wikipedia page. Absorb every concept, every
notion into the marrow of your bones.

Feel *that* ecstasy!

Feel into *THAT* forever home living e c s t a s y of cellular knowing.
(Then we'll talk probable causes for me renting you my sublet.)

A University of California MFA program is jam-packed overwhelmingly intense magic thinking.
It'll break you down,
reform reality, test to the hilt the loose ends of your addictions, core
inherited behaviors.
It'll take you away from your true self, ...and if you let it, now, give
you a terminal degree, *making you* — a party line dependent teacher of the fine arts.

{HOMAGE: Cuyler Ballenger's *Inheritance* @<https://lawndaleartcenter.org/exhibition/cuyler-ballenger/> #DrugTolerance
@https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drug_tolerance PS: if you let it, ambition will take you away from your true self. Don't you let it. ●
("you be flirting with the devil") BEHOLD: the angel of the LORD appeared to Moses in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked,
and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.}

.....

Evolving: when
the next progression
is regression.

{At its simplest this model predicts that, when a person (or culture) attempts to significantly change their performance,
they are likely to follow a zig-zag path to growth, alternately progressing and regressing.}

.....

They Take Our Jobs!* — embracing '*white settler colonial society*' with your elbows, tugging at our heart

*all right welcome everybody thank you so much for coming this afternoon to the kickoff of a semester long smorgasbord
of events relating to immigration policy, immigration history, the criminalization of migration, how immigration policy
affects our campus other campuses, students from in k-12 schools, you name it we are doing an event about it, and that
series of events collectively is called the DACA seminar so this is the sort of first big event to the DACA seminar, there is a
website for the DACA seminar, as Facebook page, Twitter account and Instagram account. The DACA seminar is
supported by a bunch of different pieces of Harvard including ...before I introduce our speaker, professor Aviva Chomsky.*

..

*Aviva is a female first name.
It is a modern Hebrew name
meaning springlike, dewy, or fresh.*

Today's mass media tends to portray white nationalist and white supremacists as fringe radicals,
a small slice of the population. Here, to the contrary, Aviva gives a clear outline of the origins — our
'white settler colonial society,' and the policies and forces continuing that project to this day.

{***Dr. Aviva Chomsky:** They Take Our Jobs! And Other Myths About Immigration | February 1, 2018 | 1h49m11s |
<https://youtu.be/xP5aMCXIsjs>}

.....

City of Angels' *City of Inmates* — embracing '*white settler colonial society*' with your elbows,
tugging at our heart of hearts

Kelly Lytle Hernández, born on March 3, 1974, grew up in the Clairemont area of San Diego. She has described seeing the U.S. Border Patrol track and monitor Latinos in her community and noticed it as "being hauntingly similar to what many of what us African American kids and teens were experiencing in terms of the rise of the war on drugs at the same time." She experienced her own "share of locker sweeps at school and was registered as a 'gang member' by the local police." She even watched as a friend was accused of dealing drugs and shot four times by the police. In the neighborhoods where she lived, armed border officers targeted Mexicans—"snatched them off buses, chased them across highways, and took my friend's uncle in the middle of the night." Observing these parallels between the war on drugs and the war on immigrants, she felt compelled "to go on and study these systems."

.....
All of Kelly Lytle Hernández's books and scholarly articles are based on her research into the history of race, immigration control, border enforcement, policing and incarceration.

Los Angeles incarcerates more people than any other city in the United States, which imprisons more people than any other nation on Earth.

City of Inmates explains how the City of Angels became the capital city of the world's leading incarcerator.

.....
Marshaling more than two centuries of evidence, historian Kelly Lytle Hernández unmasks how native elimination, immigrant exclusion, black disappearance drove the rise of incarceration in Los Angeles.

.....
In this telling, which spans from the Spanish colonial era to the outbreak of the 1965 Watts Rebellion, Hernandez documents the persistent historical bond between the racial fantasies of conquest—namely its **settler colonial form**— and the eliminatory capacities of incarceration.

{FOUND: Kelly Lytle Hernández: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kelly_Lytle_Hern%C3%A1ndez
City of Inmates: <https://uncpress.org/book/9781469631189/city-of-inmates/>}

.....
'On the Death of Anne Brontë' *Charlotte Brontë survived all of her siblings, with Emily dying in 1848 and Anne following her to the grave a year later. Charlotte penned this touching poem about Anne's death from consumption, declaring how she 'would have died to save' her sister and that she longs to see an end to her sister's suffering.*

There's little joy in life for me,
And little terror in the grave;
I've lived the parting hour to see
Of one I would have died to save.

Calmly to watch the failing breath,
Wishing each sigh might be the last;
Longing to see the shade of death
O'er those belovèd features cast.

The cloud, the stillness that must part
The darling of my life from me;
And then to thank God from my heart,
To thank Him well and fervently;

Although I knew that we had lost
The hope and glory of our life;
And now, benighted, tempest-tossed,
Must bear alone the weary strife.

.....

This is a generalized sorrow.
Not specifically caused by me, yet...
I am witness,
I am sorry.



.....

"If you treat your body as unimportant you risk insanity or inanity."
{Ursula K. Le Guin, *Power of the heavy: Tao Te Ching* – Verse 26 >
<https://terebess.hu/english/tao/LeGuin.pdf> }

Maybe now is a good time
to explain how
nothing you are doing
is more important
than your body.

.....

Margaret Atwood: *Inseparable* (Introduction)

Inseparable,
a heretofore unpublished novel by Simone de Beauvoir,
is worth reading for Margaret Atwood's introduction alone.
...de Beauvoir decided not to publish the book
after the "great" Jean Paul Sartre dismissed its focus
on the lives of young women as uninteresting and unworthy
compared to existentialism's significant themes.

Sartre was wrong.
The book IS indeed about the search for a *raison d'être*,
among women living within the confines of religious, social,
and intellectual expectations of post-WWI France.

What transforms the book is the story of the intense love the narrator
Sylvie feels for her schoolmate Andrée, a lively rebel

At the Central Public Library, we take care of our own.

Of ten people,
eight are homeless
in our public libraries.
Mentally ill, drug addicted.

A place to use the restroom and
charge your phone. "I can hide out
in the stacks and be left alone. Feel safe."

If you don't have a library card, that's okay.

We will work with you. We take care of our own.

Librarians double as social workers, will hook you up
with *Father Joe's Villages' Street Health* program . What
more could you ask for? "Socks." "Not books?" "Socks." Living
on the street, people rarely take their shoes off. They walk often and
don't do laundry. Clean socks are a reliably top-requested item. Pick-up
a few DVDs, drop-off a couple pairs of clean socks. We take care of our own.

Half mile walk away, *The Franklin Antonio Public Lunch Program* offers free warm,
nutritious meals to the public 365 days a year. To get a meal the first time you just need
to pick-up a "badge" just down the street at the *San Diego Day Center*. Once you have an orange
badge, keep it with you. You can use it to get meals or to use services like laundry and showers in the Day
Center. You can learn how to wash your socks. If you don't want to learn, that's okay. We take care of our own.

{*"When you visit the San Diego Day Center, please bring a form of ID. If you have children, please bring their birth certificate(s). Also, please bring any proof of income (ex. last three months of pay stubs, benefits award letter, receipt of child support, eg). If you don't have these items, that's okay. We will work with you to obtain the information needed."* ~ <https://my.neighbor.org/get-help/>}

.....

Mikhail Gorbachev, the last day as Soviet President, interviewed December 1991 by Ted Koppel as the USSR ceased to exist. Koppel asks if there's a Russian fable that might explain to an American child why Mister Gorbachev, so popular in our country was being forced out of office in his own? Widely admired throughout much of the world for bringing an end to a communist Soviet Union -- Gorbachev was mostly ignored and sometimes even reviled at home for the very things that made him so popular in the west.

[(things you need to know...)] If only the west had followed Gorbachev's lead in introducing significant reforms – perestroika (restructuring), glasnost(openness) and demokratizatsiya (democratization) – designed to save the Soviet Union and make life better for Soviet citizens whose living standards were declining ...If only the west had extended a foreign policy hand, as Gorbachev had, to improve relations between east and west, ...if only America had met Gorbachev's compassionate, human earnestness half way -- there, **THERE!** was the last best chance to end the nuclear arms race. To end the on-going threat of mutually assured annihilation.]

For Ted, the man who oversaw the dissolution of a Cold War superpower offered a Russian fable to help explain his country's fate. Gorbachev recounts, "...centuries ago there was a young ruler in the orient and he wanted to rule in a different way, in a more human way in his kingdom and he asked the views of the wise men <the wise men deliberate tediously, impractically long> ...Gorbachev says, well, all in all, all that is can be summarized in a simple formula: "*people are born, people suffer and people die.*"

{FOUND: *Mikhail Gorbachev on the last days of the Soviet Union* | Sep 4,2022 > <https://youtu.be/bUDMaoA91K8> | **Mikhail Gorbachev: five things you need to know** > <https://theconversation.com/mikhail-gorbachev-five-things-you-need-to-know-189709>}

.....

Off-shore: my mother's final resting place

7 Pokanoket Lane: My Uncle's Summer Retreat in Dartmouth, Massachusetts

America's Thanksgiving Day story is my ancestral story, too. It's personal. The Pilgrims lost more than half of their people due to sickness and starvation over that first winter in 1620, including my direct ancestor Thomas Rogers, though

his 17 year old son Joseph survived. The Pokanoket tribe participated in the first Thanksgiving with the Pilgrims in 1621 and maintained peace with them for years afterward. Pokanoket taught the Pilgrims how to plant crops and live in this country. Despite the fears initially felt by the Pilgrims, the Pokanoket Great Leader, Ousamequin, called "Massasoit," quickly made a pact of peace with the new settlers. But things would change a generation later when the 'annihilate and replace' Settler Colonialists reneged on their end of the pact of peace not to expand into more territory.

<A *side note*: The Proclamation Line of 1763 was one of the prime reasons for the American revolution. King George III declared all lands west of the Appalachian Divide off-limits to colonial settlers. This royal proclamation closed down colonial expansion westward beyond Appalachia. The Anglo-American colonists rebelled. 'Westward ho!' Many colonists disregarded the proclamation line and settled west, which created tension between them and the Native Americans.>

The realm of the Pokanoket was extensive and known to the Pilgrims before my lineage arrived at Plymouth, Massachusetts on the Mayflower in 1620. William Bradford wrote that he had received word before the Pilgrims sailed: "The Pokanokets, which live to the west of Plymouth, bear an inveterate malice to the English, and are of more strength than all the savages from there to Penobscot. Their desire of revenge was occasioned by an English man who, having many of them on board, made a great slaughter, when (as they say) they offered no injury on their part."

The Pokanoket Great Leader Massasoit was succeeded by his sons, first by Wamsutta, then by Metacomet, known as Philip, who was killed in the King Philip's War (1675–76). King Philip used tribal alliances to coordinate efforts to push the expansionist minded European colonists out of New England. Many of the native tribes in the region wanted to push out the colonists following conflicts over land use, diminished game as a consequence of expanding European settlement, and other tensions. As the colonists brought their growing numbers to bear, King Philip and some of his followers took refuge in the great Assowamset Swamp in southern Massachusetts. He held out for a time, with his family and remaining followers. Hunted by a group of rangers led by Captain Benjamin Church, King Philip was fatally shot by a 'praying' [Christianized] Indian named John Alderman, on August 12, 1676, in the Miery Swamp near Mount Hope in Bristol, Rhode Island. After his death, his wife and nine-year-old son were captured and sold as slaves in Bermuda. Philip's head was mounted on a pike at the entrance to Plymouth, Massachusetts, where it remained for more than two decades. His body was cut into quarters and hung in trees. Exceeding even today's most extreme standards of terrorism. Alderman was given Philip's right hand as a trophy.

The word Pokanoket was outlawed by the colonists after the war and boys 14 and older were killed if they used the name, according to the tribe. Survivors were forced off their lands — sold into slavery, deported to the West Indies, or scattered among other tribes, the Pokanokets say. Those that remained in the region fell into a broader group that became known as the Wampanoag people, but representatives of the tribe today say that even as generations passed they maintained their own identity as Pokanokets.

A hundred years before the Mayflower, Giovanni da Verrazzano sailed into Narragansett Bay in 1524 and people appeared on the shores, most likely Pokanokets. The navigator's recorded latitude of 41°40' north corresponds to Mount Hope Bay, where the seat of the Pokanoket is located. Verrazzano wrote of these Native Americans whom he encountered: "*These people are the most beautiful and have the most civil customs we have found on this voyage.*"

Even still today this is sacred land for the Pokanoket, as well as for the Christian Colonizers who took it from them. And for my tribe too. This summer my mother's ashes were spread in Buzzard's bay to co-mingle with her beloved baby brother and his wife, just off shore of 7 Pokanoket Lane. This property has been subdivided several times since my grandfather moved the stone washed up by The Great Hurricane of 1938 from the center of the field to its present place at the northeast corner. At the time, what was at the center of this sacred land was not some large, heavy uninvited guest, but rather space, an open field, a place to play ball, to erect tents and share a meal together in celebration. A place to celebrate life. Like the Celebration of Life my people gathered to observe in light of my mother Saturday, July 30th, 2022.

{Pokanoket > <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pokanoket> | Pokanoket Nation gains in struggle for identity, ancestral lands > <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/2017/10/08/pokanoket-nation-takes-step-forward-in-struggle-for-identity-ancestral-lands/18350584007/> | (ALSO SEE:) PHILIP OF POKANOKET: AN INDIAN MEMOIR by Washington Irving > <http://www.columbia.edu/~lmg21/BC3180/Irving/philip.htm>}

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Notes Miscellany, Margaret Atwood:

"Slow walking leads to rumination, which leads to poetry."

"Your intended audience may range to [...]—as Emily Dickenson put it—your fellow nobodies."

"*Poetry doesn't belong to those who write it. It belongs to those who need it.*" [Quote from Mario Ruoppolo in *The Postman* (1994)], who's nicked Pablo Neruda's poems and ascribed them to himself in order to serenade his love.

Trying to remember what I forgot.

It's not peculiar to me, comes with aging. Common apparently.

At great ardor and increasing expense, scientists study the causes and potential remedies, and perennially conclude, "*further study is required*," which has been the case for as long as I can remember.

{Increase in Federal Alzheimer's and Dementia Research . . . <https://www.alz.org/news/2022/increase-in-federal-alzheimers-and-dementia-resear> Mar 14, 2022 — A \$289 million increase for Alzheimer's and dementia research funding at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) was signed into law.}

Culture War Proxy: *Critical Race Theory*

CRT opposition is not merely an Anti-diversity Campaign,

it's the trenches of the culture war conservatives are waging against progressive racial ideology, that is, the truth.

The activism against critical race theory can be attributed to one man, Christopher Rufo and his CRT opposition goes hand in glove with Rufo's efforts to provoke distrust toward public schools in order to promote school choice and privatize education, thus exerting a hegemony on 'thought control'. It was a mere 16 days from the time Rufo went on Fox News and said, "I call on the President to do something about critical race theory," to when the President did something about critical race. . . Fox would then amplify, "*I don't really think I've seen something spur up with so much passion, out of the grassroots.*" It's not grassroots! Fox started the fire and fanned the flames!

Jon Stewart (Youtube): Christopher Rufo, he goes on that other idiot's show on September 1st, and calls on the President. Well, guess what? His words echoed infinitely, all the way to September 17th. [TRUMP, speaking in a wooden, robotic voice]: "Students in our universities are inundated with critical race theory. This is a Marxist act, holding that America is a wicked and racist nation."

To Christopher Rufo, critical race theory, a term for a school of legal scholarship looked like the perfect weapon.

As Rufo eventually came to see it, conservatives engaged in the culture war had been fighting against the same progressive racial ideology since late in the Obama years, without ever being able to describe it effectively. "We've needed new language for these issues," Rufo told me, when I first wrote to him, late in May. " 'Political correctness' is a dated term and, more importantly, doesn't apply anymore. It's not that elites are enforcing a set of manners and cultural limits, they're seeking to reengineer the foundation of human psychology and social institutions through the new politics of race, It's much more invasive than mere 'correctness,' which is a mechanism of social control, but not the heart of what's happening. The other frames are wrong, too: 'cancel culture' is a vacuous term and doesn't translate into a political program; 'woke' is a good epithet, but it's too broad, too terminal, too easily brushed aside. 'Critical race theory' is the perfect villain," Rufo wrote.

He thought that the phrase was a better description of what conservatives were opposing, but it also seemed like a promising political weapon. "Its connotations are all negative to most middle-class Americans, including racial minorities, who see the world as 'creative' rather than 'critical,' 'individual' rather than 'racial,' 'practical' rather than 'theoretical.' Strung together, the phrase 'critical race theory' connotes hostile, academic, divisive, race-obsessed, poisonous, elitist, anti-American." Most perfect of all, Rufo continued, critical race theory is not "an externally applied pejorative." Instead, "it's the label the critical race theorists chose themselves."

Last summer, Rufo published several more pieces for City Journal, and, on September 2nd, he appeared on “Tucker Carlson Tonight.” Rufo had prepared a three-minute monologue, to be uploaded to a teleprompter at a Seattle studio, and he had practiced carefully enough that when a teleprompter wasn’t available he still remembered what to say. On air, set against the deep-blue background of Fox News, he told Carlson, “It’s absolutely astonishing how critical race theory”—he said those three words slowly, for emphasis—“has pervaded every aspect of the federal government.” Carlson’s face retracted into a familiar pinched squint while Rufo recounted several of his articles. Then he said what he’d come to say: “Conservatives need to wake up. This is an existential threat to the United States. And the bureaucracy, even under Trump, is being weaponized against core American values. And I’d like to make it explicit: The President and the White House—it’s within their authority to immediately issue an executive order to abolish critical-race-theory training from the federal government. And I call on the President to immediately issue this executive order—to stamp out this destructive, divisive, pseudoscientific ideology.”

The next morning, Rufo was home with his wife and two sons when he got a phone call from a 202 area code. The man on the other end, Rufo recalled, said, “ ‘Chris, this is Mark Meadows, chief of staff, reaching out on behalf of the President. He saw your segment on ‘Tucker’ last night, and he’s instructed me to take action.” Soon after, Rufo flew to Washington, D.C., to assist in drafting an executive order, issued by the White House in late September, that limited how contractors providing federal diversity seminars could talk about race. “This entire movement came from nothing,” Rufo wrote to me recently, as the conservative campaign against critical race theory consumed Twitter each morning and Fox News each night. But the truth is more specific than that. Really, it came from him.

{Christopher Rufo > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Rufo | *How a Conservative Activist Invented the Conflict Over Critical Race Theory* by Benjamin Wallace-Wells, June 18,2021 > <https://www.newyorker.com/news/annals-of-inquiry/how-a-conservative-activist-invented-the-conflict-over-critical-race-theory> | Jon Stewart: Where Does Mainstream Media Go Wrong?, Mar 18, 2022 > <https://youtu.be/gzeoe4m1t9Q?t=125>}

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The Race to Downtown Unsheltered, *It’s time to change the way we talk and think about Africa.*

The closer you get to the equator, the broader the nostrils, the thicker the lips, the darker skin. The closer you get to the poles, the blonder the hair, the bluer the eyes, the more alabaster whiter the skin. You know the concept of race is an invention, right? It doesn't really exist in actuality. It isn't some combination of physical attributes or use of grammar. It's make-believe, a useful fiction. Like money, nations, and God. The fiction has a particular utility in the struggle for power in claiming resources and exploiting labor for me and mine, in making sophisticated noble super heroes for stories to pass on to the grandchildren. That's about it, unless we breathe life into its myth.

Anthropology holds the *Out of Africa* hypothesis as a model for the origin and dispersal of modern humans. The hypothesis contends that humans evolved in East Africa, dispersing to populate the rest of the world from circa 70,000 years ago, replacing, rather than interbreeding with, the archaic hominins [however, I'm told I have 5% Neanderthal in my DNA] that were resident outside of Africa. "*Replacing, rather than interbreeding with,*" also known as "annihilate and replace" is the same strategy the Anglo-English tribes have used to conquer the aboriginals of what they've called North America for the last 500 years. Note, Spanish conquistadors primarily sought fortune, gold and silver, and land in the New World. Mostly interested in the vast riches of the Aztec and Inca empires, and not having the intention to annihilate and replace, they killed, conquered, and enslaved indigenous people as they extracted what to them was wealth. The Anglo-English tribes imported their slaves labor, primarily from Africa, and to some lesser, domestic servant extent, from previously conquered people in Ireland. Westward Ho!, the expansion-minded Anglos thus dug into "ownership" of all the eye could see from sea to shining sea. (The French were a curious lot, their idea of colonizing North America was merely to create trading posts to exploit resources for the fur trade, though some French missionaries eventually made their way to North America in order to convert Native Americans to Catholicism.) In any case, the *New World*, become the Old World struggles two point zero. Go Vikings, skol!

The peoples dug into Africa today are by and large the lineages of ones that never left, never emigrated out of Africa. They have the longest intrinsic ancestral root tails of any modern humans. Just as much ancient—in the bones multi-millennial glacial (cold) and interglacial (warm) survival skills—wisdom have been lost to the Anglo-English tribes' "annihilate and replace" projects, so too has the understanding and perspective of the on the ground struggles going on in Africa today. By today's modern progress standards, Africa as a continent is a hot, corrupt, backward facing, easy to convert and exploit mess. And China, America, the European and fast rising Indian plutocrats, aristocrats and

technocrats intend to do just that. Wring out every precious metal, every fashionable diamond, ...in short exploit every possible natural resource —logging, fishing, trade in wildlife, including to this day, gorilla hands for ashtrays, while the conflict embattled people starve from famines and die from disease disproportionately to the rest of the world.

Here is the razor edge of accelerating modernity cutting to shreds the ancient "We live, we suffer, we die. We're reborn. . . glory be" wisdom. The Old Ways don't die so easy...amen. Modernity knows all too well it's up against the climate it is so radically and swiftly changing. Yet it wants to extend it make-believe to believe it can infinitely rebirth itself, it can ALWAYS continue to innovate its way to new and better worlds—dwindling resources and over population and pollution be damned. Whereas the slower moving traditional wisdom of the here and now sees its salvation in 'the sky above, in the ones I love,' in the unadulterated nature of nature, the organic soil, the purifying big fires, big winds, refreshing cool breezes, in the tightly sewn skins against the arctic cold, the naked free dive for mollusks among the near shore coral reefs. Living day to day, hand-to-mouth. The way, ironically, more and more of the unsheltered live in the burgeoning modern cities—ouroboros, full circle.

{Africa is not poor, we are stealing its wealth | 24 May 2017 | *It's time to change the way we talk and think about Africa.*
<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2017/5/24/africa-is-not-poor-we-are-stealing-its-wealth> }

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Before the Coronavirus Pandemic Struck — keep to myself, have faith

We had the house to ourselves, my wife & I, before the Coronavirus Pandemic struck. Then, in July, the landlady raised the rent by ten percent. Her husband said they had to do it to keep up with the rate of inflation, which hit a fresh 40-year record high in June. Don't they recognize that escalating real estate prices is a prime mover in the spiraling inflation? Ouroboros, the snake swallowing its own tail representing the eternal cycle of destruction and rebirth? Hello? "So the rise in inflation is a short-term effect of the end of the pandemic?" "That is absolutely the overriding factor." "Guess what, the pandemic isn't over—the Fed raised the interest rates, real estate prices are falling! Why not rents?" Anyways, they recommend we sublet the downstairs to keep up. There goes the last of the dedicated for 'me alone' play spaces, turned it into a quaint little kitchen. Now, we're looking for an equally quaint tenant to sublet to. As the head board of bed share is on the backside of the wall to the sublet's kitchen, we're quite particular about our hopefully equally quaint prospective tenant. And when I say tenant, I mean one person. No wives who are only here a for a few months looking for work, nor well-behaved three year olds, no emotional support dogs. One individual. Like the ad says. We're thinking a nun who only does silent prayers. Or a travelling nurse, who makes a lot money, but isn't home very often for very long, and is exhausted and sleeping it off when she is. Someone without a life of their own. Basically, an indentured servant, not indentured to us per se, but, you know, somehow feels beholden to keep to themselves.

We had the sidewalks to ourselves, my wife & I, before the Coronavirus Pandemic struck. For years, decades really, it would be odd to see more than a few others out and about on our constitutional daily walks. Now it's a zoo. Joggers of all ages, shapes and sizes getting into shape, dog walkers, or rather people studying there phones, impatiently waiting for dogs to do their business, young mothers, or just as often, young fathers, pushing zoned out babies in sporty strollers while holding a sporty coffee mug, talking on a smartphone, stopping patiently to wait for their dog to do its business. And, yes of course, and a bunch of old people sauntering briskly with deliberate aimlessness, like us, trying to squeeze the last zest out of the good life. We slalom from side to side—sidewalk to sidewalk—an eye out for traffic, sometimes going down the middle of the road. It's a good time, a good time to be a misanthrope. Keep your distance. From a safe distance, I can be friendly. But I'm not looking to make new friends. Whether they're a cloistered nun or not.

"Guess what, the pandemic isn't over!" Have faith.

{Personal Sacrifices for Faith: Cloistered nuns sacrifice worldly pleasures for austerity and self-denial. | May 11, 2007 :: "They are part of a small number of nuns in the United States who are cloistered, meaning they do not interact with the outside world except by necessity." > <https://abcnews.go.com/2020/story?id=3160621&page=1> The Fed Sees Housing Trouble Ahead: There have been conflicting signals in the housing market. | Aug. 18, 2022 :: "Many have predicted that the Fed's efforts to slow inflation would crash housing prices, after a big run-up during the pandemic." > <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/18/business/fed-minutes-housing-interest-rates.html> }

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On Writing Unencumbered

Want to be a writer? Read! Want to be a writer, not the commercial kind, but just for the love of it? Write! Ever evolving, going deeper, broader—richly penetrating into the world of words? I'd recommend for your first writing self-assignment, you do your research. FIRST study where thoughts come from. Where thoughts come from in your

brain and gut. How your brain and gut neural network works. Neural networks of the biological neuron kind, as distinct from the deep learning algorithms of machine learning used in artificial intelligence, though that study may also hold its own separate promise. Save that for a later out-of-body experience day. For now, peak into how neural networks form connections, associations, stores bits to re-member, washes out the extraneous debris between the synapsis nightly as you sleep, freshens up and presents the salient threads right off the top of your head first thing in the morning quiet while you're waking up. If you're paying attention. If you're paying attention, you'll eventually get the gist of how you form the novel and new from the tried and true—utilizing all of that nuts and bolts hardware parts of the idea forming equation. It'll give you a deeper appreciation for when you tell yourself to "sleep on it" and how you uniquely, in your own way grok the symbiotic means and methods of making sense of it all. First study the electric-wet-wonder-magic mechanics of where thoughts come from, THEN study where the materials that matter most come to you in a manner just as deep, broad and wide. Sense the sensors that bring the sensations that tickle the feelings that delight the fancy of your mind. Those are the stores and silos of the deep well from which you'll draw the grist for your writing mill. Those are the stories you'll dearly want to tell. Those directly verifiable lived experiences are the stash you'll pull from and go with, plus or minus the collective cross-check of an extensive Google search. But Google will never step into the wafting smells of a bakery with a laugh out loud catching up with an old friend, sharing two venti mocha espresso lattes and four fresh out-of-the-oven chocolate croissants with the simpatico moment. Just that wafting smell alone. That signature wafting smell that three weeks later, when your still half a block away from walking past that same bakery door, THAT 'marinated trigger sensor' smell that captures your awareness and puts you right back into the laughing out loud catching up with an old friend aliveness. Now—one space removed—it's a lived experience in a form you can put into appreciatively incisive words. That marinated trigger sensor is akin to how emotions, both fleeting and deep state emotions are processed. Fruitful ground, a lifelong study. Here is where, if you last, if you can hang in for the long haul, is where you'll intuit the soul of what you're talking about, what your writing about, what you want, really want to say to yourself—and what, . . . edited, edited, edited, refined, distilled—what you want to share with the world. But audience is a different thought. For now, beginner's mind, be your own sole audience. Thoughtfully write on, unencumbered.

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Suited to a More Public Audience:

"I'm Nobody! Who are you?" by Emily Dickinson

I'm Nobody! Who are you?
Are you – Nobody – too?

Then there's a pair of us!
Don't tell! they'd advertise – you know!

How dreary – to be – Somebody!
How public – like a Frog –

To tell one's name – the livelong June –
To an admiring Bog!

Kristina Marie Darling, *"Given these findings, I believe that several questions could be taken up by future researchers in the field. Because I have endeavored to present a concise snapshot of Dickinson's poetic categories at a single point in time, this essay does not examine the ways in which Dickinson's poetic categories changed over time. The fact that Dickinson's style changed later in her literary career, becoming more fragmentary, suggests that it is entirely possible that her beliefs about which poems constitute a given category changed over the course of her career. Additionally, I believe that her assessment of which poems were suited to a more public audience evolved as the recipients of her letters changed. Dickinson's choices with respect to her letters remained largely performative, and could be described as custom made to the letter's recipient. As new literary exchanges emerged, such as her later correspondence with Thomas Wentworth Higginson, it is entirely likely that her assessment of what constitutes a "public" poem changed as well."*

{FOUND: "I'm Nobody! Who are you?" <https://www.litcharts.com/poetry/emily-dickinson/i-m-nobody-who-are-you> ::

Public by Varying Degrees: Understanding Audience in Relation to Emily Dickinson's Artistic Subject | Kristina Marie Darling | April 29, 2019 > <https://kenyonreview.org/2019/04/public-by-varying-degrees-understanding-audience-in-relation-to-emily-dickinsons-artistic-subject/>}

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You hear me?

You can see,
squirrels around,
the lemons down
on the ground
beneath the tree.

You can see?

You hear me ...but,
can I get an Amen?

There's life to live,
enough to share ...

You hear me?

By the sidewalk
three full bags,
freshly downed lemons,
washed, for free.

You see? Amen.

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< Notes on *Convention 1 of 3* >

The News: *change in the weather gonna be extreme, you're the best thing I've ever seen*

Notes on being Conservative—conservative as in to conserve:

protect (something, especially an environmentally or culturally important place or thing) from harm or destruction.

Born into a rather, somewhat, conservative family. Conservative in the conventional use of the word. Father the strong silent type. (Who knew what he knew?) Mother, a blue blood rebel who eloped into the then cultural wilderness of southern Florida to become, despite her alcoholic husband, her own brand of volunteer civic leader. Mom always had a book beside her in the station wagon to read at the stop lights as she shuttled her 7 kids around. Dad only read the newspaper, sipping a high ball in his easy chair, while listening to big band jazz on the hifi. His view of the world was colored by the simmering anger and fear of the worst of what might be going on in the world today. That and the sardonic comic section, further filtered through the fog of alcohol. As soon as I became a teenager I assumed his method, solidly locked into the comics, the sports section, and a budding alcoholism. Only in my first year in college, when my father died of cirrhosis of the liver did my good boy jock, God and country indoctrination begin to quirk. As fortune would have it, I wasn't alone. A good slice of my generation would find cause to tune in and drop out -- embrace the freak, towards the vague mirage of love & peace hippies. Hair grew long, ate magic mushrooms picked off fresh cow pies, yes, but here's where it gets sticky: rejection of conventional values. Is Tofu, not Turkey for Thanksgiving dinners rejecting a conventional value? Or trying to get to the truth of what the origins of Thanksgiving dinner was celebrating, say from the Pokanokets' perspective? Is getting to the roots, questioning conventional wisdom itself being disloyal.

Honestly speaking, it was more about slowing down the Industrial Age capitalist free market juggernaut, seeing *what is* as it actually was, actually is and from there trying to move towards to a simpler sustainable life in a way that leaves room for all sentient beings to flourish happily. Getting sober, facing reality head on. A plethora of alternative and experimental ways to catch the news and make the change ensued. For the next fifty years or so I'd gather the news from a wide spectrum of sources. A dazzling array of competing, dovetailing alternative self-help, *'live let live'* tolerant of difference, imaginative, challenging thought-provoking sources. This voyage of the journalistic starship Humanist Knowledge Worker Enterprise on its fact finding/digesting mission, boldly going where no one has gone before seamlessly continued on ...even as the Information Age burst onto the scene with the super startling connectivity of the internet. Only more so, many magnitudes more so. More and more like this ...all the way up to the unclear and fateful day when Rupert Murdoch's brand of tabloid journalism took western world flight into that absurdist fascist form that hijacked the conversation in that mean-spirited, let the outrage out, hateful voice so too prevalent in the Age of Trump, fueled by novel worldwide web platforms for conspiracy mis-dis-information springing up like mushrooms, powered by the motives of greedy grabbing disingenuous players. At the moment I grokked the grounds of *that* motive, in a flash I

saw the proverbial shit hit the promise of libertarian “net neutrality” fan and the *glasnost* (openness) dream snapping shut like a Venus Flytrap on a bumbling bumble bee. I withdrew, dropped out of the mainstream once again—dropped out of social media and began undertaking a deep moral inventory dive into WHO was authoring the news I capture, and WHY—the motives of the writer and the agency they worked for. I checked the sources, and the sources' sources. My innate—one turn on the wheel later—social/political conservative mind-set kicked it. To conserve, first do no harm.

Now at the hub of my daily efforts to distill the anger and fear of the worst of what might be going on in the world today is the solid integrity of NPR.org and APnews.com with, for ballast, the added spice of a survey through the headlines of theconversation.com—a nonprofit, independent news organization featuring verified academic experts with an occasional splurge dessert of the old guard trusted and admired model of UK's theguardian.com. Lastly, I peruse the Google News feed just to round out the clattering noise and see if I can decipher a signal, a pulse of a beating heart in the heat. There, I'm just as likely to click on Fox News and the National Review, as Democracy Now, Mother Jones or even the Intercept. I've informed Google's algorithm I'm open to the full array of the cacophony. The varieties in this shmorgishborg are the side dishes, and not all the content of this mix is available to me. I recognize the rich gold standards of the New York Times and Washington Post, but they have gone behind pay walls (and taken so many others with them) inaccessible to be me by the sheer economics of what it would cost to subscribe to the full array of competing outlets with their hands out. Plus, the costly unwitting “manufactured consent” of the, say, corporate New York Times propaganda is too corrosive to go unmet without its countervailing perspectives, adding a dizzying cost to determine which stew mix of ingredients would provide a balanced taste. Thus, for my main meal, the public service minded media are my entre. For protracted feasts, I look to the essays and books of those individuals who have dedicated their lives to thinking deeply through the complexities, such as Michelle Alexander, Ronan Farrow, Amy Goodman and Noam and Aviva Chomsky, among so many others. Honest brokers whose articulate thoughts are grounded in compassionate heart. My kind of conservatives.

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< Notes on Convention 2 of 3 >

The economic world—my mother's lifelong grasp on it—made her an astute investor in the stock market. She had inherited via her mother, a tiny bit of the wealth granny's father, A.I. DuPont accumulated, and parlayed it into a good, rich, full life for herself with enough left over to pass on some to her 7 kids. The privilege of generational equity. *"The older the money, the more invisible it was; the newer, the more flaunted,"* notes Katy Lederer. My mother died shortly after my 70th birthday. As tacitly promised, I finally became a Trust Fund baby. It wasn't lost on me, that when I was 20 or so, at a time I desperately wanted NOT to be here anymore, I tried to hang myself with a nylon rope. DuPont Company invented and produced nylon, and now I was heir to that good fortune, in part because the nylon rope stretched until I again was firmly on the garage floor. At this present near end stage of my life, I am less likely to flaunt or squander the old wealth. I don't have my mother's skills, nor the stomach to watch the fortune of my new nest egg bob up and down in the stock market, so I cashed out and put it in the most conservative of savings. You know, it's funny, funny peculiar, ...for all of my adult life, heretofore, I've economically lived month to month, if not day to day, and I hardly ever worried about money. I could eventually always figure out how to make what I needed. But now that I have a bit of a nest egg, albeit a relatively modest nest egg, I'm a neurotic mother hen with errant chicks. The windfall is not nearly enough to even buy the house we've been renting for the past 29 years. We've put in more than 25 times the money our landlady has into this property, yet she gets the equity and we get the looming month to month threat of an eviction notice. She just raised the rent another 10% despite the rate of inflation hitting a 40 year high from the fallout of the global pandemic. In what definition of a democratic system is the value you put into your home somebody else business? Apparently ours. I already have a coop of habitual things to be anxious about, I don't need to be watching the stock market bobbing up & down. Or is it, I need to shift my priorities and give up on peace in the Middle East, and that whole other basket of goods I have no providence over? Then again, speculating on such would obligate me to invest in predetermined futures— predicting the future is not my skillset. I'm better off being content, hanging tight and sticking to planting my seeds in the here and now, keeping a low profile in accords with conventional common sense wisdom.

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< Notes on Convention 3 of 3 >

Appropriateness: following the Wayward Wu Wie

Do not do what has been done in the land of do, do what is done in the land of not doing and all will be done.

Quite the steady growth in our xeriscape garden, year after year. With or without you—the geography, the geology, the sociopolitical means to finding place—it's a place the good life belongs. Quite the party of dog walkers converging on our sidewalk, after the rare rain, avidly discussing the way it is, what it has become, as the dogs pee on our succulents.

Jimmy Evert's consistency, showing up every day, rain or shine—if not teaching, stringing rackets. I remember Chrissie, remembering her devout Catholic dad, not unlike, a strict Confucian disciplinarian, but never have I heard her mention consistency, his living steady example, the attribute more than any other to propelled her to the top of the game.

Unconflicting personal harmony, even when the wheels come off. Even when the world around is falling into chaos—hug the center line. When others might go away, take a walk about—free-flowing spontaneity and savoir-faire, the focused wayward wu wie way. Not not doing. Appropriateness in the place it ought to be, a gift to be simple, a gift to be free.

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{Sunday, 220911}

Out Shopping: The British Raj, Kenya, James Taylor, Allensworth, California: *Steamroller Blues*

I know better than to ask my wife what she's looking for at the 20+ Family Yard Sale in Burlingame. She's just looking.

The British Raj with its Crown Rule sure did a number on the Indian subcontinent from 1858 to 1947, a succession of famines alone killing over 65 million people as the Raj extracted goodies to ship back to the British Isles. (*Modern humans arrived on the Indian subcontinent from Africa no later than 55,000 years ago. Their long occupation, initially in varying forms of isolation as hunter-gatherers, has made the region highly diverse, second only to Africa in human genetic diversity.*) SINCE the British Raj left ...India has been a federal republic, governed through a democratic parliamentary system. It is a pluralistic, multilingual and multi-ethnic society. India's population grew from 361 million in 1951 to 1.211 billion in 2011. During the same time, its nominal per capita income increased from US\$64 annually to US\$1,498, and its literacy rate from 16.6% to 74%. From being a comparatively destitute country in 1951, India has become a fast-growing major economy and a hub for information technology services, with an expanding middle class.

A dozen eggs lay cracked on the parking lot at Whole Foods, apparently left for the crows. But there are no crows. Guess they'll be a frittata by noon.

In Kenya, where decades ago a young Elizabeth learned of her father's death and her enormous new role as queen, a lawyer named Alice Mugo shared online a photograph of a fading document from 1956. It was issued four years into the queen's reign, and well into Britain's harsh response to the Mau Mau rebellion against colonial rule. "Movement permit," the document says. While over 100,000 Kenyans were rounded up in camps under grim conditions, others, like Mugo's grandmother, were forced to request British permission to go from place to place. "Most of our grandparents were oppressed," Mugo tweeted in the hours after the queen's death Thursday, "I cannot mourn."

James Taylor doesn't seem to understand napalm, especially in his use of it to engender strong affection through the back door in his *Steamroller Blues*: "I'm a napalm bomb/Guaranteed to blow your mind/If I can't have your love now baby/There won't be nothing left behind". Nasty, beyond nasty stuff, napalm—and how we use it. Napalm is an incendiary gel used in firebombing campaigns. Against Tokyo, Japan, one such firebombing raid, codenamed "Operation Meetinghouse" killed at least 100,000, in a single night; some one million people were left homeless. The US Air Force and US Navy dropped 23 times as much napalm on Vietnam—mostly jungle forest villages good with small children, no doubt you've seen the pictures—as it did on Japan during World War II, bragging, "the effect was not always purely physical as napalm had psychological effects on the enemy as well." *If I can't have your love now baby...*

Allensworth, California, Established in 1908, was the first of its kind : a town governed entirely by Black people. Lt. Col. Allensworth, who was enslaved in Kentucky before fleeing and becoming a Union soldier in the Civil War, was also a minister, educator and businessman. In a letter to Booker T. Washington, Allensworth said the town would be "where African Americans would settle upon the bare desert and cause it to blossom as a rose." Allensworth did blossom into a thriving town. But it had to rely on the state government and white-owned companies that controlled water distribution and the railroad, two lifelines that were soon snatched to squeeze Allensworth into submission. In 1914, a new stop was created in a neighboring white town and the number of shipments from Allensworth severely declined. "They added tracks over to the little community of Alpaugh, which is west of here by about seven miles," she said. "All that agricultural product was being transported from Alpaugh instead of Allensworth. The Pacific Water Company built only four wells for Allensworth, compared to the 10 wells built for Alpaugh, according to a report released by the Reparations Task Force in June 2022. Allensworth's wells started drying up, and the water became contaminated. The settlers were "victims of a racist scam and were sold land that would never have enough water," the report noted— by 1920, the town was in severe decline. So the money started slowing down, dwindling, and then the trains stopped stopping here." Allensworth's Black residents started to move away. Today, the most visible evidence of Lt. Col. Allensworth's utopian project is an obscure California state park. Tourists can walk through the town's original buildings, visit the old church, and tour the lieutenant colonel's home. Contemporary Allensworth sits across the street. It's quiet and welcoming,

populated by mostly Latinx farmworkers who moved in as Black residents departed. The town is hemmed in by irrigated vineyards and orchards. Many Central Valley farmers get water deliveries from the State Water Project and the Central Valley Project, feats of 20th-century engineering that shuttle water from Northern California to cities and farms in the south. But like most small valley towns, Allensworth doesn't have access to this water source. Instead, it's still tapping its shrinking aquifer, which, according to residents, tastes unusually good. There's "an itty-bitty sweetness to it," said Sherry Hunter, president of the Allensworth Community Services District. But like most people in town, she only uses the water to shower, wash dishes or flush toilets. She hasn't had a drink from it in years. "Come to find out the water was contaminated with arsenic," she said. Once a destination where Black people from around the country moved for safety and an opportunity to flourish, Allensworth is now a dusty Central Valley outpost with a population of roughly 500.

{I cannot mourn': Former colonies conflicted over the queen > <https://apnews.com/article/king-charles-iii-africa-caribbean-slavery-50f9175b541f307adb2e494fcccc80f5> | 'Promised Land': A Historically Black California Town Honors Its Proud, Painful Past — and Fights for Its Future > <https://www.kqed.org/news/11925020/promised-land-a-historically-black-california-town-honors-its-proud-painful-past-and-fights-for-its-future>}

Attempts to Reconcile Humanitarianism and Ongoing Economic Development

Rethinking Political Economy in Colonial India

Summary: Chapter 3 examines the provision of cooked food as famine relief in late nineteenth-century India. Famine relief was undertaken at the local level by officials who interpreted policies and managed the balance between cost saving and lifesaving in different ways. But by the 1890s, there was widespread consensus that government "kitchens" should provide aid in the form of cooked food to children, as many local officials claimed that they were victims of parental neglect. Feeding the "field labourers of the future," rather than expecting them to be sustained out of their parents' relief wages, was a way to maximize the future utility of these "units." For by the end of the nineteenth century, imperial revenue production and saving colonial subjects from starvation were no longer seen to be in tension with each other rather they were intimately linked projects. This chapter demonstrates that the provision of cooked food was a central element of famine relief precisely because it was part of late-Victorian attempts to reconcile humanitarianism and the ongoing economic development of the British Empire.

{FOUND: Many Mouths: The Politics of Food in Britain from the Workhouse to the Welfare State, Chapter 3: **Famine, Cooked Food, and the Starving Child:** *Rethinking Political Economy in Colonial India* <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/many-mouths/famine-cooked-food-and-the-starving-child/A16833A7C15C96E7E0343AEA6B980A11> | Cambridge University Press: 27 March 2020 }

I tell my wife,
"Fortunately I'm not blameless.
You can always blame me."
She agrees. *Gleefully!*

My wife wants all the credit
and none of the blame.
I'm good with that.

Heterocyclic Amines (HCAs)

Looking for the naturalist in high society,
you have to play with fire, if you want to BBQ.
Remember, the char is carcinogenic.

{220914}

Final Entry: *save for last.*

There's so much more I could have said
that I didn't say, that I should have said.
I'll leave it here.
Enough said.

The never ending pitch
on the *Shopping Channel*
doesn't give you time to think
for yourself.

{210830}

An excellent insight into the power of indoctrination and brainwashing is the reality TV show *Escaping Polygamy*. Watch the pivotal moments closely when Isaac Jeffs, son of Warren Jeffs, the notorious leader, and prophet of the FLDS polygamist cult begins to break physically, mentally and emotional free of the cult in Season 3, Episode 4, "The Prophet's Son." It speaks universally to how your own beliefs and loyalties were formed.

Warren Jeffs' daughter, Rachel Jeffs Blackmore, author of the book *Breaking Free* tweets on Aug 7, 2020, "*Fear culture is cult culture; scaring everyone into obedience is cultism. Don't be afraid of anything and never trust those who try to scare or intimidate you to do something. Follow your heart, keep your freedom. #FearCultureIsCultism*"

Writ large our mainstream media is based in fear culture. And just like Isaac and Rachel that's all we knew. It was the very water our school of fish swam in. To become a flying fish takes an unimaginable leap of faith. To teach yourself to think and act independently of the society you grew up in and are surrounded by, and not to succumb to the fear molding or the reactionary outrage molding is the miracle performed by the few who can successfully transverse the path less traveled by. The most successful person I know in this regard, and the most informed about the social and political reality of the USA in the past 50 years is Noam Chomsky.

{**Escaping Polygamy: The Prophet's Son – Part 1 of 2** (Season 3, Episode 4) | Lifetime > https://youtu.be/GUe46y_1GwQ | **Escaping Polygamy: The Prophet's Son - Part 2 of 2** (Season 3, Episode 4) | Lifetime > <https://youtu.be/ARaamswal2E> }

{210905}

Propaganda: as a network MSNBC, like CNN, or FOX has a very specific point of view. And virtually all the anchors hammer away on the same stories, with the same in-house pundits for weeks, months at a time. Though it can get very tedious, each anchor has a clear brand that appeals to slightly different audiences. With opinion journalists, it's what current issues they do and don't focus on that speaks to their bias and motivations -- the agenda they are pushing, as well as the ones they ignore. Chris Cuomo is the no non-sense "let's get after it" with integrity brand. Until he's caught back-handedly helping his brother not come clean, but perversely fight multiple sexual harassment allegations. Does Don Lemon call Chris on it in their usually frank 'bro talk' during the hand-off between their shows? Hell no! It's a good ole boy boy's club tacitly agreeing boys will be boys.

Rachel Maddow's brand is the wholesome exhaustive Oxford trained nerd. She's not simply giving us a detailed reading of the daily news, she's developing a somewhat factual, somewhat innuendo, somewhat nerd-fest snarky narrative to carry her audience along show after show. Personally, Maddow wears me out with her tedious redundancy. Like a preacher from the pulpit she chants in measured repetition, a rhetorical device used less for informing and more for persuasive indoctrination. If Maddow presented with the simple straight forward clarity of PBS News Hour's Judy Woodruff, she could condensed her show to ten commercial free minutes. [Democracy Now!'s Amy Goodman](#) has a fraction of the staff Maddow has, yet she consistently provides a densely thoughtful, historically astute assessment, which is far more informative on a much wider array of topics. Spend an hour with the well-studied richness of a Fresh Air Terry Gross interview and see how it compares to the effect of Maddow's soft-balls to the home team.

Maddow and other MSNBC anchors had the telegenic lawyer Michael Avenatti on as their pit bull attacking Trump guest over 108 times starting in March 2018, CNN had more than 121 Avenatti appearances, until Avenatti was convicted of extorting Nike -- then not a word. With all the resources that Maddow has at hand, why didn't anyone catch Avenatti for the sensationalist scam artist that he was, and after he was exposed as such, why didn't any of the cable anchors go back and do a thorough mea culpa examination of Avenatti's contribution to their show? Because it didn't fit their narrative. In an interview on network TV promoting his 1988 book *Manufacturing Consent*, Noam Chomsky's interviewer empathically stated, "As a journalist I don't have a bias, I work hard to be objective and report all the facts for all sides!" Chomsky replied, "You may not recognize it, but you have a clear bias, and if you didn't, your corporate employers wouldn't have hired you." For high-relief contrast study the focus, narrative and presentation styles of corporate news agencies to and non-corporate ones, such as the [Associated Press](#) and [NPR/PBS](#).

For instance, in the 20 years of the US war on Afghanistan did you once hear the cable or network media dive into the reality on the ground, much less assess, as NPR correspondent [Sarah Chayes](#) does in her *Ides of August* essay: The Taliban were a strategic project of the Pakistani military intelligence agency, the ISI. I was there. Afghans did not reject us. They looked to us as exemplars of democracy and the rule of law. They thought that's what we stood for. And what did we stand for? What flourished on our watch? Cronyism, rampant corruption, a Ponzi scheme disguised as a banking system, designed by U.S. finance specialists during the very years that other U.S. finance specialists were incubating the crash of 2008. A government system where billionaires get to write the rules. [Bush Admin] In 2011 [Obama Admin], an interagency process reached the decision that the U.S. would not address corruption in Afghanistan.

It's telling that Rachel Maddow is considering striking out on her own. I'd be curious to see how different not serving the interests of NBCUniversal, but rather a "direct relationship with paying subscribers" would alter her focus and presentation style.

Politics is the new religion. / Money the new God. / Podcasts the new pulpit. / Podcasters ala Joe Rogan, / like the evangelists of yore, / must come up with new hot sermons / to keep the congregation fired up, / week after week, if not day by day. / It takes a lot of juice to stay relevant. / Viralness is next to godliness.

{[Rachel Maddow](#) is thinking about leaving MSNBC and starting her own media venture | August 12, 2021 > <https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/12/media/rachel-maddow-msnbc/index.html> | **Manufacturing Consent**: The Political Economy of the Mass Media > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manufacturing_Consent is a 1988 book by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. It argues that the mass communication media of the U.S. "are effective and powerful ideological institutions that carry out a system-supportive propaganda function, by reliance on market forces, internalized assumptions, and self-censorship, and without overt coercion", by means of the propaganda model of communication. | BBC Interviewer gets Schooled about Media Propaganda by **Noam Chomsky** | Jan 13, 2016 > <https://youtu.be/suFzcnCHjko> | **Noam Chomsky's Manufacturing Consent revisited** | The Listening Post | Dec 22, 2018 > <https://youtu.be/pf-tQYcZGM4> }

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Ursula K. Le Guin had *No Time to Spare* in 2017.

"How rich we are in knowledge, and in all that lies around us yet to learn. Billionaires, all of us."

She was thinking about what matters.

"If I'm ninety and believe I'm forty-five, I'm headed for a very bad time trying to get out of the bathtub."

She died January 22, 2018 (aged 88) in Portland, OR.

I'm glad I didn't meet Ursula, (can I call you Ursula?) before she died, or I would have spent all my spare time pining for a place to hang out a whisker's breadth closer to her than her rescue cat.

.....

Diminished Thing: *old age is not to be wasted on the young*

Robert Frost's *Ovenbird* asked the operative question, "*What to make of a diminished thing?*"

Frost hints at an answer in saying that the ovenbird does not cease to sing.

He is honest about the reduced natural beauty, speaks of it plainly, but he still persists, and not in lament.

Younger people don't want to hear about it, says Ursula Le Guin,

"so honest conversation about geezerhood takes place mostly among geezers."

The posters say,

"Old age is not for sissies." Ursula protests, "Old age is for anybody who gets there." But, *Old Age is Not for the Young*.

Bernard Shaw was asked what is the most beautiful thing in this world. "Youth," he replied, "is the most beautiful thing in this world—and what a pity that it has to be wasted on the young!" Sissy or not, beautiful to the eye or not,

old age is savored among geezers who are less interested in how it looks as in listening to the song of the ovenbird.

I, myself, never felt older than when I first left my mother's home and faced the truth of my father's death, a time when I did deeply lament, could hardly speak, and in my ugly, did want most *not* to persist.

Yet here I am, still dying, still asking, "*What to make of a diminished thing?*"

Yet here I am, still dying, song savoring all the more. You youngsters shouldn't be afraid to hop into the conversation.

After all, all you have to lose is the naive innocence of your youth. Your elders face losing their very life, for real.

Bit by bit, diminishing returns. Death is the most heralded event of our lives. Don't waste the wasting of dying.

Do the pageantry justice—eyes wide open, prepare to see the grand mystery—what's next?

You'll live as long and as much as you do, appreciating as much as you allow yourself to.

You may or may not get a lot of living in, but, for sure, you only die once. Make hay.

.....

Obey that brilliantly amalgamated luminous grey zone: *escaping your own self-imposed nunnery*

If you look at "obedience," what it is to "obey," mostly you'll find the 'how to' lists of how outer forces shape you to conform, "Encourage your child to acknowledge instructions." But how do you develop a strong personal center to obey your true self? I'd suggest that that delicate balance is found in that brilliantly amalgamated luminous grey zone between the Adherents and Resistance.

The Resistance: If you search "obey" in Goggle the top result is *Obey Clothing*, "a clothing company founded in 2001 by street artist Shepard Fairey as an extension to his work in activism. The company appropriates themes and images used in its clothing from the John Carpenter film *They Live*." The brand is known for incorporating politically and socially provocative propaganda into the designs of their clothing. The film, *They Live*, follows an unnamed drifter—credited as "Nada"—who discovers through special sunglasses that the ruling class are aliens concealing their appearance and manipulating people to consume, breed, and conform to the status quo via subliminal messages in mass media.

The Adherents: If you search "obedience" in Goggle the top result are divided between "The Concept of Obedience in Psychology" and "What is Obedience? How Do We Obey God? - Christianity."

We're told: Obedience, in human behavior, is a form of "social influence in which a person yields to explicit instructions or orders from an authority figure". Obedience is generally distinguished from compliance, which is behavior influenced by peers, and from conformity, which is behavior intended to match that of the majority. The meaning of Christian obedience is "the act of submitting (obeying) to the commands (laws) of God, the highest authority, creator, and Father of mankind. If you have faith in God and believe Christianity is the truth, obedience is the practice of living by faith, obeying the teachings of the Bible."

Thing is, the bible was written by men.

How then, to procure that delicate balance found in that brilliantly amalgamated luminous grey zone between the Adherents and Resistance? How to find your sole true self? I say, it can be a grand harmonic orchestration, it can be a bloody hell civil war within and/or without. Here is where I caution: don't let a belief system hijack your lived experience. And what is within and what is without anyway?

I particularly liked Carl Jung's notion of individuating, an undertaking likened to his description of the creative process — the road of integration between parts of the self that are conflicted, assimilating juxtaposed opposites. Bringing into harmony the parts of the psyche, the symbolic content rising from both the unconscious to consciousness, that are at odds. That notion served me well when I had a Great unCivil War raging red hot within my young psyche, unsure which side I was on.

And if on the road to integration, shoes are symbolic of what you stand for, ...and here is where I'd diverge from being hijacked by the symbols of myths.

Hunker down to ground zero, hunker down I now say, hit bottom with a bounce or a thud, but get to the bottom, the bottom of the bottomless pit. Obey THAT rule! That you are it. That there is no bottom, there is no end until the end and if you're still here it's not the end. And end with a promise, a promise to your true self that you will respond, you are responding—responding to what? Responding to what is, to what you are. To what you are becoming, yes, . . . but more to the full embrace that 'I am.' It's the full embrace that I am that I obey.

{NOTES: **Christian Self Control:** *isolate and ruminate.* To live by faith means to live by prayer, commonly going to God in supplication and thanksgiving. If you feel that you are struggling with understanding or practicing obedience, pray for guidance and inspiration. Moreover, prayer itself is a form of obedience, as scripture says to humble ourselves and pray. | **Total Control, Becoming a nun:** chastity, poverty, and obedience -- giving up on sex, wealth, self: You must take a vow of chastity, which means you cannot get married or have sexual/romantic relationships. You must take a vow of poverty, which means you must live a simple life. In most cases, this means giving up your personal possessions (and any sense of 'ownership') and share what you have with your community. You must take a vow of obedience, which means you commit to following the faith and your religious leaders. You may be required to take a vow of silence. You must wear modest clothing when not wearing your nun's habit. Catholic nuns, as decreed by Pope Francis, are not allowed to use smartphones or social media. You cannot become a nun if you have been previously married. Your marriage needs to be annulled (not 'divorced') first. | [Becoming a nun: Rules and facts you must know](#)}

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When life gives you lemons, give them away—people like free and love, just love the zest

When we first met she was about 6 feet tall and eight feet wide. Her branches went all the way to the ground and continued for another 2 or 3 more feet. The most peculiar sight. It took me a long few moments to comprehend what I was looking at. Finally, through the layers of spider webs, detritus, duff and dust I made out against the rich variety of greens the yellow shapes as lemons. Fat, over-plump, juicy lemons. When I got around to trimming her branches, they sprang up from their droop and the tree took on a whole new character. Light and buoyant, fresh and airy. Henceforth she began to grow up and out, but mostly up. Periodically I have to get up high and cut her down to a manageable height, which invariably gives her a delightfully French froufrou style. This silly, now not so little, tree has always been amazingly prolific in bearing fruit. Once in a while, a few are bud mite ridden, resulting in freaky looking lemons. Not often, and fewer still, some get brown rot. However, on the whole this one tree offers us an endless bounty of heavenly ellipsoids, more than plenty, enough to share. So many can fall from the tree of their own accord on any given night that we're forced in self-defense to rinse them off and place them in a bag by the sidewalk next to a "FREE" sign. Our neighbors are very appreciative. Some go out of their way to thank us. Recently one neighbor, though certainly not necessary, brought us hot tamales, which were still piping hot, to reciprocate. Just this morning a young mother, along with her mother by her side, and her baby swaddled on her chest, stopped to thank us for 'all the lemons,' though we didn't have more out today. The grandmother beamed as her daughter recanted the joy her infant daughter expressed in plucking a lemon from the bag. Wealth shared, naturally. Smilingly, ...with zest!

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Wordwork: Wordworker, Wordworking

Starts with a sound. Not airborne, rather the kind of wet electric sound made by the neural networks in your brain that *mimic* the sounds plucked from the air, those made mostly by the vocal cords of other animals, mostly humans. Sounds your brain fashions into words. Words we agree upon. Words you too can speak back into sound or sing, or write down on some receptive substance—clay, papyrus, paper made of rice or wood with a stylus scratching, inked or graphite—write down as symbols whose shapes mimic animals or geometric forms or who remembers what, but as long as you remember those shapes and the sounds they evoke, you're okay, you can still convey in a way that is now quickly becoming thoughts, and if you are astutely lucky, fraught of language, thoughts with meaning. That most elusive and ephemeral of the airy fairy beasts, meaning. I'll leave the deeper meaning of meaning for philosophers, I'm merely a wordworker here. But I will mention the more immediate meaning of meaning, such as "*Hey, now, what's that sound? Everybody look, what's going down.*" The question, quickly followed by a command. Useful, pragmatic. Say, perhaps you're in a crowded theater, "*Hey, what's that smell, smoke? Fire! Fire! Everybody out!!*" Useful sounds with an appropriately alarming pitch and tone. I mean, if it were stated in a hushed clandestine whisper, like by a laid back stoner dude, "*Smoke a doobie? Hey man, light my fire, light my fire.*" No, those sounds aren't going to clear the theater. That meaning won't transport a larger audience. It has moved to a subcult of private mutual understanding. And that's where we're headed, isn't it? Towards belonging to the embrace of mutual understanding with an ever wider audience. Isn't that what wordworkers are doing in all those long hours shaping and reshaping the sounds in their heads to be an allure to further mutual understanding? Or if not mutual understanding, at least evoke a novel thought in a stranger, if not more dearly to a loved one. A scientist stands a better chance with empirical evidence to evoke mutual objective understanding when saying, "This is a pipe," while lighting it up, sucking air and blowing smoke—as here's the thing itself, here's the object. A dada poet painter has a better chance of evoking a more subjective interpretation, say when painting a picture of a generic pipe with the words, "*Ceci n'est pas une pipe*" ("This is not a pipe") inscribed below—as of course it's not a pipe, it's a painting, a painting of a pipe. But that simple sleight of hand was a novel, if not revolutionary thought back then in 1929 heralding a whole suspicion into *The Treachery of Images*. You can't trust your eyes. Things are not as they appear. You can't believe everything you read. But with sounds we're not so easily fools, are we? The thoughts that form in the messy wet electric neural networks might get twisted by compounded reasoning and rhetoric, but the simple sounds themselves stay pure. Say, or sing if you will, the simple solid air sounds made by a piccolo mimicking a birdsong, even when backed by the symphony of a cafe cacophony, or the big brash Charlie "Bird" Parker band bebopping a hipster Beat Generation, personifying the jazz sound as an uncompromising art, intellectual rather than just an entertainment—an experiential wall of up tempo improvising harmonic structure with complex chord and key progressions purporting a novel layer of meaning without reason. Bird, bird bird, ...bird is the word. Then again, even more simply, the angelically dulcet tones of Joan Baez singing *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*. Those sweet, powerful transfixing sounds that can only be made by the human voice, that can evoke such deep emotion like no other. That meaning! That resonance! Beyond what wordworking can do.

.....

Put it in the shed. Put it in the shed. Put it in the shed, she says.
I whine and complain. It's too full. I need space to work.
I like space. She watches the shopping channel for entertainment.

.....
My dear Ursula,

Please parse for me the difference between allegory, parable, fiction and magic-thinking. Not in a by return mail letter, that would be too much to ask, but perhaps in an essay or one of your blog postings. A good writer, such as yourself spends hour, if not months condensing thoughts and ideas for the easy digestion of their readers. I'd so appreciate that benefit coming from your astute, well observed mind. I have to confess my bias. If we are to have any semblance of consensus reality, no form of make-believe can get us there. That's my premise. Only sensually perceivable, objectively verifiable, factually reportable events can inform us of the true truths of the world we share. Not Sci-Fi, not metaphors or 'it's like' of any kind. Life as we know it is already such a richly layered, complex enough event. I feel, just in the effort to form that right telling of the story is story enough, distillation/reconstitution enough to work with in making the appropriate adjustments to our collective thinking. I myself could never get very deep into thinking. Apparently, I'm a serial thinker, as whenever I got to the still point, thoughts evaporated. But I have thought often, and have haphazard collections of bits & pieces—pearls, if you will, or rather more like shards, broken bits—to be strung in any manner of design. I have a boat load of these shards to string together. Every arrangement, every design will of course purpose different shades and shapes of story, maybe good with plot and intrigue, narratives worthy of the reader's time. And that, my dear Ursula is the kind of story I'm asking you about. How do you parse thoughts born of lived experience tested against the recanting of other's thoughts of lived experiences? What is the good of grounding all that into the groundless light of imagination? Or is, indeed, *what is* enough to attend to? Is the illumination of *what is* useful enough?

Ursula, I know you died at age 88 on January 22, 2018 in Portland, OR and that I'm asking the impossible of a ghost. I know I'm writing to you too late. That I tuned into your life's work only after you vacated this life. (I won't say "left your body" or "went to heaven" as that suggests a flight of fantasy making believe there is something like 'soul' or such, that goes on ever more, something I know nothing about.) But perhaps, just perhaps you left behind a surrogate to speak for you—one child born to carry on. If you do find a way to convey your thoughts from the beyond, I'm all ears. I will say my thoughts for this letter came to me in this early morning as I chopped and steamed chard, kale and cabbage for the week, after having searched for you on Google and joyfully read for days, digesting your writings in *No Time to Spare*.

mth frum Dan

{SEE: **Ursula K Le Guin's** *No Time to Spare: Thinking About What Matters*}

.....
We have it all. All that we need, and then some.
Excluding that yacht, that private jet,
that rocket into outer space.
All the glitz and glamor.
No need for that.

We don't own a house, we've made a home.
We have it all. Including immense gratitude.

.....
Sunday Ritual *Everything bagel*, toasted, buttered
in the parking lot, in the car, a lap picnic chewy, chewy
mouth-feel chewy yummy, yummy butter. Oh, butter!
Too good to have at home—who could resist it?
We'd be fat little blissed-out cherubs if we kept
butter at home. But in the parking lot, in the car,
outside the bagel shop, warm toasted, buttery,
Oh, so buttery bagel. . . Amen!

Fit woman knocking out a muscular man with one punch,

how are all these "the new strong girl meme" videos a good thing?

Are they saying in effect, 'if you can't join'm, beat'm with a sucker punch?' Why?

Why

a new generation of feminism is lead by politically fascist provocateurs? Why do

Giorgia Meloni of the Brothers of Italy Party
Marjorie Taylor Greene of USA's Republican Party
Marine Le Pen of France's National Front,
Pia Kjaersgaard of Denmark's People's Party,
Siv Jensen of Norway's Progress Party

among others, reflect the enduring appeal of neofascist movements to so many modern women in egalitarian, inclusive liberal democracies—twisting the old fascist ideology dictating family and motherhood as the sole domain of women's duty into a hyper-masculinized gang of xenophobic trans-sisterhood tribalists fomenting hate, hating in the name of traditional values, hating on the 'other,' *hating any other* not loyal to our gang?

Why?

Naomi Wolf posits, "The attraction of right-wing parties to women should be examined, not merely condemned. If a society does not offer individuals a community life that takes them beyond themselves, values only production and the bottom line, and opens itself to immigrants without asserting and cherishing what is special and valuable about [their own] Danish, Norwegian, or French culture, it is asking for trouble. Until we stop regarding cultural pluralism as being incompatible with the defense of legitimate universal values, fascist movements will attract those who need the false hope and sense of self-worth that such movements offer, regardless of gender."

Why? economically...

The Economic Policy Institute reports:

three-fifths of all income growth from 1979-2007 went to the top 1%
and from 2000 to 2007 (the last period of economic growth before the recession)
the richest 10% of Americans received 100%—**ALL** of the growth of income,
the other 'deplorable' 90% received **NONE**;

...hence the cry to "Knock'er out!"

{SEE: **Ursula K Le Guin's** 2017: *No Time to Spare: A band of Brothers, a Stream of Sisters*: "I have come to see male group solidarity as an immensely powerful force in human affairs, more powerful, perhaps, than the feminism of the late twentieth century took into account." | SEE: **Naomi Wolf's** 2014: *Fascism with a Feminist Face*, "Much feminist theory asserts that war, racism, love of hierarchy, and general repressiveness belong to "patriarchy," whereas women's leadership would naturally create a more inclusive, collaborative world. Why, then, are so many women leading Europe's most prominent neofascist political parties?" > <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/naomi-wolf-examines-the-rise-of-women-to-leadership-positions-in-major-far-right-european-political-parties> :: Naomi Wolf played a leading role in so-called "third-wave" feminism and as an advocate of "power feminism," which holds that women must assert themselves politically in order to achieve their goals. | **The Economic Policy Institute** October 27, 2011 > <https://www.epi.org/publication/fifths-income-growth-1979-2007-top-1/> }

Enjambment in Iambic Pentameter

Ursula, "IT'S AS SILLY for me to write about economics as it would be for most economists to write about the use of enjambment in iambic pentameter. But they don't live in a library, and I do live in an economy."

I concur with the freedom to break a line wherever, whenever called for, however...
the confining rigor of iambic pentameter alone should be left to those who wear starched collars.
And what of the wellness of an economy metered only by the pernicious cancer of capitalist growth?

*"In taking uncontrolled, unlimited, unceasing growth
as the only recipe for economic health,
we've dismissed the ideas of optimum size and
keeping the organism in balance."*

{SEE: **Ursula K Le Guin's** *No Time to Spare*: Clinging Desperately to a Metaphor}

SEARCHING for the "Confessions of a Serial Thinker"

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

— attributed to "Albert Einstein himself" by The Serial Thinker @ThinkSerial on Twitter

"It aggravates me mightily that if ten random test-subjects were shown the word "serial" as a prompt and asked to write down the word they first associate with it, nine of them (if not all ten!) would likely answer "killer"! That says a lot about the state of our society (not least about the influence of "the media"). What would a better answer be, "better" in the sense of being truer to our quotidian experience? I propose "thinking." Human beings are incorrigibly serial thinkers. [...] derived from the verb *serere*, "to join, link, bind together, [...]" first recorded in the early 17th century, meaning "a number or set of things of one kind arranged in a line." -- John Wilson: *Serial Thinking*

"I cannot stop myself from overanalyzing trivial interactions, even though I know my worries are irrational. I am a confident and outgoing person and placing myself in social situations is not a difficulty. Yet sometimes, when I've come back from these social interactions, I analyze what I said and did, searching for instances where I may have caused offence or embarrassed myself. If I find myself in situations where someone who I don't know very well, gives me vague replies that I cannot read, my panic sets into overdrive." -- Natasha Piggott: *Inside the Mind of a Serial Over-thinker*

{*The Serial Thinker* > <https://twitter.com/thinkserial> | John Wilson: *Serial Thinking* | 10.22.21 > <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2021/10/serial-thinking> :: Natasha Piggott: *Inside the Mind of a Serial Over-thinker* | Aug 18, 2020 > <https://medium.com/invisible-illness/inside-the-mind-of-a-serial-overthinker-eff983c0669>}

Propose Purpose, get on with it

Destiny, your end point is not destined by fate, not given.

You decide, invent, make up where you will go and why.

Suggest something, put forward for consideration—hopes and dreams, a reason to be done, something to be attained, an intention you ardently want to exist. You're not a cork bobbing on the open ocean, you have self-made providence, choice, agency, skills, all the know-how you need to know to intervene, to produce your heart's desires. You know you know enough to learn to purposefully take the next step and the next step towards your chosen destination. Get going.

Do not oppress others, do not allow yourself to be oppressed.

Aid, assist, comfort, help, make happy, soothe.

Don't keep anyone in subservience and hardship,

especially by the unjust exercise of authority.

Don't allow anyone to subject you to harsh or authoritarian treatment.

Boost, compliment, delight, encourage, gladden, praise,

especially authentically, sincerely, ...especially children.

{NOTE: the most prevalent application of totalitarian oppress comes from our parents and teachers at home and at school. That's where it's most likely to begin. The larger layers of society and government build upon the backs of these kowtowed babes.}

There are people who need help.

There are people who deny it, saying that God helps those who help themselves and the poor and the unemployed are merely shiftless slackers sponging on a nanny government.

There are people who don't deny poverty, but they don't want to know about it because it's all so terrible and what can you do?

And then there are people who help.

[...]

They don't have to look far to find people who need help getting enough to eat.

Anywhere kids are, to start with. Many school-age children in our country, towns, and cities don't get three meals a day, or even two. Many aren't always sure if they'll get anything to eat today at all.

How many? About a third of them. One child in three.

Put it this way: If you or I were a statistic-parent with three statistic-kids in school, one of our three children would be hungry. Malnourished. Hungry in the morning, hungry at night. The kind of hungry that makes a child feel cold all the time. Makes a child stupid. Makes a child sick.

Which one of our children . . . which child . . . ?

{(excerpt) *Notre-Dame de la Faim* by Ursula K. Le Guin, Oct 2011 >
<https://www.ursulaklequin.com/blog/37-notre-dame-de-la-faim> }

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Adorable

If I taught her anything, I taught her to be adorable. Again. Not an easy thing to infuse in an adult—the ability to adore. Not a problem with children, it comes naturally. It's the foundation of worship and cuteness—the worship of puppies and kittens and little babies with supernatural powers. But adults tend to get busy and grow out of all that, get sophisticated, and too cool to see the inner light, the simple splendid loveliness in another. Adoring thus needs to be reintroduced, along with wide-eyed innocence with no fear of ridicule for being gullible, vulnerable or naive. To revive the reverie, the art of living with the full embrace, resuscitate that dotting affection that recognizes the divine in all things matter. It's that easy. Just be open to the august majestic dignified wonder in another and you too will again regain the ability to be adorable, . . . like a child.

.....

There's nothing you can learn from me.
I'm not teaching. I'm just living a life.
The way a squirrel lives a life.
The way a pine tree lives a life,
a dragonfly. You can learn *about* me, but
that's something else altogether.

.....

I like society except for the people. I like kids well enough—in small doses, but not my own. I don't have kids. Don't trust me with yours. I wouldn't. If kids start acting the way kids do, biting you to the bone, kicking you in the shin, hard—with all their might—the insult as painful as the injury, I wouldn't hesitate, I know—though I fancy myself a pacifist—I couldn't slow the knee jerk slap across the face, equally hard. Adult-hard across the child's soft face. For that matter, same goes for adults, except with adults that might easily get into felony battery. For fear, for fear of the long arm of the law I steer clear of getting to the knee jerk point with adults. I leave them alone from the get go. They say the best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago, and the second best time is now. So for now I leave them alone. Adults. Adults, not trees. Trees I hug. Even so, at the music festival, the grocery store, to the teller at the bank friendliness can be useful. I don't make friends, but I can be friendly, socially jovial. Otherwise, me and we the people live and let live. If for some odd nonsensical reason push comes to shove, I'll call the cops, (or what is paying taxes for?) But first, before getting anywhere near there, I'll police with etiquette, the customary codes of well-mannered socially cued politeness. It'll save on the whole mending walls business. Those walls my recluse has built so fastidiously along the way, so at odds with really getting to know you. Then again, from what I've seen on social media, I know enough.

.....

Fresh to Death is what the kids are saying, some of the hip hop kids are saying for being dressed in very fashionable items, be they sneakers, clothes, jewelery, etc. . . . The phrase originated from the "*Heaven's Gate*" mass suicide, who wore all matching outfits with crisp Nikes before they committed suicide—therefore *Fresh to Death*.

"You know those heaven's gate nuts? they were crazy but they kept it fresh to death!!!" That's how the kids say it. Not just with fashion, it can also be a term used to describe something that is so good it is unexplainable, "My goodness, that is fresh to death my negro brederin!" Something a black kid might say with a nod to religiosity.

{**Heaven's Gate** was an American new religious movement, a cult that went on a journey of spiritual discovery, the leaders, known as Ti (Bonnie Nettles) and Do (Marshall Applewhite), identifying themselves as the two witnesses of Revelation, attracting a following of several hundred people in the mid-1970s. In 1976, the group stopped recruiting and instituted a monastic lifestyle. On March 26, 1997, deputies of the San Diego County Sheriff's Department discovered the bodies of the 39 active members of the group, including that of Applewhite, in a house in the San Diego suburb of Rancho Santa Fe. They had participated in a mass suicide, a coordinated series of ritual suicides, coinciding with the closest approach of Comet Hale–Bopp. Just before the mass suicide, the group's website was updated with the message: "Hale–Bopp brings closure to Heaven's Gate ...our 22 years of classroom here on planet Earth is finally coming to conclusion—'graduation' from the Human Evolutionary Level. We are happily prepared to leave 'this world' and go with Ti's crew." > [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heaven%27s_Gate_\(religious_group\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heaven%27s_Gate_(religious_group))}

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Toddlers are naturally bi-polar. *Let's face it.* Uber-hyper ecstatic one moment, the next, if not asleep, "over-tired," as euphemistic mothers like to say—sullen, bored, depressed. It's not just the sugar rush. It's basically all or nothing, a switch on or off.

Ursula tells me, "He is a vivid little creature. Youth is so dramatic! He is utterly sweet and utterly nutty. Wild as a bronco, inert as a sloth. One moment he's airborne, the next fast asleep. He is unpredictable, yet . . ."

Perhaps this bi-polar nature thing isn't peculiar to our species. But then, are the layers and layers of mannered politeness to even out the polarities uniquely human? Not to mention all the supernatural powerful pharmaceuticals. She's talking about her kitten, Pard. If religion is "the opium of the people," is the indoctrination into the magic words 'Please and Thank You' a kind of lithium for the masses?

{Ursula K. Le Guin, *Chosen by a Cat* > <https://www.ursulakleguin.com/blog/50-chosen-by-a-cat>}

.....

I'm not writing this to you. I'm not writing this about you.

I'm writing because I love you, especially when I am thou and you are it and we are all together. (Goo goo g'joob)

You've said you like my words, the way I write. That I should write more, the world needs to hear my thoughts. It seems, however, that you're more comfortable with my words when you don't feel they are directed at you, at you personally. You know, like in an email or text. You like my 'for the public' writings. But am I ever really writing to you, to you personally. I mean, how could I? How well do I really know you? I know you're my brother's daughter, some biographical bits. We've had some great conversations, some precious time spent together. Too little in my mind. Too little to say I know you, or even knew you then, . . . much less now.

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The sacred and the comic are not that far apart, something the Pueblo Indians seem to know better than most of us do.

{Ursula K. Le Guin, *First Contact* > <https://www.ursulakleguin.com/blog/22-first-contact>}

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{worth repeating ...FROM: <https://www.appleeyedesigns.com/WayOut/wayoutNOTES.html>}

Vision Quest with Apache medicine woman Kachinas "Kute" Kutenai

I was introduced for a day to the most enlightened being I'd ever meet during a Vision Quest in a Manzanita forest northeast of Los Angeles led by Apache medicine woman Kachinas "Kute" Kutenai. A handsome fellow, 12 to 18 inches long of a lizard species I couldn't name. Most of the day was spent being, just being. Then occasionally he'd put his tail in his mouth making a hoop of himself and roll care-free down the leaf covered slope of the rolling hills. He'd roll and roll until he'd 'splat down' on the flats. Then he's laugh and laugh. I swear, pure, unmistakable mirth laughing silently out loud for minutes on end. Next a little snooze, then up he'd scamper back up to the top of the shaded slope, and do it all again. And again. Simply caught in the act of being.

When I first arrive at my three day, three night Vision Quest's self-selected 'camp site', I found shade from the hot, drying sun and a flat bit of ground under the low canopy of the endless Manzanita forest. Sitting on a spread out tarp, I took off my shoes, put my gallon jug of water within arm's reach and began to survey my surroundings in more detail. Within seconds I froze stock still. Not three feet away a loosely curled, distinctly patterned snake with a rattle sticking up top. Not here for a trauma drama, I didn't want to disturb. Yet I was too close for comfort. It felt like stillness was my best option at this point. Eyes softly fixed, alert, I waited. I waited for what seemed like hours. Finally, at first slowly, movement, then more purposefully the snake slithered graceful away, thankfully in another direction. But!, turns out, it was not one rattlesnake, but two intertwined. One left behind, still snoozing. I wait again. Eventually the second one would follow the path of the first, and I could breathe a sigh of relief. I had the place to myself.

When I recounted these stories for Kute, even in the total darkness of the sweat lodge, I could feel her smiling knowingly.

It's my 'stoned' experience that rocks have "mind" with 'other' relationships to time than we do, and my 'vision quest' experience that the interwoven root network of fields upon fields of Manzanita have open and direct lines of communications with distant stars, and my 'meditative' experience that ultimately content less space of inner consciousness is too vast to navigate, and it too also has relationships to time than we can't fathom. Makes me think we need to rethink both "mind" and "evolution." I can well imagine that the vast, deep, and living microbial biosphere, the "subsurface microorganisms in hydrothermal vents/springs, cold methane seeps, deep oceanic sediments, coastal estuaries and bays, and subduction zones" underneath all the world's oceans that Karen Lloyd speaks of from her Lloyd lab is a persistent form of intelligence worlds apart from our own. And there's much we can learn by sitting with it, eyes softly fixed, alert, waiting. Then again, no, not waiting, ...not impatiently poking, prodding, or curiously sampling, ...rather simply watching, witnessing and seeing where we meet, how we connect.

{Kachinas "Kute" Kutenai > <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/thedesertsun/name/kachinas-kutenai-obituary?id=22070279> | Karen Lloyd: Lloyd Lab, Deep Subsurface biosphere research > <http://lloydlab.utk.edu/>}

.....
a distinct and independent existence

You end *On the Fifth Afternoon* by asking, "What is entity?"
Aren't you too one of the many black birds in the tall grass
rising out in ripples and billows, flowing down into the reeds and
out across the air in a single, flickering, particulate wave making a single
tree's lower branches blacker with birds than greener with leaves?
Aren't you too, like me, a single in the many flickerings—quivering,
glimmering, trembling, wobbling, shivering—by and by . . .
a good bye to you my dear one.

{Ursula K Le Guin, No Time to Spare: *Notes from a Week at a Ranch in the Oregon High Desert* > <https://www.ursulakleguin.com/blog/74-notes-from-a-week-at-a-ranch-in-the-oregon-high-desert>
+ *The Lynx*: "The Oregon High Desert Museum is one of the most perfectly satisfying places I know." > <https://www.ursulakleguin.com/blog/6-the-lynx> }

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{220922, Autumn}

Catching Up

Jackie was puttering around the truck trailer sized hopper bin half full of large Palm fronds. We asked why? When they renovated their granny flat it left the backyard bare, now they're going about dressing it up. When she first moved into the neighborhood she proudly flew a 'UCLA' flag by her front door. Now out front she has a couple of stacks of precariously balanced volcanic rocks stacked 7 high. *So how are you?* Good, good. Except I got COVID in June. Not sure how it's interacting with my Lupus. I'm boosted and prophylaxised to the max, so that's the best I could do. I understood the prophylaxis wouldn't prevent it, just make the symptoms less severe, so I think it could have been worse. I was super fatigued for a couple of months, still have these odd headaches, and I never get headaches. Contracted the disease from my daughter, Maddie. She's a fourth grader at McKinley Elementary, right there, across the street. She had mild COVID symptoms for only about four hours, then she bounced right back, though I worry about what the long term effects might be. We had to quarantine her. She missed the last week of school, which is the most fun time of the year for the kids. She could hear the celebrating going on from her bedroom, which made Maddie all the sadder.

One thing the pandemic made abundantly clear during the home schooling days, Jackie is not a good teacher. I knew I'm not a teacher, now Maddie knows too. As we talked in the street, a half a dozen people interrupted us to say 'Hi' to Jackie. Finally, I blurted out, 'what, do you know everyone on the block?' She chuckled. Guess so, but that's Spuds doing, everyone loved Spuds. Spuds looked exactly like the fictional bull terrier used for Bud Light beer's extensive advertising campaign. "Is Spuds still with you?" No, he passed earlier this year. He was 13, he was tired, he had had a good life. No, we're not going to get another dog anytime soon. Not ready yet . . . and you, how are you?

.....

I found a squirrel in the rocks beneath the Avocado tree this morning.
Its neck oddly crooked, black eyes staring off into infinity. Stunning to see death in a body I saw just yesterday so fully animated with frisky nuttiness.
I don't want to say I told you to be careful, because I never did. I wanted, . . .
I so enjoyed your fully animated frisky nuttiness.
Thanks for all those peanuts you left on my doorstep.

.....

"Oh, the Birds . . ." Bird observed and recorded

In the nineteenth century, most people treated birds as if they were stamps waiting to be included in a prize collection. As a result, countless thousands of birds and their eggs were collected. Considered a necessary part of scientific behaviour, this kind of killing was done by men as important as [John James] Audubon, who once wrote that he felt incomplete if he didn't kill a hundred birds a day. As one of the first bird artists to use fresh models—which he meticulously posed after threading thin wires into their bodies—Audubon would kill a dozen individuals before finding the one he wanted. Most of us are defined by the age we live in—Audubon included—and in the nineteenth century birds were routinely slaughtered in astonishing numbers. Audubon reports that in a single day forty-eight thousand Golden Plovers were gunned down near New Orleans. On May 28, 1854, William David Thoreau, who earned some of his keep by collecting specimens for science, wrote in his diary: "*The inhumanity of science concerns me, as when I am tempted to kill a rare snake that I may ascertain its species. I feel that this is not the means of acquiring true knowledge.*"

{FOUND: page 3 of Graeme Gibson's *The Bedside Book of Birds: An Avian Miscellany* | **John James Audubon (1785-1851)** > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_James_Audubon } | John James Audubon bio: bioone.org }

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To the victors go the spoils. Is it unsurprising that the spoils are spoiled?

Especially after the long torturous plunder of the Monroe Doctrine in the Americas, central and south America? *What?* You didn't think once you destroyed theirs that they wouldn't be knocking on your door?

A dramatic shift at the border as migrants converge on a remote corner of South Texas . . .

When migrants are released from U.S. custody in Eagle Pass, they're dropped off by bus at a former warehouse on the outskirts of town. A non-profit called **Mission: Border Hope** has transformed the building into a bustling way station for migrants. Immigrant advocates in Eagle Pass had never seen numbers like these before, either. So they've had to improvise.

And now not just north-south . . . the United States' spheres of influence, though officially undeclared, is no longer limited to the Western Hemisphere but worldwide.

As Ambassador Chas W. Freeman, Jr. tells us,

"U.S. secretaries of state have recently taken to declaring that "the United States does not recognize spheres of influence." In light of Americans' continued insistence on the validity of the Monroe Doctrine, this is more than ironic. In effect, Washington now claims and seeks to exercise a right to help determine the policies and international alignments of all the world's countries other than China, Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and the Russian Federation, all of which it regards and has designated for military planning purposes as implacable adversaries. In what some have called "a contest for the allegiance of humanity," countries in the spheres of influence of other great powers or not yet incorporated into the U.S. sphere are either courted (for example, Ukraine) or subjected to coercive diplomacy through sanctions or thrown into anarchy by regime-change operations.(For example, Iraq, Libya and Syria.)"

*But I have learned Real Politics.
No freedom for our children
in the world of the sayso.*

{SEE: *About Spheres of Influence* by Ambassador Chas W. Freeman, Jr. (USFS, Ret.) | 2022-03-09 > <https://chasfreeman.net/about-spheres-of-influence/> | *A dramatic shift at the border as migrants converge on a remote corner of South Texas* by Marisa Peñaloza and Joel Rose, September 23, 2022 > <https://www.npr.org/2022/09/23/1124561261/a-dramatic-shift-at-the-border-as-migrants-converge-on-a-remote-corner-of-south-> | *When the Soviet Union Was Disintegrating* by Ursula K. Le Guin > <https://www.ursulaklequin.com/blog/130-poem-written-in-1991>}

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Time certain. *There used to be a time when we met we arranged to meet on time . . . to the minute.*

'Time certain, time certain,' we'd proclaim.

This is not one of those.

The pandemic brought everything to a standstill.

On the restart we're easing in, sauntering . . .

are you coming back?

All in good time.

All in good time.

.....
"War feels to me an oblique place," Emily Dickinson wrote Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson in February 1863. The years of the Civil War corresponded to Dickinson's most intense period of productivity as a poet, during which she is thought to have written roughly half of her total number of poems, and yet her precise relation to the war remains something of a puzzle. *Because it is the very nature of Dickinson's poems to have a range of possible references, it is difficult to say whether a particular poem was inspired by the war.* *"It feels a shame to be Alive"* certainly seems like a response to the Civil War.

It feels a shame to be Alive—
When Men so brave—are dead—
One envies the Distinguished Dust—
Permitted—such a Head—

The Stone—that tells defending Whom
This Spartan put away
What little of Him we—possessed
In Pawn for Liberty—

The price is great—Sublimely paid—
Do we deserve—a Thing—
That lives—like Dollars—must be piled
Before we may obtain?

Are we that wait—sufficient worth—
That such Enormous Pearl
As life—dissolved be—for Us—
In Battle's—horrid Bowl?

It may be—a Renown to live—
I think the Man who die—
Those unsustained—Saviors—
Present Divinity—

{FOUND: *Emily Dickinson and the Civil War* > <https://www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org/emily-dickinson/biography/special-topics/emily-dickinson-and-the-civil-war/>}

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Anne Garrels left us too soon on September 7, 2022.

We need her now more than ever.

If I could have transferred the remaining years of my life to extend hers, I would have. She's that valuable.

It's unlikely any American knows more about the heartland of Russia and their feelings for the people of Ukraine—the world at large—than what Anne took with her.

Apr 22, 2022, **Gina Klonan, founding president of the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame:** I am so honored today to have as our guest former NPR senior correspondent author of *Putin Country, a journey into the real Russia*, co-founder of the NGO *Assist Ukraine* and 2012 Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame inductee. Please welcome Anne Garrels.

Thank you Anne for being here today, it's so great to see you again.

Anne Garrels: ". . . and you too."

For the sake of review, or in some cases enlightenment, let's outline a brief history of the region. Annie this war did not start in 2022, is it fair to say that the dissolution of the Soviet Union which began in 1988 was the launch pad . . .

"Ukraine's history has been one of conflict for 2000 years, and but yes, in terms of identification of an independent country a sovereign nation which the Soviet, which Russia acknowledged in 1991, yes, um and it's been a confused history since then."

You said in your book *Annie, Putin Country*, that in the Soviet Union during the 80s you were considered a persona non-grata but you returned visa in hand in the 1990s with your husband Vince, to whom you dedicated your book, what draws you to this region?

"Well, I speak Russian, and from for reasons I don't even understand, I learned it in college. I'm not sure why, but I just became obsessed with the culture the history and it, lo and behold, . . . in my first job at ABC they sent me to Russia . . . came in handy."

So shortly after the fall in 1991 as you just mentioned Ukraine declares independence from Moscow, Russia recognizes it, but since then there have been influences and motivations that have moved Ukraine toward a very pro-western status. What are some of those do you think ,well . . .

"Ukraine has flipped and flopped. I mean the independence was universally voted for in a referendum in 1991 and then Ukraine declared neutrality, it tried to balance between Russia and the west. It was highly corrupt. It had huge economic problems, it has huge identity problems, because of its conflicted history for 2000 years. It was invaded repeatedly, and although ironically, in the Soviet period, the Soviets while they wanted Ukraine, the Soviets also encouraged a kind of Ukrainization, so there was always a contradiction between who it was, but in the course of the '90s and 2000s Ukraine increasingly, well especially in 2014, it voted sort of saying it could be part of the west, but then Russia said no. And that particular Ukrainian president, Viktor Yanukovich caved. Russia—and there was a big demonstration, a violent demonstration across the country, across Ukraine—saying we want to be part of the west and . . ."

Did you say that was in 2014 when Russia invaded Crimea . . . well as a result of that, I want to ask you a question, so Putin was elected prime minister in 1999 and president in 2012. Time magazine recently stated throughout his 22 years in power Putin has seen Ukraine as a fraternal nation tied to Russia by bonds of faith, family, politics and a millennium of common history. Has he always been focused on this kind of Ukrainian nationalism that he embraces?

"It was not clear to start with. I think it really clearly in 2008, when the United States said that Ukraine could be part of NATO, that really began the fight. And most Russian experts I knew and know said that that was a terrible mistake to suggest that the second largest country in Europe, I mean Ukraine is huge, could be part of NATO. It was NATO expansion—was obviously threatening to Russia. But suggesting that Ukraine, which had declared its neutrality from the very beginning could be part of an . . . and encouraging it to think it could be part of NATO—and the irony is that NATO as a group has to accept a new country—there was never, I mean, oh there might have been some idea in the early days in the early 2000s that Ukraine would be part of NATO, but it was never serious. But the US kept suggesting it. And the idea though that it would be was never . . . and certainly not in February 2022 when Putin invaded . . . the United States and our western allies of NATO certainly have a role in this conflict and . . ."

{FOUND: "A Conversation Between" Episode 28 | **Stand with Ukraine: Featuring Anne Garrels** with Gina Klonan of the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame | 55m27s > https://youtu.be/r8Q4NbfDJ_4 | **Putin Country: A Journey into the Real Russia** by Anne Garrels > <https://us.macmillan.com/books/9781250118110/putincountry> | **ASSIST-UKRAINE:** A grassroots initiative to quickly provide medical supplies, protective gear and humanitarian relief to Ukrainians fighting for their lives. > <https://assist-ukraine.org/> }

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Ponder the imponderable. That's what belief is for.
Verify the verifiable. That's what science is for.
Both have their place. Don't confuse one for the other.

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Habit and method. Good friends. Most of us will by the end lose capacity, various abilities physical and mental. If you prepare ahead it can ease the way. Good friends to travel with, habit and method, in changing what you used to. And you know, the groove you ride is whatever you get used to. If you don't like where the groove is taking you, habit and method can help change the way. Say you want to get up earlier, have some time for yourself, or you want to stop adding to the horrendous suffering of livestock, stop consuming cattle, cows and pigs. Making such changes has real physical and biological ramifications. As does the loss of short-term memory. It can be a heavy lift, a long trek. Habit and method will make good companions sorting out what's what in getting to where you want to go, want to be. Here's the thing, the more you do something, the better you get at doing it. The more regularly you do it, the more regularly you get better at it. With a tenacious drive, you strongly want to get to the end of your trip of a ten-thousand miles, but more you want to get there healthy and happy. The rest stops along the way, the taking care of yourself is every bit as precious as the push to get there. It takes focus, concerted effort—self-discipline. It's not ritual, not empty gestures. You can't just stick your nose in your handheld and smartphone it in. There's no app for 'gotta wanna'—you have to want to, you have to really want to be the creative design agent of your living. When I was growing up the main meaning of discipline presented as punishment, but it can also mean habit and method—good practice—a good soft reminding practice of the ways and the means to get you where you want to go, to create what you want in your life that you don't currently have, and do it with appropriate gentle kindness for yourself and everyone you meet along the way.

.....

"The middle of the road is trying to find me" – 'let me live by the side of the road and be a friend to man'

To find the middle go to the extremes. Do this when you're young, at your peak fitness. It's arduous out on the edge. Takes stamina, quick reflexes, an extra willingness to push the envelope, take risks. Only when you're confident you know where to locate the edges can you find your center point. Go home, live there, nearest your center point. There is where you ought to be. Of course everything is always changing. You may be called occasionally back out to the frontiers. This time you'll have history to guide you. You'll see what's familiar, what's changed and know more what's precious and what's passing away. As the Pretenders sang it:

*The middle of the road is trying to find me
I'm standing in the middle of life with my plans behind me
Well I got a smile for everyone I meet
As long as you don't try dragging my bay
Or dropping the bomb on my street*

*Now come on baby
Get in the road
Oh, come on now
In the middle of the road, yeah*

*In the middle of the road you see the darndest things
Like fat guys driving 'round in jeeps through the city
Wearing big diamond rings and silk suits
Past corrugated tin shacks full up with kids
Oh, man I don't mean a Hampstead nursery
When you own a big chunk of the bloody Third World
The babies just come with the scenery*

.....

My family, THIS! man, his wife, children hidden:

{Ode to my nephew, Ty Landrum}

Ah! Beautiful. Beautiful in its raw, smelly fullness. The full catastrophe.

You are more cultured than I, I more roughhewn. You expose yourself, your family, your wife and children for significant stretches to a variety of cultural set and settings east and west. Practicing full bodied presence. Once I ventured out on a long walkabout looking at and for the here & now, now I stay home and tend my garden.

But, Ah! this light shining between the cracks of *"Yoga requires that we surrender our attachments"* AND *"Our attachments to our children are among the strongest that we will ever form..."*

It illuminates Zorba the Greek:

"Am I not a man? And is a man not stupid? I'm a man, so I married. Wife, children, house, everything. The full catastrophe."

You say, *"I am also glad to have the friendship of someone who has walked farther down many of the paths that I am walking today, and could surely give me some good counsel."*

In a poem exchange with my mom, she writes:

Older voices may know more words—or not—
But the tunes are different from year to year;
We keep on learning.
Still, music is forever
And the harmony can be kept simple.

I know for continuity of reasoning
my philosophy is messy,
but as poetry, what a song!
But you!, you can both sing and dance.
So beautifully, such a joy!
to the ears, the mind, my heart.

True, I have gone down many of the paths that you are walking today, but we know, I think we'd agree, these paths are NOT the path, the paths we can go down are not the eternal path. And the many paths we have and do go down, you and I, companions together, hands holding hands, we go down from differing perspectives, framed by distinct contexts.

I go down these paths a wandering sadhu; you stop to care, to tend the path, illuminate the path for others.

You take responsibility that the path will weather the weather and be passable for future generations.

I simply walk, as I learn to walk my talk.

"...the tunes are different from year to year; We keep on learning."

And that is what I so admire in you.

You keep on keeping on with ever expanding grace and kindness bearing more load with lightness with each step. Pondering the imponderable, making tangible the verifiable, making visible the hidden, cultivating an amalgam of the new man, the new husband, the new father, . . . the new citizen . . . as yet unseen.

{**Set and Setting** refers to the mental state or the mindset (shortened to "set") a person brings to the experience, like thoughts, mood and expectations; the "setting," the physical, social and cultural environment—the weather, the room's atmosphere, feelings of persons present towards one another, and prevailing views as to what is real. > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Set_and_setting}

She was suffering from overambition, a psychiatrist suggested, treating with antipsychotic drugs, producing psychotic symptoms, at age 27, after eight years of misdiagnosis, she consulted a medical textbook, realized she was suffering from a severe form of endometriosis, "an often painful disorder in which tissue similar to the tissue that normally lines the inside of your uterus—the endometrium—grows outside your uterus."

Treatment left her unable to have children, and continued to disrupt her life.
The problematized woman's body became a theme in her writing.

"I started writing in earnest at 22. I thought: I am a wreck and have no money and am in poor health—and so how am I going to impose myself on the world? I was seethingly ambitious, I don't make any secret of that. I needed to be somebody. The only way I could think of was by writing. Because all you need is paper and pencil and you can do it horizontal. But it was never an escape, nor was it the place I was running to—because it wasn't a refuge—but it was what enabled me, it was my source of power and it was all I'd got and it was the cheapest source of power. Words are free. And when I think: what do I retain from the old days? It's a turn of phrase." —Interviewed in the Observer in 2003.

{**Hilary Mantel** *in her own words*. "Hilary Mantel, who has died aged 70 on 22 September 2022, was one of the most celebrated writers of our time. Her widely acclaimed Wolf Hall trilogy and its subsequent screen and stage adaptations brought her millions of fans around the world." >

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/sep/23/the-pen-is-in-our-hands-a-happy-ending-is-ours-to-write-hilary-mantel-in-her-own-words> }

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This is Americana!, . . . *man, you cannot be serious!*

September 26, 2016 @ 6:38 PM billionaire businessman Mark Cuban admitted he lied about planning on sitting in the front row to bother Donald Trump, "First of all, when I tweeted that I was going to sit in the first row, I didn't have a first-row seat, I knew that it would get under his skin and drive him crazy. Mission accomplished."

On June 22, 1981, in front of a stunned crowd, McEnroe ranted: "*You can't be serious, man, you cannot be serious!*"

{*History Of The Mark Cuban And Donald Trump Feud* | Sep 26, 2016 > Monday's debate between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump is one of the most highly anticipated political events in American history. But a big storyline of the evening has nothing to do with who will be on the stage. Instead, a lot of the pre-debate focus will be on who's sitting in the audience. Dallas Mavericks owner and prominent Trump troll Mark Cuban said last week he scored front row tickets to the event, with a Clinton aid saying the tech billionaire has the best seats they have access to. > <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alexreimer/2016/09/26/history-of-the-mark-cuban-and-donald-trump-feud/> :: **JOHN McENROE**: *one of sport's most iconic catchphrases* | Jun 22, 2021 > <https://www.the-sun.com/sport/3138592/john-mcenroe-tennis-wimbledon-bjorn-borg/>}

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"Can Democracy withstand hyperbole à la the Murdochs?"

Yes, USA democracy, as much of a democracy as it was crafted to be,
did muster through the yellow journalism
of the Hearsts, the Mercers, the Redstones and others,
. . . but that was before smartphones.

The jury is still out on what strategically used disinformation
powered by titillating sensationalism and crude exaggeration
can do in the uncensored, truth be damned, Information Age.

{*"The Murdochs: Empire of Influence"* This new seven-part CNN original documentary series about Rupert Murdoch's media dynasty is based on Jonathan Mahler and Jim Rutenberg's New York Times Magazine article "*How Rupert Murdoch's Empire of Influence Remade the World.*" > <https://www.cnn.com/shows/the-murdochs-empire-of-influence> }

.....

The Cold War wasn't simply a pissing contest we won and the Russians lost. Its end was an inflection point, a pregnant moment when it was possible to go where human history rarely, almost never goes, . . . an instance we collectively, cooperatively could have pulled away from the brink of mutually assured nuclear annihilation.

In January 1986, Mikhail Gorbachev publicly proposed a three-stage program for abolishing the world's nuclear weapons by the end of the 20th century. He met with Reagan in Reykjavík, Iceland. Both leaders agreed with the shared goal of abolishing nuclear weapons, but Reagan refused to terminate his "Star Wars" program and no deal was reached.

Gorbachev is considered to be one of the most significant figures of the second half of the 20th century. Praised for his role in ending the Cold War, in Russia he is often derided for facilitating the dissolution of the Soviet Union—an event which weakened Russia's global influence and precipitated an economic collapse in Russia and associated states.

<This woundedness is where the inflection point is lost.>

This is where an international show of goodwill, *a thousand points of light* organizational goodwill such as George Bush spoke about in his inaugural address on January 20, 1989, "of all the community organizations that are spread like stars throughout the Nation, doing good. We will work hand in hand, encouraging, sometimes leading, sometimes being led, rewarding." It's a small world, light doesn't stop at national borders, unless you build a wall. Even then, extend a hand.

Anne Garrels said as Russia opened to the West in the early 90s, people there were excited and optimistic. But slowly, they started to learn about the rest of the world and grew suspicious as NATO closed in on Russia's borders. People

felt like betrayed lovers, she said, as disillusionment set in and the West treated Russians like losers. It was a toxic combination. "One of the reasons I did the book, *'Putin Country'* was to go back and look at maybe what mistakes we may have made along the way that helped create a Putin by sort of dismissing Russia as a loser and by not acknowledging that it really might have a say in some things, and I think trying to understand that Russia is wounded and is licking its wounds. I think understanding that it is a wounded country is key."

If only George Bush had extended his 'thousand points of light' to a wounded Russia . . . after all it wasn't simply a pissing contest where we won and Russia lost. The loss of that moment belongs to the world and all its inhabitants, living on in the dark suffering. Until another inflection point comes around . . . pray we see the light.

{A Journalist Delves Deep Inside *'Putin Country'*: On understanding Russian motivations >
<https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2016/03/24/471600636/a-journalist-delves-deep-inside-putin-country>}

A Patterned Intensity of Language—in poetry, beauty is the truth

"The Tao Te Ching is partly in prose, partly in verse; but as we define poetry now, not by rhyme and meter but as a patterned intensity of language, the whole thing is poetry. I wanted to catch that poetry, its terse, strange beauty. Most translations have caught meanings in their net, but prosily, letting the beauty slip through. And in poetry, beauty is no ornament; it is the meaning. It is the truth. We have that on good authority."

{FOUND: *Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching: A Book about the Way and the Power of the Way* by Ursula K. Le Guin (introduction)}

"American schools have always been about teaching values and character." Here's to hiding the phone.

Essentially, social-emotional learning teaches students how to manage their emotions, how to make good decisions, how to collaborate and how to understand themselves and others better. It's more common in younger grades: All 50 states have standards related to SEL in preschool, and more than half have standards in K-12. It has existed under different names across the decades: character education, 21st century skills, non-cognitive skills. In the adult world, they're often called soft skills. "It was just part of what a good teacher does," says Aaliyah Samuel.

Conservatives began connecting social-emotional learning to CRT: in the last year, in states across the country, parents and community members have increasingly been fighting the teaching of social-emotional learning in schools—largely because social-emotional learning has become linked with another flashpoint in public education: critical race theory, or CRT. Critical race theory, a decades-old legal framework, is the concept that racism goes far beyond the individual: It is systemic and deeply entrenched in our laws, policies and institutions. Nearly 900 school districts experienced anti-CRT protests between September of 2020 and August 2021, reports the Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access at the University of California, Los Angeles.

With all his top of class study, how did Florida Governor Ron DeSantis miss the lessons in 'values and character'?

DeSantis attended Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School and Dunedin High School, graduating in 1997. After high school, DeSantis studied history at Yale University graduating in 2001 with a B.A. magna cum laude. In 2005 DeSantis graduated from Harvard Law School with a Juris Doctor cum laude.

Postdoc, appears DeSantis took a tutorial from Trump in slimy thuggism. Quick study. Sadly.

DeSantis is of Italian descent, funny the parallels with present day Italy moving to the extreme right. Looks like the Italians are going to make Giorgia Meloni head of government. It's said, she'll procure the most fascist rule since Benito Mussolini, who ruled Italy as a dictator through the worst of modern times from 1925 to 1943. *Yikes!*

Recently read an astute and prescient 2014 article by Naomi Wolf that addresses the question:

"Reflecting the enduring appeal of neofascist movements to many modern women in egalitarian, inclusive liberal democracies, why are so many women leading Europe's most prominent neofascist political parties?"

It made the success of Marjorie Taylor Greene and Lauren Boebert more understandable for me.

Though the 'values and character' fix is still incredibly elusive.

Anne Garrels died three weeks ago, September 7, 2022. She was my age. BIG loss. We need her now more than ever.

It's unlikely any American knows more about the heartland of Russia and their feelings for the people of Ukraine, and geopolitics in general, than what Anne took with her. I'm currently reading her 2017 book *"Putin Country: A Journey into the Real Russia."* Fascinating! An American broadcast journalist par excellence, who worked as a foreign correspondent for National Public Radio, as well as for ABC and NBC, and other media, Anne writes like a reporter, clear and concise, factual, yet with her heart endearingly on her sleeve. When I finish *"Putin Country,"* I have another of her books on my night stand: *"Naked in Baghdad."*

As much as Anne Garrels loved Russia, she is probably best known for her reporting during the 2003 Iraq war. She was one of a handful of foreign reporters who remained in Baghdad as the war began. As she told Susan Stamberg, she used a satellite phone for her reports and went to great lengths to conceal it from Iraqi authorities. *"And then I decided it would be very smart if I broadcast naked, so if that, god forbid, the secret police were coming through the rooms, that would give me maybe five minutes to answer the phone, pretend I'd been asleep and sort of go 'I don't have any clothes on!' And maybe it would maybe give me five seconds to hide the phone,"* she said."

Here's to hiding the phone!

{How social-emotional learning became a frontline in the battle against CRT by Meg Anderson > <https://www.npr.org/2022/09/26/1124082878/how-social-emotional-learning-became-a-frontline-in-the-battle-against-crt> | Fascism with a Feminist Face by Naomi Wolf > <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/naomi-wolf-examines-the-rise-of-women-to-leadership-positions-in-major-far-right-european-political-parties> | *Putin Country: A Journey into the Real Russia* by Anne Garrels > <https://us.macmillan.com/books/9781250118110/putincountry> | Anne Garrels, longtime foreign correspondent for NPR, dies at 71 > <https://www.npr.org/2022/09/07/1121624031/anne-garrels-long-time-foreign-correspondent-for-npr-dies-at-71>}

Don't let your petty differences keep you from building on your shared strengths. And don't build on quick sand, or other unsafe foundations.

My uncle said, "I've spilled more than you'll ever drink!"
Now I can reply, "Unfortunately, I've forgotten more than you think."

Ripple Effect: *the tail of chaos*

I could give you a reason, tell you a tale as to why I did what I did. Truth is I do what I do first cause and only then see the consequences, much less the unintended consequences. A butterfly flapping its wings along the amazon rain forest, half of a pair a dance. I'm not alone in this.

{**FIRST CAUSE**, in philosophy, the self-created being (i.e., God) to which every chain of causes must ultimately go back. The term was used by Greek thinkers and became an underlying assumption in the Judeo-Christian tradition. According to the Buddha, it is inconceivable to find a first cause for life or anything else. > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmological_argument | In chaos theory, **the butterfly effect** is derived from the metaphorical example of the details of a tornado being influenced by minor perturbations such as a distant butterfly flapping its wings several weeks earlier--a very small change in initial conditions had created a significantly different outcome. > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butterfly_effect}

It's a pity, isn't it? All of these unfelled trees along the Amazon River. A pity. *Who will save us from ourselves, if not us?*

{The Amazon River Basin is home to the largest rainforest on Earth. The basin—roughly the size of the forty-eight contiguous United States—covers some 40 percent of the South American continent and includes parts of eight South American countries. The river system is the lifeline of the forest and its history plays an important part in the development of its rainforests. | Speaking to Billboard editor-in-chief Timothy White in 2000, George Harrison said of *"Isn't It a Pity"*: "It's just an observation of how society and myself were or are. **We take each other for granted—and forget to give back.** That was really all it was about."}

RE: My family, THIS! man, his wife, children hidden:

{Ode to my nephew, Ty Landrum}

On Saturday, October 1, 2022, Dick Landrum wrote:

Dan, thanks for these thoughts. I'm sure that Ty and I both appreciate them so much. Mom's thoughts are right on... interesting.

The rest of the news on the hurricane:

We made out OK, probably 135 miles from the storm center at the closest.

Lots of rain and 30-35 mph of wind for 24 hours. No structural damage, but lots of branches down and thousands of mangrove propagules (red mangrove seeds) to pick up.

Beppy and Borrón made out pretty well, but just got power back on Friday; we lost power for just over an hour and got to test our gas generator for the first time since we had it installed in 2005. Beppy just told me that the water level is still rising throughout Orlando and her area, but she is in no danger of flooding at her house.

Love to all

On Sunday, October 2, 2022, Ty Landrum wrote:

Uncle Dan,

This is an extraordinary tribute. Not sure if I measure up, but I appreciate the kind and admiring sentiments nonetheless. Thank you for thinking so much of me, and for writing these warm thoughts.

The full catastrophe indeed. And the road ahead looks dusty and uneven from here. No idea where it leads, but still we carry on. Today we relocate to a horse farm in Spain, somewhere beyond Seville, to collect ourselves and find our bearings after a long hot summer.

Thanks to you both.

Sending all my love,

Ty

I'm uncertain as to what 'up' would be in this measuring, but in any case you give me something to measure against—in contrast to—if there is the need to measure at all. As I face my slow, deliciously slow, savored demise, I do less measuring and sit more in the pond that ponders *"Is being, simply being, enough?"*

If my references are too broad and don't all fit like a glove in the current moment, if they be more aspirational leaning into the 'new citizen,' no need to take it personally. Nothing to live 'up' to here. The shared placeholder persona is merely a hope, a dream that helps me, may help us all, find our way out of this world devolving into chaos to develop a new harmonic order. A dream that best orients my model of me to you in shared experience—though I know so little of the history of your day to day life—and still feel such a simpatico of spirit. And too, in very different frames of reference and just as fervently, I feel this mysterious simpatico of spirit with your sisters, mother and father. What is that!? Family?

Ha!, ". . . relocate to a horse farm in Spain, somewhere beyond Seville." Way back when, before the time of Trump, before the global pandemic—and the alienation it brought—before the Soviet Union collapses, before I first traveled overland to India . . . wearing a Sikh turban, I was walking through the Orange groves and Sunflower fields in full bloom outside of Valencia, just me and my rucksack, trekking from Barcelona to the ferry port that would take me from Gibraltar to Tangier in Morocco, when two Spanish Yoga practicing brothers picked me up in their old jalopy and took me to a *"farm in Spain, somewhere beyond Seville."* More than greetings, the only Spanish I knew was 'cebolla,' onion. And their English was no better, so our communication was virtually all in mime. In the 3 days and nights I stayed with them the brothers bickered incessantly, bickered as only brothers can, nearly to the point of coming to blows. Of course I didn't know a word they were saying, but the body language was more than ample. They'd get to the boiling point, then go and slam the doors to their respective rooms and do asanas and mantra meditations. I could see and hear each of them from the patio where I camped through sliding glass doors, they were intensely focused for hours on end, day and night. There must have been something in their shared set informed by the constraints of Ahimsa, nonviolence, for after a while they'd meet up again in the living room and embrace fully, weeping like wounded lovers. Rinse and repeat. What is that!? Family?

Love familia universal,—*what else is there?*

.....

Immigrants have the most compassion for other immigrants that follow after them, you'd think. But even when they entered through the backdoor, they often say, they resent the additional competition for the available unskilled labor jobs. If they make their way to the front door they'll say, "¡No, no puedes entrar!"

(Or so forges the mainstreamed anti-immigrant fervor)

{**Anti-Defamation League: Mainstreaming Hate, The Anti-Immigrant Movement in the U.S.**, "Anti-immigrant ideology has gained mainstream acceptance, infiltrated policy implementation, been used as a wedge issue to scare constituents and become the fodder of media personalities who regularly demonize immigrants to a wide audience. They frame their messages as reasonable and valid but are promoting xenophobia and preventing a reasonable conversation about real reform to address real challenges in the immigration system." > <https://www.adl.org/the-anti-immigrant-movement-in-the-us>}

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My wife thinks she has a man-servant named "Husband" even though I tell *her*, "Only do what you want to do."

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Meaning of Entanglement must be incomplete

An entangled system is defined to be one whose quantum state cannot be factored as a product of states of its local constituents; that is to say, they are not individual particles but are an inseparable whole. In entanglement, one constituent cannot be fully described without considering the other(s). The state of a composite system is always expressible as a sum, or superposition, of products of states of local constituents; it is entangled if this sum cannot be written as a single product term.

The paradox is that a measurement made on either of the particles apparently collapses the state of the entire entangled system—and does so instantaneously, before any information about the measurement result could have been communicated to the other particle (assuming that information cannot travel faster than light) and hence assured the "proper" outcome of the measurement of the other part of the entangled pair.

A possible resolution to the paradox is to assume that quantum theory is incomplete, and the result of measurements depends on predetermined "hidden variables". The state of the particles being measured contains some hidden variables, whose values effectively determine, right from the moment of separation, what the outcomes of the spin measurements are going to be. This would mean that each particle carries all the required information with it, and nothing needs to be transmitted from one particle to the other at the time of measurement.

Einstein and others originally believed this was the only way out of the paradox, and the accepted quantum mechanical description (with a random measurement outcome) must be incomplete.

<FOUND: **Quantum Entanglement** > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quantum_entanglement#Meaning_of_entanglement}

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All of the branches of the Sciences have a terminal Doctor of Philosophy degree. The only terminal degree in the applied Arts, however, is death.

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Embrace the Humility of Uncertainty — We and others have questioned the validity ...

Clinical guidelines seek to standardize care to increase adoption of proven superior interventions and reduce ineffective, unsafe, or wasteful practices (1). Many guidelines provide separate ratings for strength of evidence and strength of recommendation, with no requirement that these strengths match.

Other guidelines may not describe the strength of evidence used as a basis for recommendations. Studies of guidelines unfortunately have reported a high proportion of recommendations—including strong recommendations—based on evidence that is low quality and hypothesis generating rather than high quality and hypothesis confirming (such as reproducible, prospective, controlled trials) (2, 3).

We and others have questioned the validity ...

{FOUND: *The Future of Medical Guidelines: Standardizing Clinical Care With the Humility of Uncertainty* > <https://www.acpjournals.org/doi/10.7326/M21-3034>}

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Humility of Uncertainty: pyogenic osteomyelitis, a novel approach from the WikiGuidelines Group

Key Points

Question Can a novel methodology using collaborative research coordinated online be successfully applied to the development of a guideline for the diagnosis and treatment of a common infectious disease, pyogenic osteomyelitis?

Findings This consensus statement and systematic review using a novel WikiGuidelines methodology addresses 7 questions regarding the management of osteomyelitis, resulting in the establishment of 2 clear recommendations (concerning oral antibiotic therapy for pyogenic osteomyelitis and duration of therapy) and 5 clinical reviews that outline a present lack of adequate, hypothesis-confirming data.

Meaning These results suggest that this novel, egalitarian methodology enables a clear separation of established care standards based on hypothesis-confirming evidence from practice preferences that are based on lower quality or no evidence.

Abstract

Importance Traditional approaches to practice guidelines frequently result in dissociation between strength of recommendation and quality of evidence.

Objective To construct a clinical guideline for pyogenic osteomyelitis management, with a new standard of evidence to resolve the gap between strength of recommendation and quality of evidence, through the use of a novel open access approach utilizing social media tools.

Evidence Review This consensus statement and systematic review study used a novel approach from the WikiGuidelines Group, an open access collaborative research project, to construct clinical guidelines for pyogenic osteomyelitis.

Conclusions and Relevance The WikiGuidelines approach offers a novel methodology for clinical guideline development that precludes recommendations based on low-quality data or opinion. The primary limitation is the need for more rigorous clinical investigations, enabling additional clear recommendations for clinical questions currently unresolved by high-quality data.

{FOUND: *Use of Novel Strategies to Develop Guidelines for Management of Pyogenic Osteomyelitis in Adults: A WikiGuidelines Group Consensus Statement* > <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2792124> | Pyogenic osteomyelitis is an inflammation of bone and its marrow content in response to invasion by bacteria organisms that reach bone via hematogenous route, from a contiguous focus or by direct traumatic or iatrogenic inoculation. It is a common health problem among children in developing countries. > <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5883847/>}

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" . . . if only Man would learn, as Gurdjieff taught, to conquer himself instead of his neighbor."

{FOUND: Kathryn Hulme's *Undiscovered Country*, page 133}

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The Yin & Yang of the Gender Identity Spectrum and, no, you can't be born outside *this* zodiac

For a variety of reasons and circumstance, each individual is by varying degrees more yin or more yang. Yet in general it's fair to say, half of men are more yang than the other half, and half of women are more yin than their counterparts. The more yang half of women may or may not be more yang than the more yin half of men, and vice versa. It's a fine mix, men and women energetically insignificantly different at the center—the still point of the Yin/Yang dynamics.

For hormones alone, much less socio-cultural conditioning, no woman will out yang a hyper-masculine male, and no man, no matter how prissy his mannered affect, will out yin an introverted girl. From high school prom queen & king, to bodice ripping romance novels, Yang Men and Yin Women are the predominate classic socio-cultural model pretty much worldwide. Yet most of us live elsewhere. Hermaphrodites withstanding, superimpose the Venn diagram grey area overlapping Yang Men and Yin Women with the Venn diagram grey area overlapping Yin Men and Yang Women, that's where most of us live. In that grey area in-between, the collective we is beginning to develop new pronouns. So far, the new pronouns are merely repurposing existing old pronouns and are not clear, distinct entities unto themselves—adding to the confusion. Which, actually, is okay. Okay, not okay in the sticky fusion sense of the confusion, but because such anomalous identities are best expressed as zestful spectrums anyways, it's best to keep things vague, if not fresh.

.....

Life *IS* the meaning of life

2

"Meaningless! Meaningless!"

says the Teacher.

"Utterly meaningless!

Everything is meaningless."

—the words of the Teacher, a son of David, king in Jerusalem

In essence, the author of Ecclesiastes tells us that everything we do is 'vanity': empty, futile, and short-lived. It doesn't matter if you're wise or a fool, ultimately, because everyone ends up dying.

Then again as the Great Bard Bob says:

"Little red wagon

Little red bike

I ain't no monkey but I know what I like

I like the cool way you look at me

Life is sad

Life is a bust

All ya can do is do what you must

You do what you must do and ya do it well

I'll do it for you, honey baby

Can't you tell?"

[\[Ecclesiastes, New International Version | Buckets of Rain, Bob Dylan > <https://www.bobdylan.com/songs/buckets-rain>](#)
ALSO SEE: [Pete Seeger's Turn! Turn! Turn!](#) (to Everything There Is a Season), a song adapted entirely from the Book of Ecclesiastes > <https://youtu.be/GbPI91kTFro>]

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Can poetry be translated?

Can even scientific language be translated veridically?

Of course not.

{FOUND: Ernst Pöppel, Carpe Diem > <https://www.edge.org/response-detail/26724> (*Veridically: truthful, coinciding with reality*)}

.....

Not sure I understand Tao Te Ching – Verse 71, but . . . it's time for lunch

Knowing I be in the "I don't know" is reassuring.

I don't really know where I am, why I do what I'm doing.

I'm hungry, I eat. I know where the refrigerator is.

That's enough. I'm satisfied. Happy even.

.....

Initiates take vows, virtually all religious cults—explicitly or implicitly—required of adepts, in order to bond to these "ancient mystery" schools' traditional teaching formulations. At base the neophyte must suppress all emotions—the true deep well source of ageless wisdom. This guidance by control, rather than a melding within, can only produce fragmented strange-monster anomalies.

Anomalies, a nice way to say perversions. Exceptionally, whole individuated beings go ahead while leaving nothing behind, taking all parts, celebrating all pieces—no vows required. Empty heart. A full, simple embrace of being: Mystic, self-transcendent, ecstatic, . . . uncensored.

***The greatest power is the gift
of following the Way alone.***

*"Mysticism rises from and returns
to the irreducible, unsayable
reality of "this."
"This" is the Way.
This is the way."*

{Ursula K. Le Guin, **Tao Te Ching – Verse 21**, "*The empty heart: The greatest power is the gift / of following the Way alone.*"
(Mysticism rises from and returns to the irreducible, unsayable reality of "this.") > <https://terebess.hu/english/tao/LeGuin.pdf> }

.....

A milieu of two: *momma's boys beware*, throw mother from the train . . . a kiss

For where more than two are gathered together in my name, pray, there is politics.
Where we rub each other wrong, not prayer, we gather seeking harmony, resolve conflict.
Tête-à-tête. Moving parts rubbing—there can be not resolution—no lubricant like love.
Tête-à-tête. Tête-à-tête. Tête-à-tête. I bury your face . . . with kisses.

.....

WHERE did you come from, baby dear?

Out of the everywhere into the here.

{FOUND: "*Baby*" by George Macdonald (1824–1905) > <https://www.bartleby.com/246/315.html> :: A Scottish author, poet and Christian Congregational minister, MacDonald was a pioneering figure in the field of modern fantasy literature and the mentor of fellow writer Lewis Carroll. > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_MacDonald}

.....

Kettle black

We blamed the other side for all the pandemic deaths,
counting each precious life, one by one. Saying grandmother's name.
Out loud. Tearfully. Now, that the economy is bad, and
it's our turn to take charge . . . it's not over
just because we stopped reporting.

.....

That's what bullies do:

isolate, humiliate, dominate.
When going to strange places take a friend,
bring your own humility to the party. Dance
the free style dances—where no one leads,
no one follows, go where everyone laughs
around the punch bowl, helps clean up
when the party's over. Especially on the way
up the pecking order to empires,
the ultimate bullies.

.....

Dear Ursula dear, I know I'm late to the party. Only arriving after you left. But from what little I could gather from the whiff of you left lingering in the musty air, you loved living in the worlds of fiction you entered asking, naming, as it were, what is as you went along. You loved these worlds of infinite invention all the more to the one where you bodily sat alone and typed out their existence for millions of minds to dwell in. You loved these worlds of infinite invention all the more, yet equally, no doubt, to the Tao, the Way. How is that? Is this reality where, if I had not been late to the party, I could have sat next to you and your 'pardner' Pard as you typed, is this reality every bit as infinite as the Way fictitious? Am I to be corrected? And if so, where should I be looking to catch the news? Is the Power of Heavy telling me to keep an eye on the price of potatoes every bit as important as the best Hubble Space Telescope images of all time including nebulas, galaxies, planets and more! Every bit as important as the child referred to only as an "It" throughout the story in the utopian city of Omelas, whose prosperity depends on the perpetual misery of *this* single child, a town whose name you hit upon on seeing a road sign for Salem, Oregon in your car's rearview mirror. Is this intangible place also the Way. Is the yang of reality counter constructed by the yin of the imagination? What's real? What is the reality of the imagined in imagination, the flight it takes sparked in other's minds? Is the imagined real, alone unto itself, or more real only when fashioned back into things by the hands of the inspired? That's what I wonder. It seems too easy in the wander of that wonder to get lost in the veracity of all that information dissected by misinformation, disinformation, unscrupulous cunning megaBIGdataset artificial intelligence manipulated manipulative steal-your-vote, wash your brain, convert you to perversions, make *you* the "It" child suffering sacrifice for the blithe hapless happiness of all others . . . *that!* for good or evil aside kind of formation of information. *That!* 'for good or evil aside' kind of reality juxtaposed to the *THIS!* of the Way of the Tao. That's what I'm asking about. How can I hold my ground? The dirt, the soil? The millions of micro-organisms in each square inch beneath my feeling toes. How can I hold on to this sentient reality? How can I hold on to this reality when the juggernaut of the Information Age Truth Disruptors are upon my old weary ass? Do I need to be born again, fresh yin? Bright new yearnings? So close to my final exhale, should I hold my breath? I know, I know, . . . more questions than answers, but oh!, the ache in the quest for the questions. Where now do I find "*The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas*"?

{*"The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"* is a 1973 work of short philosophical fiction by American writer Ursula K. Le Guin.}

Hyper-masculinity, at 6'6" 240lbs, the best illustration I've heard of hyper-masculinity came via a self-confession from Trace Adkins when he explained to Bill Maher why he had to get sober because he was such a badass damn drunk. Trace says whenever he got drunk all he wanted to do was fight and fuck. Didn't care which. You could get into whichever line you'd like, to fight'm or fuck'm. He'd be happy either way.

Stop signs used to take a couple weeks before they'd get installed at an intersection. The road workers would post temporary signs stating that in a couple of weeks there will new stop signs installed at this intersection. Now stop signs simply appear at the intersection. *Ipsa facto*: be here now.

Coming around the corner, up on the hill the glistening silver pole sparkled against the ominous dark grey clouds. An American flag—red & white stripes, a royal blue field of 50 white stars, flying half-mast. The colors of the flag are symbolic—red symbolizes hardiness and valor, white symbolizes purity and innocence, and blue represents vigilance, perseverance and justice. I can only wonder why we need that empty, unused top half of the pole. Empty except for that extra length of rope used to ceremoniously lift that waving flag up to the top before lowering it back down to half-staff. Why do we even need this extra length of pole and rope, this ceremony, when for as long as I can remember the flag has been flying half-mast. And rightfully so. It flies half-mast to remind us to feel the sorrow, to grieve our lost ones. It flies in front of this State building to remind us of our lost ones with a high profile public face. But in grieving our lost ones with a public face, how can I not feel the deeper loss of my own dear loved ones? The ones closest to me who simply tried to live the honest life the best they could, contributing when and where they can. This endless, continuous, ceaseless grief. No need for the top half of the pole. How could I possibly forget? How could I possibly forget the ever growing hole in my soul? Then again, perhaps that is why we need the ceremony and that extra length of pole—to make room, give hope that we, you and I, can together with good deeds mend the hole in our hearts' collective soul.

Indigenous Peoples Day here is California has officially replaced Columbus Day, as a way to remind us and to honor all those that lived on this land before us. My nuclear family is indigenous to Fort Lauderdale Florida, though that's not where I feel at home. And before us, members of our blood line left their European home and came and displaced, colonized indigenous peoples throughout what we now call North America. Above, "*Off-shore: my mother's final resting place 7 Pokanoket Lane: My Uncle's Summer Retreat in Dartmouth, Massachusetts*" is one such story personal to our family history, one for our ancestors files It's also co-incidentally the story beneath, the flipside to the harsh myth of America's Thanksgiving Holiday. Last night I watched the 2019 movie *Dark Waters*, which was based on the 2016 New York Times article "*The Lawyer Who Became DuPont's Worst Nightmare*", telling the story of DuPont de Nemours' hideous knowing callous deceit poisoning the world and their own employees in the chase for outrageous fortune developing 'forever chemicals' for products such as Teflon and scotch guard. Is this my family!? Is my DuPont lineage still involved in the same named company? In 2017, DuPont merged with competitor Dow Chemical, then split into three companies -- DuPont, Dow and Corteva -- in 2019. Eleuthere I. du Pont sits on DuPont's board of directors. Is this the basis of my inheritance? Makes me wonder, can I disavow my heritage? Of course I can't. Our inhumane history can't be reconciled. Only grieved, remembered. Corrections can only mindfully, heartfully be made going forward. Thank you, dear heart for sharing the pain. It's too much for me alone.

{*Dark Waters* (2019 film) > [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Waters_\(2019_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Waters_(2019_film)) |
SEE: *I Recognize Reckoning, I so melancholy ache* (220725)}

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Distracted. He didn't mean it. He really, really didn't mean it. It just happened.

He was just fiddling with his app. Thought it was a simple fiddle. Just needed to tap once to send.

But when he tapped nothing happened. So he tapped again, and again. Frustrating. He hit an old lady in the crosswalk.

It happened so fast. Sent her to the hospital. Broken hip. Broken app. Broken heart.

.....

My bio is not graphable. I'm not a ranked subspecies fitting neatly in a category, a linear event, a beginning middle and end. I have nothing to sell and you're not buying it. Yet, I'm still here, . . . and there, and everywhere. Born, unborn, hatching anew each instant. I'm lost and found, fact and fiction. A porous container for a disembodied spirit. A thin skinned semipermeable membrane passing through the out there, a gatekeeper granting admission to questionable stuff to meet the machinery of my ooey gooey innards in here. Look there, find me here, where you don't know to separate me from it, one from another. The impact of the confluence of my influences. Taken as a whole, presented as a flow, fluid truth. Thoughts and deed, imaginings knocked hard against the rock of the ageless ages. The yin in the yang, within the yang of the yin, the binary duality being fruitful ripe fruit splatting on the hard ground, bursting open ten thousand seeds multiplying splendiferous omniforms, each and every shape good with variable mutations of unique expression, some thriving building tsunami, others ebbing back—a recluse retreating from the pandemic of all too human ignorance and blunder struck arrogance. Not a humble tourist taking a selfie with my lunch plate alone in the diner, I too am the tip of the tongue taste of salty black olives, fresh cashew nuts and fatty sockeye salmon taken sparingly from the sea of kale, celery and tomato slices. As well, that squirrel found neck broken staring into infinity I mentioned earlier, in another piece, a few days ago, . . . there I am!—there! is my history, though it's just as good told to my unborn, never born, grandchildren in some uncertain future. A life, my life cannot be graphed—time served in the classroom, on the job, achievements awarded, skill sets expert. A life lived is lived experiences, relationally absorbed impressions, thoughts borrowed, twists turned, wonders revisited, surprise chance meetings, long lonely spells, empty empty emptiness, too deep to speak, the long slog rebound to that one indelible moment when I am the life of the party, remember that empathic dance of dances before the unworn paths through and to peaks and valley, crisp fresh air, gasping vistas, mulling through the grind, circling back to that old song, lifting the heart, shaking loose the groggy head, offering your last dollar to one more hungry than you. Dying on the inside, trying something new, giving up going home when there is no feeling of home, spilling your orange juice on the bleached white vintage doily next to the one you'll want to spend the rest of your life with, that one! Oh my, aren't I graceful! Coming in unsuspecting when close friends have gathered to celebrate that you were born, that you exist, that you are a happening in their lives, though that never happens in real life. Still you keep on keeping on, what else is there, paying the rent, paying your dues, paying attention, paying attention to the blues and the pain and suffering, the burst of emotion, the excitement building for the moment lingering, savoring, ready to expire, pregnant with possibility, choosing the road not taken, going it alone, holding tight the clammy hand of your true loved one crush crowded at the concert cacophony. Making something of yourself, separate together, over and over again without end. And back again. Never once the same even when it seems so. I am not simply some intensified pattern of an eternal state of being. Am I? I could go on, but I'm not alone here.

I have company to entertain. Such is my life. That! is what I record.

.....

I'm right hand dominant, left hand subordinate. They told me I was born this way, but I was a switch hitter when I was a kid playing Little League baseball, and easily learned to be almost equally adept with both hands at a lot of things. Later, in my 20s studying practices from metaphysical schools in the lineage of G. I. Gurdjieff's *Fourth Way* work, I was taught to make a conscious effort to challenge my general right hand dominance by leading with doing everything, such as opening doors, shaking hands, blowing my nose, any and everything with my left hand. Encouraging left handed dominance added another layer of thought before taking an action. It became evident when I constantly had to make a conscious choice in becoming ambidextrous it made it harder, slower, more confusing to execute even the smallest task. Finally, when push comes to shove, for efficiency, if not sanity, one hand has to lead, best if the other knows to serve in a supporting role, more fluid when you know going in which hand serves which purpose.

All throughout nature in organisms that coordinate their efforts you'll see the importance of some symbiotic structure of leading and supporting roles. From the hierarchy of predators on the African savannah--lions, leopards, hyenas, and wild dogs, to the pecking order of chickens, to the human family functions at home cascading into their societal functions on the schools playground. Someone has to dominant, hopefully someone with a good heart, not the bully. Even more so with empires. From the dawn of the Agrarian Age, human societies have been challenging and vying for dominance in the pecking order of who will control the land and all the resources therein. The horrors of World War 2 left us in a Cold War of empires stalemated with the threat of mutually assured nuclear annihilation between the United States lead alliance and that of the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Union collapsed and the Berlin Wall came down, the remix to the new world order began. In the 1980 and early '90s there was a tiny window of hope that the United States lead alliance would meet the dissolving Soviet Union's leader Mikhail Gorbachev's initiative to reshape the new world order into a more civil society, more cooperative, charitably egalitarian, less competitive, less ruthlessly authoritarian. With Vladimir Putin's second invasion of the sovereign nation of Ukraine on the 24th of February 2022—AND well within its power—the United States lead alliance's *f a i l u r e* to magnanimously negotiate a peaceful settlement at any time before or during the aggression, *that* window has all but closed.

On a personal note—my first wife, Herta born in 1939, was a child of the second world war, born in Novi Sad in present day Serbia, but then Yugoslavia. In 1941 Yugoslavia was invaded by the Axis powers, which perpetrated a most heinous ethnic cleansing slaughter on Herta's "Danube Swabians" lineage. Virtually every night of the 9 years I spent with Herta, she awoke at least once in a cold sweat in abject terror from a relentless, unending nightmare of war. And every night I held and rocked her in my arms reassuring her that everything was alright. But, I didn't have the language, much less a way of comprehending the effects of a post traumatic experience of such magnitude. As much as I tenderly rocked and reassured her everything was alright, I was never able to reach and dissolve its core. My intentions were misguided. I yearned too hard to be the one who took her pain away. A pain too large for me. It broke my heart. Herta being Herta broke my heart wide open in a way that could never be repaired. I was wrong when I told her, "everything was alright." Clearly it was not alright. Never was, never will be. Unable to purge the hell that was within her, Herta sadly surrendered, died in my arms. She was only 49 years old, had lived only half her life, and the worst of it at that. She taught me intimately, viscerally the results of war. What war actually is. What war does to a tender human spirit. What it is to live with the long tails of hell. And in that shared hell I learned to care deeply for another human being. To share a pain larger than self itself. And hope, only hope that sharing pain is not all there is to being human.

Though two generations removed, my second wife, Carol's lineage was a product of the Russian anti-Jewish pogroms beginning before the first world war. The fear and terror of such abject inhumanity inherently passed down to the very essence of each new child born. In Herta's case, unlike her two sisters, she was an introvert and remained lifelong subordinate. Though soft myself, I hesitantly, imperfectly took the lead in our relationship. In Carol's case, by nature she is stronger stuff, she pushes back and is firmly welcoming of being the lead in our relationship, having it her way and being treated as a principessa, which she so richly deserves. For the most part I'm happy to serve in her subordination, to not have to bear the weight of the world of decision making navigating such a confused, terrifying world very step of the way in and out of our home together. And again, for the most part, I admire Carol's clear minded, good heart filled with light and love stable direction, but of course, by my own nature, on occasions when I feel too pinched, I am compelled to assert myself, push back, make my 'ouch' heard and carve out a little niche I can call my own to own. At least for a moment.

.....

Lions not sheep, rants Sean Whalen.

Gazelles not hyenas, I reply.

The lion has to show the jackals who he is . . .

Times are changing and unless you are HUNGRY AS FUCK and willing to HUNT, you're gonna starve.

So to all you who see me and see the work and who push like I push, I SEE YOU.

And to all of you who bitch and moan and complain and tell me to be "humble" and think I need to BE something that makes you comfortable in your own misery, fuck off, I DONT OWE YOU A FUCKING THING.

Them that don't know fear ain't met their maker.

Make dear your fear,

. . . you control the grasslands at your own demise.

A number of years ago I was overweight, depressed, suicidal and bankrupt.

Today I have multiple businesses, cash in the bank, a ripped body and a lifestyle . . .

Hyenas are commonly viewed as frightening and worthy of contempt.

Gazelles are known as swift animals, appreciated for their grace.

{Sean Whalen... LIONS NOT SHEEP > <https://youtu.be/VXlkPzTJk4> | Sean Whalen, "I don't owe anyone a damn thing." May 15, 2020 > <https://www.facebook.com/likeseanwhalen/photos/a.617731108261940/2932017323499962/>: "LIONS NOT SHEEP APPAREL, LLC is responsible for this Page"}

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{221016}

Generational Alcoholism: *Does America have an alcohol problem?*

It's said that children of alcoholics never grow up, are slow to fully mature, become emotionally stable. The Peter Pan Syndrome. I'm the middle of five boys, a girl at either end. Though a mere 3-4 years apart on either side, I had a different alcoholic father than my oldest brother, and a different father again than my youngest brother. According to my father's driver's license he was the same man, only the alcoholism made him different—more erratic, less accessible, more confused, more confusing, less human—as the alcoholism increased over the years. And my mother, an alcoholic of a more aristocratic genteel class, his ready enabler right up until she kicked his sorry cheating ass out.

My oldest brother was able to give up alcohol much easier than my youngest brother. My oldest brother was married, "still in the Navy in 1974 when Jane and I both decided that we would quit drinking alcohol due to the alcoholism in both of our families. It really was not a physical challenge as both of us only drank at college parties and Navy parties. The hardest part was that, in the Navy, alcohol was a big part of social life at home and when in port during overseas duty. Others at parties were likely to make a big fuss over our not drinking, but most of them were not really worth trying to have a nice conversation with, anyway. Over the years, we have been excluded from a lot of social groups' parties because we aren't drinkers, but we were getting tired anyway of going to parties when the only conversations seemed to be more and more about the other person, and, in most cases, it required us to play 20 questions with anyone to have any conversation... that gets old!"

A proud former Marine, it's harder to tell the status with my youngest brother. He's been estranged from the family for over 2 decades. When I last talked to him on the phone, he was traumatically verbally abusing, intimidating the woman in his life at the time. He wouldn't listen to reason and hung-up on me when I ardently recommended he calm down. Not long after, I heard the court had ordered him into some form of rehab therapy, and soon after completing that he went to stay with his next older brother, my next younger brother (whose misguided son would later spend time in prison for armed robbery) in rural Arkansas. To cut to the quick, he projected his newly learned signs of an abuser onto his brother, and convinced his wife of such and ran off with her, marrying her with the zeal of some immature fanciful notion of new religion supported defiant outlaw codependency.

The middle child, I'm somewhere in the middle. A reforming hippie in my mid-30s, I gradually gave up on drugs and alcohol after meeting the woman who would become my second wife, the love of my life, the standard bearer of unfettered life I wanted to get back to. Up to then I lived the Peter Pan Syndrome—a person who has difficulty "growing up," finds it hard to manage typical adult responsibilities, such as keeping a job and maintaining healthy relationships, behaves irresponsibly, and was generally full of myself. It's been a slow slog out of being full of myself. Today's my 71st birthday. I've spent the second half of my life reforming from the first half. Doing the heavy lifting. Mostly reliable and consistent, present and caring now, maybe next year I'll be more fully formed. Large and in charge of a soberly responsive loving personal and public citizenship. A relationship between an individual and a state to which the

individual owes allegiance, engenders loyalty and in turn is entitled to its protection, inspires mutually binding love. Imagine where I'd be if this is where I started. Imagine where this country would be if there were more sober citizens.

.....
Alan Watts' Taoist Way: spiritual illusory versus practical *real world* laws

Alan Watts (5:21), "The great problems in the spiritual life, or whatever you want to call it, is to be able to have intention and act simultaneous. By this means you escape karma and you escape the devil. You might say that the Taoist is exemplary in this respect. This is getting free from karma without making any previous announcement. Supposing we have a train and we want to unload the train of its freight cars, you can go to the back end and you can unload them one by one and shunt them into the siding, but the simplest of all ways of unloading is to uncouple between the engine in the first car and that gets rid of the whole bunch at once. And it is in that sort of way you see that the Taoist gets rid of karma without challenging it." [. . .] (12:38) "This is T.S. Eliot's' idea in the *Four Quartets*, where he says that the person who has settled down in the train to read the newspaper is not the same person who stepped onto the train from the platform. And therefore also, you who sit here are not the same people who came in at the door. These states are separate each in its own place, there was the coming in at the door person, but there is actually only the here and now sitting person. And the person sitting here and now is not the person who will die. Because we are all a constant flux and the continuity of the person from passed through present to future is as illusory, in its own way, as the upward movement of the red lines on a revolving barber pole. You know it goes round and round and round, and the whole thing seems to be going up or going down, whatever the case may be, but actually nothing is going up or down. So when you throw a pebble into the pond and you make a concentric rings of waves, there is an illusion that the water is flowing upwards, and no water is flowing outwards at all, water is only going up and down. What appears to move outward is the wave not the water. So this kind of philosophical argument says, that our seeming to go along in a course of time . . . it doesn't really happen. The Buddhists say, the suffering exists, but no one who suffers. Deeds exists but no doers are found. A path there is but no one who follows it. And Nirvana is, but no one who attains it. So in this way they look upon the continuity of life as the same sort of illusion."

Alan dear, I understand the generalized metaphor for the spiritual life in terms of the illusory law of karma you put forth here, but what about the consequences in practical real life? If a young "here and now" man of 19 say, rapes a 14 year old little girl, when he is found out as a "separate here and now" 22 year old man, is he not the same man in the eyes of society's law and fully accountable to and for his past actions, his karma? No simply 'uncoupling' from his prior actions.

{Alan Watts - Taoist Way > <https://youtu.be/Ql4wGGTDapA>}

.....
What's that commotion outside as I'm doing the breakfast dishes? Is everything alright out there? I get to the window just in time to see a handsome hawk alight on the balcony banister with a half dozen crows in dive swooping pursuit. Another bevy of crows on the surrounding telephone wires look to have him pinned down. It's evident there's a reason we use 'hawk eyes' as a stand in for having extremely keen vigilant, watchful sight. This one is not here long enough for me to give him a name, but he takes his time, even as he addresses each swooping black blur coming his way, each black blur in turn swiftly shying away when the calm hawk's piercing gaze fixes it. The hawk will be most vulnerable on takeoff. The crows know. The hawk knows the crows know. After a few studied moments, in just the right instance, two powerful strokes of his wings and he's off and gliding beneath the canopy of the Avocado, turning sharp left through a narrow opening down the tree filled canyon. The murder of pursuing crows' "caws" and "kraas" slowly fade into the far distant din. We're left alone—my wife now with me at the window—with a rare visit! I take it personally as a happy birthday note in a language I'm still to learn, yet somehow grok in the moment's amazement.

.....
"Are you self-taught or do you have a higher education?" Here's the problem with the question, beyond being a Wild Child it's not possible to be self-taught. The word 'taught' itself implies someone **gave** you instruction or showed or explained something, some how or when or why to you. The base tool you need to learn in our complex societies, to learn anything else is language. And you can't learn the English language by yourself, it's a conversation. Given that one tool sufficiently sharpened, it is then possible to strike out in your own directed exploration, but to what ends? Do you learn a practical trade or some "free liberal art" practice designed to help you formulate compelling arguments, communicate well and solve problems? (Even when core among the problems to be solved are the inherent corruptions of the very systems of education teaching you the liberal arts?) For me the solution was to take the tools and run. Or more, take a long walk about . . . and ponder, . . . penetrate and ponder, follow the next step in thought and deed, see

where that leads to, go from there, redirecting back to the new here, ever here now assessing, questioning the answers—curious. Keeping that spark alive.

I believe what you're really asking is, *'did you obediently follow directions or go off into the weeds with your own peculiar inquiry?'* The answer to that of course is both. From kindergarten up through to when I dropped out of my sophomore year in college, I really didn't have a choice. With very little leeway, I pretty much had to follow the curriculum put before me—though after I dropped out, I would, over time, drop back in and try on nearly a dozen different majors in a spectrum spanning studio and fine arts, hard and soft science, religion vis-à-vis spirit and culture . . . oh my, but these labels don't begin to touch the breath of engagement, do they? If I could merely list the topics it would take a lifetime or two. Never mind. Those efforts may be better assigned to the self-taught side of the equation, as none led toward credits for a degree, nor should they have. They were only intended to satisfy my own curiosity and lead me back to poetry. Poetry, a luxury my entitled privilege afforded me. I didn't do well when I was a slave to the system with no choice. Much better, and immensely more satisfying, when I chose my own current of thought. It's all the same information that's out there for me as for you, but for me it was how I put it together, order the order, and inform the formation of the information that makes the difference. Thus I made time to sort it out.

Now that the technologies of the Information Age have made the access to information vastly more convenient, I see even less utility in a system that demands of you in order to be viable, employable, follow solely its order, its narrow instructions. There's so much more possibility in the broader reach of an enlightened assimilation of a wider chorus of divergent thoughts orchestrating potently useful ideas. Witness, for instance, the school dropout software developers and internet social media moguls, such as Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg. Will a new authoritative hierarchy be built to filter and accredit these heretofore unfathomable burgeoning possibilities? Or will 'hey ho, going with the flow' renegade self teaching free minds with even the most rudimentary of contemporary tools still be taking long walkabouts into the wilderness of the unknowable—with the added capability, I didn't have in my day, to smartphone a friend anywhere in the world? Will national, if not, international authoritarian laws be written to constrain and censor the flow or will the open-sourced, self-taught people's voices fostering net neutrality prevail? My guess, the future, like the past, is mixed. But the present, *ah!*, the present—*this!*, this conversation is where it's happening. *"Are you self-taught or do you have a higher education?"* . . . not so much.

.....

I feel and do better when I ignore the news, . . . which reminds me, I *am* prejudice: I treat everyone the same. I ignore them. As best I can.

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When you ask, "Is there a God?" the question behind the question is, *'What is First Cause?'* You're implying, in order for there to be anything at all, there must have been a self-created actor, a prime mover to which every chain of causes must ultimately go back, hence 'God'. Another view says no, existence always exists—*how can it not!* We merely perceive it in our limited capacities like a motion picture, one frame at a time, so it only *appears* to be a causal chain.

Or as self-professed 'Conscious at times, Living La Vida Explora' author Jo Cowan ponders: *" Actually, we might not be able to answer that question. If there was a beginning to existence, then it may be impossible to conceive of "non-existence" in terms of human thought. Maybe existence can only be conceived of from within existence. So maybe it always existed, maybe it "started" as some point, or maybe there are other options that we cannot fathom. Maybe non-existence can't exist, so maybe existence has always existed. Maybe non-existence was the initial condition, but it was unstable and after some "time" or "brewing/stewing" it booted up existence for reasons we can't really understand. If existence started at a point such as the Big Bang or some "higher level metaverse bang", then perhaps there is "no concept of time outside of before the Big Bang" rather than time existing before existence. Does existence require time? Who knows? But maybe our weak assumptions about existence are incapable of making sense of this. Maybe the state of existence does not have an opposite. That could mean that non-existence has never existed, or it may mean that a lack of our version of existence does not equate to 'non-existence'."*

"I'm just spewing out word salad."

{Has existence always existed? > <https://www.quora.com/Has-existence-always-existed>}

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The Grand Inquisition, call and response

Are you Christian? No.
Are you Muslim? No.
Are you Buddhist? No.
Are you Taoist? I doubt it.
Is there a God? Who's asking?

Are you an 'ist' of any kind?

That is, a follower of a distinctive practice, system, or philosophy, typically a religious or political ideology or an artistic movement?

Kindest.

That is, having a friendly, generous, and considerate nature—though I practice imperfectly.

The Watercourse Way: Remix Watts & Le Guin with a touch of commentary (*my personally favorite part*)

Be the watercourse way.

We are waves.

It is the sea.

The Way in the world
is a stream to a valley,
a river to the sea.

The simplicity
or singleness
of the Way is
that of water,
which always
rejoins itself.

To live until you die
is to live long enough.

*Only ask yourself,
... can I do less?*

It wouldn't be the Way
if there weren't jokes about it.
Pure and simple looks chaotic.
The great thought can't be thought.

*Only the Way knows the name,
those who know the name
don't know the Way.*

Whatever you win you lose.

*Born naked, you
only collect dust.*

Whatever you lose you win.

The good is not doing.

Restraint keeps you out of danger
so you can go on for a long, long time.

*Cut wood, carry water.
Let's get it out of the Way.*

{Tao: The Watercourse Way is a 1975 non-fiction book on Taoism and philosophy, published posthumously, is Alan Watts' last book.
| Alan Watts > <https://youtu.be/Ql4wGGTDapA> | Ursula K. Le Guin, *Tao Te Ching* > <https://terebess.hu/english/tao/LeGuin.pdf> }

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In the middle of a rather long, immersive cafe conversation way back when on Telegraph avenue in Berkeley California with a rather wise, precocious red-headed woman, when I ask, "*How is it possible there is anything at all?*" she yelps, as if someone stomped on her toes, "*We can't possibly know that!*"

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(Ursula, 7:16:) . . . *go with the flow . . . in the crudest sense Taoism says you do things by not doing things, and all attempt to do and to set things right and to make things happen, eventually backfires.*

Is the dance of predator/prey the Taoist Way? Sheep and pigeons for the most part go with the flow, go along to get along, yin style. Lions and hawks make their living aggressing prey, yang style. Sometimes attack mode backfires, but on the whole the top of the food chain eats when times are good. And when times are good, a few of the sheep and pigeons aren't so lucky, though most, except for brief terrifying moments of panic, go freely on their passive plant eating way. The herds and flocks are thinned, less stress on the grasses, on the whole of the habitat. When by some acts of nature times are more dramatically NOT good in the habitat—*drought, fire, flood* . . . when times aren't good for sheep and pigeons, they're not good for lions and hawks either. Is that simply the Way it is? Nothing to do to set things right? And when the act of nature destroying the habitat is man-made—chainsaws, bombs, herbicides . . . what to not do?

{Bill Moyers interview with Ursula K. LeGuin about "Lathe of Heaven" > <https://youtu.be/O1bZe7bdXMw?t=418>}

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Civilization and its Discontents on MegaData, a hundred years of innovation after Freud puts Victoria/Edwardian attitudes towards sex on the line—the collective libido blows the Emperor's grip on the top hat off, or does it?

A history, updated. And only slightly bias distorted.

With the centenary of Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* fast approaching, I can't help but wonder . . . now here we are, again, sitting atop the most advanced technical empire in history, with both the cutting-edge medical and electronic telecommunications, replete with Google at our finger tips to be able to draw from the best thinking and repository of history mankind has ever known and . . . and what? *A G A I N ! ! ! ? ?* . . . it's Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, published 1859, three years after Sigismund Schlomo Freud was born: "*It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.*" P L U S, amplify Dickens by the advent of The Information Age, which, yes again, has brought out the best and the worst in us in these accelerating times. Magnifying the cracks in society and giving a megaphone to an influential marginal few, opening *a whole climate of opinion* whose dominant scruples are personal greed—not benefit for the common need. Drowning out the feeble sounds of our real world concerns for the wildlife, the very atmosphere we breath, the very life in all its forms on this rare small planet, making a horrible mess of it all. Above the cacophonous noise only the faintest of clear, useful signal. The magic genie's not going back in the bottle anytime soon. The never was bottle will never be the same. What to do? What to not do? As the Taoists might say, go with the flow. Best to lay low and wait for a cool breeze? Wait until the jets of history cool to touch, then handle with care. Can our bunker survive?

Freud's 1929 *Civilization and its Discontents* put Edwardian attitudes towards sex on the line, just as The Great Depression—a severe worldwide economic depression began after a major fall in stock prices in the United States struck like a lightning bolt. Not everyone, however, lost money during the worst economic downturn in history, some industry thrived. Business titans such as William Boeing and Walter Chrysler actually grew their fortunes during the Great Depression. (As will, by hook or by crook, maverick capitalists such as Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk and Jared Kushner during the Great Recession of the late 2000s, further prospering unimaginably following the engendered economic-socio-political-pandemic tumult leading to the current pending threat of a Great Stagflation in late 2022, poised to get roaring in 2023.) In the mutual light of the respective preceding 'golden era' roots, before this dark curtain fell upon the people of those times—and the oligarch emboldened—Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* once again illuminates and heightens *'the clash between the desire for individuality and the expectations of the society.'* The chicanery of the ruling class notwithstanding.

At the time before this time, in the United Kingdom there was a strong religious drive for higher moral standards led by the nonconformist churches. Ideologically, the Victorian era witnessed resistance to the rationalism that defined the

Georgian period, and an increasing turn towards romanticism and even mysticism in religion, social values, and arts. This era saw a staggering amount of technological innovations that proved key to Britain's power and prosperity. Doctors started moving away from tradition and mysticism towards a science-based approach; medicine advanced thanks to the adoption of the germ theory of disease and pioneering research in epidemiology. Domestically, the political agenda was increasingly liberal, with a number of shifts in the direction of gradual political reform, improved social reform, and the widening of the franchise. There were unprecedented demographic changes: the population of England, Wales and Scotland's population rose rapidly, however, Ireland's population decreased sharply, mostly due to emigration and the Great Famine. Thanks to educational reforms, the British population not only approached universal literacy towards the end of the era but also became increasingly well-educated; the market for reading materials of all kinds boomed. Which led to the Edwardian era, a "leisurely time when women wore picture hats and did not vote, when the rich were not ashamed to live conspicuously, and the sun really never set on the British empire."

Concurrent with the Victorian era, in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, Sigmund Freud was born the first of eight children to a financially struggling wool merchant living in a rented room in a locksmith's house at 117, Schlossergasse, Freiberg in Moravia during the *Revolutions of 1848* in the Austrian Empire.

Changes shaped the nature of the Holy Roman Empire—the Holy Roman Emperor Francis II, who was also ruler of the lands of the Habsburg monarchy, created the title Emperor of Austria, for himself and his successors. In doing so he created a formal overarching structure for the Habsburg Monarchy, which had functioned as a composite monarchy for about three hundred years. He did so because he foresaw either the end of the Holy Roman Empire, or the eventual accession as Holy Roman Emperor of Napoleon, who had earlier that year adopted the title of an Emperor of the French; Francis II eventually abandoned the title of German-Roman Emperor later in 1806.

Freud was born to Galician Jewish parents in the Moravian town of Freiberg, in the Austrian Empire (now Příbor, Czech Republic). His Jewish origins and his allegiance to his secular Jewish identity were of significant influence in the formation of his intellectual and moral outlook, especially concerning his intellectual non-conformism, particularly in respect of depth interpretation and "*the bounding of desire by law*". Freud postulated the existence of libido, sexualized energy with which mental processes and structures are invested and which generates erotic attachments, and a death drive, the source of compulsive repetition, hate, aggression, and neurotic guilt. In his later works, Freud developed a wide-ranging interpretation and critique of religion and culture. Freud read William Shakespeare in English throughout his life, and it has been suggested that his understanding of human psychology may have been partially derived from Shakespeare's plays. Freud's work has suffused contemporary Western thought and popular culture. W. H. Auden's 1940 poetic tribute to Freud describes him as having created

*"a whole climate of opinion
under whom we conduct our different lives."*

Freud enumerates what he sees as the fundamental tensions between civilization and the individual. The primary friction, he asserts, stems from the individual's quest for instinctive freedom and civilization's contrary demand for conformity and repression of instincts. Freud states that when any situation that is desired by the pleasure principle is prolonged, it creates a feeling of mild contentment. Many of humankind's primitive instincts (for example, the desire to kill and the insatiable craving for sexual gratification) are clearly harmful to the well-being of a human community. As a result, civilization creates laws that prohibit killing, rape, and adultery, and it implements severe punishments if these rules are broken. Thus our possibilities for happiness are restricted by the law. This process, argues Freud, is an inherent quality of civilization that gives rise to perpetual feelings of discontent among its citizens. Freud's theory is based on the notion that humans have certain characteristic instincts that are immutable. These include, most notably, the desires for sex, and the predisposition to violent aggression towards authority figures and sexual competitors, who obstruct the individual's path to gratification. Where atop sit the 1% who make their own rules, if they can get away with them. In sum, in this regard, the tools—and once again, staggering amount of technological innovations—of the Information Age, has indeed unprecedentedly bolstered "the individual's quest for instinctive freedom" though it's made a horrible mess of civil politics, only fostering "civilization's contrary demand for conformity and repression of instincts." Has it not?

POSTSCRIPT: Sigmund Freud arrived in England in June 1938 following Nazi Germany's annexation of Austria, and the outbreaks of violent anti-Semitism that ensued. He died 23 September 1939 (aged 83) in Hampstead, London.

{**SOURCES** on the various topics included > mostly: <https://en.wikipedia.org>}

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Here's to Erin Napier and all those people who still have their teeth in Mississippi.

{Ben and Erin Napier say they 'have to work extra hard' to counter stereotypes that small-town America is 'racist' and 'podunk' > <https://trends.craigslist.net/ben-and-erin-napier-say-they-have-to-work-extra-hard-to-counter-stereotypes-that-small-town-america-is-racist-and-podunk/> "We actually have the Internet, you know, the opposite of what you might believe about us right now. We have shoes and teeth in Mississippi and the Internet," joked Erin. "I think one of the big misconceptions is that it's podunk and it's backwards. Every single square inch of this country has podunks and backward people. It doesn't sound like a small town problem."}

To know enough's enough is enough to know.

It's the inner eye that really sees the world.

" . . . *doing without doing is doing, not not doing.*"

"Fuss" or diplomacy, work, meddling, interference, concern—the old Chinese character "*Shi*"—depending who you ask.

{bits: 12:18 PM 10/19/2022: though spellcheck may disagree . . . credit where credit's due, begin with Le Guin: #47, *Looking Far*}

Be one with the world, merge!
Mix up your mind with it, mingle
with ordinary people.

{#49, Trust & power}

Take care of your life. Live the right way,
without anxiety, . . . holding without grasping.
If you take life as it comes, it doesn't come
as an enemy. Live, live! . . . until you die.

{#50, Love of life}

To have without possessing, do without claiming,
lead without controlling: this is mysterious power.

{#51, Nature, nurture}

Insight sees the insignificant. Strength knows how to yield.
Use the way's light, return to its insight, and so keep from going too far.
That's how to practice what's forever.

{#52, Back to the beginning}

{FOUND (excerpts w/slight REMIX edits): Ursula K. Le Guin, *Tao Te Ching* > <https://terebess.hu/english/tao/LeGuin.pdf> }

When you're on your Way, nothing out of the ordinary happens,
which is really extraordinary.

There's the right way, and
your way. Which do you choose?

Society and the individual,
bet you can't pick just one.

Cutting Breakfast Cabbage: *only you alone can do that*

No, I don't want to have lunch with you. You who came into my country on a privileged visa, claiming citizenry on scurrilous pretense, dagger in cloak, then voted in, ushered in the most horrid Thugocracy to attempt to destroy the best hope in history—yes fragile, yes imperfect—the American Dream, to build democracy—a work in progress, for sure,

a project far, far from emancipated. But a valiant long vision effort put asunder by your impulsive selfish grab solely so you could add to piles of narcissistic too much excess on the backs, at the expense, of those who have not enough. Your enslavement of others affording you to daily dally in the gamble of the boom and bust markets and sock away a mounding stash your prodigious daughter will never need as she easily makes her own way in a way independent of your deceitful, despicably hateful wolf in sheepskin chic clothing antics. Maybe she will keep a spark of hope alive, but any conversation with you over breaking bread would only leave a forever unwashable bad taste in my mouth. In my mind you are the poster child for all the greedy fools who put Trump in power, opening the door to a world of unscrupulous despots to pillage their own small claim at the very moment we need most to come together to save ourselves from ourselves from predictably assured annihilation of, not just us, but most all sentient life on this planet. At a time we most need to focus on living on earth equitably, and not merely our tiny, insignificant hoarding selves. You are who I think of when I think of all the eyes closed, fingers in your collective ears, speaking 'nana nana boo boo' evil following fools leading the charge with avarice into petty grievance wanting only more, more at the suffering of all else. It's that, and your straw hero strongman, and you, . . . you I hold most responsible, are the last thing I want to think about. There's no conversation here. No middle ground from your gated community to your unmoored ugly, oh, so full of yourself marauding. Don't call me. Even if you have an epiphany and turn the page, don't call here. If you do reform and turn one eighty in a direction for the common good, all for the better. Let me see it from the fruits of your labor, the sweat on your brow. Making atonement for the evil you've brought will be its own reward. Here's to the good. But you've, for a lifetime, you have already thought well enough of yourself. Enough for the both of us. I don't need to hear any more about you. I don't need to hear your Paul on the road to Damascus conversion stories. I need this world to move towards kindness. With or without you. If I sound bitter, I am. The kindest relief from this sharp, pungent taste is to allow you your head in finding your way into a world of caring for more than fear. Only you alone can do that. It's the fear that keeps you small. Only you alone can undo that.

.....

#53, Insight

People wearing ornaments and fancy clothes,
carrying weapons,
drinking a lot and eating a lot,
having a lot of things, a lot of money:
shameless thieves.
Surely their way
isn't the way.

{*"So much for capitalism,"* comments Ursula K. Le Guin, *Tao Te Ching* > <https://terebess.hu/english/tao/LeGuin.pdf> }

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When the bulls fight tend to the ants stomped

Homage to Anne Garrels' NGO called *Assist Ukraine* > <https://assist-ukraine.org>
(220321)

*"My current focus is on the terrible war in #Ukraine. I have a special
passion for the people there who are fighting for their lives and their future."*

>>

#58 *Living with Change*

When the government's *dull and confused*,
the people are placid.
When the government's *sharp and keen*,
the people are discontented.

Alas! misery lies under happiness,
and happiness sits on misery, alas!

Who knows where it will end!

Nothing is certain.

["dull and confused" and "sharp and keen" are words used to describe Taoists and the non-Taoists]

#20 *Being Different*

Ignorant, ignorant.

Most people are so bright.

I'm the one that's dull.

Most people are so keen.

I don't have the answers.

Oh, I'm desolate at sea,

adrift, without a harbor.

Everybody has something to do.

I'm the clumsy one, out of place.

I'm the different one,

for my food

is the milk of the mother.

Ursula comments: "The difference between yes and no, good and bad, is something only the "bright" people, the people with the answers, can understand. A poor stupid Taoist can't make it out. This chapter is full of words like huang (wild, barren; famine), tun (ignorant; chaotic), hun (dull, turbid), men (sad, puzzled, mute), and hu (confused, obscured, vague). They configure chaos, confusion, a "bewilderness" in which the mind wanders without certainties, desolate, silent, awkward. But in that milky, dim strangeness lies the way. It can't be found in the superficial order imposed by positive and negative opinions, the good/bad, yes/no moralizing that denies fear and ignores mystery."

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The point is that Taoists gain their ends without the use of means.

{Ursula K. Le Guin, *Tao Te Ching* > <https://terebess.hu/english/tao/LeGuin.pdf>}

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Older people tend to have sleepiness earlier in the evening and wake up earlier in the morning. For me that's long before dawn. This earlier sleep timing in older adults probably is due to the age-related phase advance in their circadian rhythm. I'm told decreased production of Human Growth Hormone, Cortisol, and Melatonin can play an important role in regulating my sleep. Bladder capacity also diminishes with aging, getting up more often to pee a tiny trickle doesn't help in getting a solid night's sleep either. In fact, with age, many bodily functions slow down, including the digestive tract, which might not work as efficiently or as quickly as it used to. The muscles in the digestive tract become stiffer, weaker, and less efficient. The need to evacuate at odd hours can also get me out of bed and prompt me get on with it. There's this awkwardly marvelous 'all's right with the world' moment when I pop up awake earlier in the morning than I'm used where I'm left to wonder, "should I stay or should I go?" In this delicious moment it feels like I have all the time in the world to just lay around in the reverie of 'nothing to do', just listen to the ambient sounds or my wife's breathing—that's *always* reassuring, watch my thoughts anxiety free—nothing to worry about, . . . wallow in the limbo. Until the lower gastrointestinal tract kicks in and tells me otherwise.

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#65 One power *"I cannot make the leap between them. I can only ponder it."*

Once upon a time those who ruled according to the Way didn't use it to make people knowing, but to keep hem unknowing. People get hard to manage when they know too much. Whoever rules by intellect is a curse upon the land. Whoever rules by ignorance is a blessing on it. To understand these things is to have a pattern and a model, and to understand the pattern and the model is mysterious power. Mysterious power goes deep. It reaches far. It follows things back, clear back to the great oneness.

Ursula comments, "Where shall we find a ruler wise enough to know what to teach and what to withhold? "Once upon a time," maybe, in the days of myth and legend, as a pattern, a model, an ideal? The knowledge and the ignorance or unknowing Lao Tzu speaks of may or may not refer to what we think of as education. In the last stanza, by power he evidently does not mean political power at all, but something vastly different, a unity with the power of the Tao itself. This is a mystical statement about government—and in our minds those two realms are worlds apart. I cannot make the leap between them. I can only ponder it."

{Ursula K. Le Guin, *Tao Te Ching* > <https://terebess.hu/english/tao/LeGuin.pdf>}

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{221024}

Ubereats courier, "An artist is an artist only when making art."
Jamba Juice team member, "*I don't feel like an artist otherwise.*"

{An artist is only an artist when creating art. The moment the creation is complete it is no longer art, it becomes an artifact. It's a proof that art happened, but from now on it's all maintenance.}

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So Endearing

In my field I have no competitors, no marketplace either.
I am essentially the traces of a wandering ant without a queen.
At home I have a principessa, things are put in their proper place.
I am not an influencer in any industry. My opinions are my own.
They don't mean anything to anyone, except those who love me,
who see the beauty, not in what I'm saying so much as how it's said.
I whisper: "*My aim is old yin on this side of young yang.*"
When going to bed for the night, it's best not to pick a fight with the wife.
I always felt that the true value of my oeuvre was in the continuity of the whole.
But now the work is scattered helter-skelter, it's all gone to pieces.

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Ocean: on eating a Pig with enough room to turn around

When I first arrived here some 3 decades ago in this rental stand-in for our forever home, doves, chickadees, mocking and hummingbirds predominated. That's what I saw. That and a place to plant sunflowers. My affections easily slid into becoming a birder. After building a water feature fountain fashioned out of a statue of Hotei—a cheerful, contented, portly monk affectionately known as the Laughing Buddha—I placed a two-tiered bird feeder on a tall pole nearby. Almost daily I'd refill this bird feeder with a range of grains and seeds, partial to sunflower seeds, millet, milo, cracked corn, and wheat. Life was good. Then the neighbor's pure white, yellow eyed adolescent cat, Ocean stepped in. Increasingly, by day Ocean prowled our yard. I'd shoo him away, effectively to no avail. In the evening, home from work, we'd hear the neighbor call him back, "Ocean, Ocean, Ocean!" Tail straight up, he'd agilely scamper over the fence. Good riddance. One fine Saturday morning I found Ocean in the bird feeder splayed out on his back, paws to the sky, eyes closed smile tight in a bed of feathers, a half chewed wing drooping out the corner of his blissed out Lewis Carroll Cheshire grinned mouth. In a fury I took off my flip flop and started slapping the side of the bird feeder breaking Ocean's reverie. He knew he was next for a slap and bolted in a high arching leap over the Jade plants into free escape.

I'd long been dismayed by—at the loss of the wild life—the growing domestication of top of the food chain carnivores at the expense of the ever suffering domestication of farm animals and over fishing the oceans. I have to admit though, my principles didn't hold up. Ocean, in his cuteness, his playful mischief, his insistent wanting for affection, won me over. I resistantly joined the legions of cat people. We became so enamored my wife would wrap Ocean up in a chest hammock and we'd watch TV together until we heard the neighbor's call, "Ocean, Ocean, Ocean!" Still, unable to participate in the cruelly sly 'chumming the waters' seduction hunter dance in furtherance of Ocean's bliss, I took down the bird feeder. Laissez faire. When Ocean proudly left dead lizards at my doorstep, I ignored him.

In *Civilization and its Discontents* Freud posits that us wild animals are at base pleasure-seeking missiles, we primarily want to seek pleasure and avoid pain. But these instincts clash in forming society—for order, societies can't afford to allow its citizens to rape and kill each other willy-nilly, hence the ever complexifying rules to follow for domestication. In the scenario with Ocean above, Ocean was the wildlife and I was acting as the enforcer for the 'good of society' or at

least my notion of it. I see now that for the longest time, having the sensibilities of a pacifist, I wanted to deny that bloodlust was an intrinsic desire. That killing just to kill when you had more than enough to eat went against the natural order. Now I recognize the thrill of the kill itself is hardwired, and given the opportunity will be pounced upon by the wild within us. It's a delicate balance, isn't it, between the natural rights of the wild and forming a just society?

Today, Oct. 11, 2022, the Supreme Court will consider whether California can address cruelty to animals by requiring that pork sold in the state come from breeding pigs housed in spaces that allow them to move around freely. There was no dispute that the state could regulate the treatment of pigs within its borders. But California produces almost no pork, even as its residents consume 13 percent of the pork produced in other states. The question for the justices is whether the law's impact on business practices in those other states run afoul of the Constitution. What would the Laughing Buddha say? Should the luxury of pork from pigs—a highly intelligent animal with its own wants, desires and social needs—be confined to pens so small they can't even turn around for the entirety of their life? The California law would allow the pigs to be housed with at least 24 square feet of space, that is a 4 feet by 6 feet rectangle—slightly less than two human coffins side-by-side. All morality aside, what is the impact of the fact that *The World Lost Two-Thirds Of Its Wildlife In 50 Years*? That is the last fifty years, and we are on trend to loss half of the wildlife still remaining in the next 30 years. And the suffering of farm animals? How do we measure that . . . at our pleasure? Killing just to kill when you have more than enough to eat may or may not go against the natural order. The thrill of the kill itself may or may not be hardwired, but even so, what are the chances it can be rewired? What would the scope of such an update look like? Can our collective desire for a less cruel world supplant our needless bloodlust? Or is that too intrinsic to evolution?

Once again I have more questions than answers. Eventually our neighbor moved out taking Ocean with her to a place not too far away. A year later she was having a party and invited us over. We enticed in all the old familiar ways, but Ocean no longer seemed to recognize us, not interested. Laissez faire.

{*Supreme Court Wrestles With Case on Pigs, Cruelty and Commerce* > <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/11/us/supreme-court-pigs-animal-cruelty.html> | *The World Lost Two-Thirds Of Its Wildlife In 50 Years* | September 10, 2020 > <https://www.npr.org/2020/09/10/911500907/the-world-lost-two-thirds-of-its-wildlife-in-50-years-we-are-to-blame>}

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Why I Won't be Couriering Downtown: sometimes the adventure alone is not enough

I get a request for a 20 minute job downtown with the promise of a \$4.37 pay out. With morning rush hour traffic it takes me 10 minutes to get there. Downtown is overloaded with new building construction that is taking up a lot of street parking. The city has stopped taking cash at the parking meters, so where I used to pay a dime for 5 minutes parking, I now have to use my credit card at a minimum of \$1.25. I circle the blocks around my pick-up until I finally get a spot 4 blocks away. I hustle over to the restaurant, which is understaffed—the food is not ready. I wait. And wait. Eleven minutes later I'm out the door with a paper sack of hot food in the insulated bag on my shoulder and two large fountain drinks filled to the flimsy plastic covered brim in an equally flimsy drink carrier for my 4 block not-so-pleasant jaunt back to the car. When I swipe right on the app, I see the delivery is on the other side, a sketchy part of downtown where the homeless, (or the *'unhoused'* as we are calling them these days), camp out. Again, I circle the blocks around my drop-off until I finally get a spot 3 blocks away, swipe my credit card, and hustle over to the high-rise as quickly as the sloshing fountain drinks allow. I have to stay sharp. Is this guy merely another raving maniac or is he a for real intimidating threat? I never know until I round the corner. Finally, I get to my customer's building, which requires a code to gain entrance, which the customer didn't provide. I text the customer, *"What's the door code?"* No response. I call, it goes to voicemail. I text again, *"Are you there?"* No response. After a few minutes someone comes out the front door and allows me to slip in. Now I have to wait for someone going up the elevator to use his FOB key to get to the ninth floor. Through a maze of confusing signs and poorly laid out door numbers I reach my customer's door, text *"I've arrived,"* place the food and drinks near the inward opening door and take a photo to verify delivery. I hustle double time back to the car, handing a particularly destitute looking, raggedy, barefoot mid-aged woman 3 one dollar bills, saying *"Bless you"*. I tell the Ubereats app, *"Stop New Requests,"* go off-line and get the hell out of Dodge.

Let's recap. I spent \$2.50 for parking and nearly an hour on a *'20 minute'* job for which I'll be paid \$4.37. I gave \$3 to someone worse off than me. I didn't account for how many curses I used up, karma which will likely bring me even closer to hell. Not to mention the cost of inflated gasoline used, and the prorated inflated costs of auto insurance, car maintenance and data use on my smartphone. You do the math, would you be enticed to courier in today's downtown? I'm glad enough I had the experience, but sometimes the adventure alone is not enough to want to do it again.

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Much of stories told today are still told in the old linear 'campfire' manner with a beginning middle and end driving the adventure to a point moral or amoral, perhaps with a twist at the end—definitely to a climax. Movies and campy writers may chop it up and cleverly place fragments out of sequence, but they have time and page number constraints that obligate every bit to inform the central story, no waste, no dally. Not so my "*Rough Rants*," which in their fullness tell a whole coherent story, my story in a way unfolding—born of the real outside, marinated in the mystic inside, turned inside out and embraced all about. Unborn, undying . . . living. Living a life as is—let's slurp up some sound syllable soup. *Rough Rants* are a work-in-progress, they'll never end. Even if I abandon this document, even if life abandons me. An orphan without a birth, there is no end to rough rants.

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I don't subscribe to religions that find me guilty before I'm even born.
Original sin or whatever that crap is. Where do I truly find presumed innocence?

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I have good news for you. I still have more questions than answers!

Why is that good news?

See, . . . I can't answer you that. You may think I've grown soft, but that's only because you can't see inside me, spill my guts, which are growing old and stiff, and making it hard to give a shit. That's the good news . . . I'm that much closer to death, to my everlasting reward—the beginning of the next grand unknown.

Why is that so grand?

Good question.

Yes, from here it is unknowable, certainly doesn't appear so grand . . . but at least from there I'll know I don't know, or maybe not, I don't know, and not knowing I don't know would be a grand relief, wouldn't it?

There's a miracle to be had here. We just don't know what it is.
Maybe it would help if we stopped praying so loudly and quietly listened.

{As Ursula K. Le Guin says LaoTzu says, "live in your body, you are your body; where else is there to go?"
| Ursula K. Le Guin comments Tao Te Ching #80 Freedom> <https://terebess.hu/english/tao/LeGuin.pdf>}

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Meet Me at the Corner, *wouldn't want to disquiet my anonymity*—a moment without renown—you and I

It's raining. What's the 'it'? Rain. Rain's raining. And the cloud from which the rain came, is the cloud clouding? Where did these 'ings' come from, where did they go? Back to the one. So too 'I'. Onomatopoeia-ishly, the sound of water says what I think. Unlike alphabetic languages that has a letter or combinations of letters and marks to represent each speech sound in the language, Chinese characters are ideograms, written characters symbolizing the idea of a thing without indicating the sounds used to say it. Chinese has no verb conjugation, each verb only has one form—no need to memorize verb tenses! Nor to express if an action takes place in the past, present or future. No such thing as 'the' and 'a'—simply the context, will make clear whether we are talking in singular or in plural. No gender: no masculine, feminine or neuter words. Chinese has a fixed sentence pattern, no inversion: a fixed pattern of subject - verb - object. And the ideograms are not recommending objective, fixed actors acting upon, only imagination evoking pictures depicting a (hopefully) shared state of being. In the erupting digital age, us alphabetic people are becoming more used to the ideograms we call emojis, so we have more experience in knowing how a simple picture is worth a thousand words. We grok a shared feeling from the little '*smiley face with a wink*' that would take tediously long and be less satisfying if we try to describe 'it' using letter by letter sound. Thus in your provincial accent you English speaker, like I, slurp up some sound syllable soup, thus: ". . . *even if fame never found my face. Or rather perhaps all the more so—wouldn't want to disquiet my anonymity, now would we?*" And what extra goo dribbles down the corner of your mouth onto your freshly laundered t-shirt is NOT a thing or even a happening per se, but a notion, a concept of some state of being more general, less fixed, less specific to a you or I—an expression of preference in the relationship to others—most likely human others—and not only how they know of me for who, but how well they know the event that I am. I'll meet you at the corner, that intersection where our paths cross knowing nothing of where the other has been, much less where, or even if, we're going to go on together, or meet again. Here we are! Two *goings* meeting at the corner.

"Wouldn't want to disquiet my anonymity" suggests—and it's only a suggestion—not a fixed thing, rather the freedom NOT to be someone else's preconceived notion of who I am by way of fame, from idiosyncratic interpretations of my previous actions—especially on account of supposedly notable achievements—documented in some media in which I am the content, object or subject, or even author, which can only be background noise and not the on point signal of now and certainly NOT the whole surprise of meeting strangeness being to being, feeling the fullness of the happening taking place in this moment, you and I, bumping fists.

A casual stranger, having never met, yet trusting the feel, we—you and I—can stand under a shared umbrella at the corner waiting for the 'walk' light to change and without sounds beyond 'Thank you for sharing' share a pitter patter, yes wet, blustery cold, darkly greying, swooshing splashing glass and painted steel dragons alerting, discount sale window displaying, stepped over alcove harboring blue tarp-covered bivouacking nagging hunger, giggly puddle jumping, pigeon flocking wire alighting precious delighting wordless hello goodbye. Equally—you and I—left on the far corner to our own, having most recently been one together with one I will never have again a go, going our separate ways.

{HOMAGE: Alan Watts, *Tao: The Watercourse Way*; 1. The Chinese Written Language >
<https://terebess.hu/english/watts-Tao-the-watercourse-way.pdf> }

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Polarity: *can't have one without the other*—without mutual action or influence the connection breaks
(a comment on unity in divisive times)

There's no peace without hostility, no love without hate, no shadow without light, no positive electric charge, nor emotion, without the negative*. No circuit, no electricity. There's no me without you and the togetherness we choose.

There's no nothing without something, no place without space, and no, . . . you can't have the One without the other.

Inside/outside, upside/downside, large/small, us/them, life/death. Without neglect how caring, without depression how elation, without opposition how co-operation, without antonym how synonym, without Seme how Uke.

Where spectrum—or reason for that matter—without a point: where hot/warm/cool/cold without absolute zero—ice, the freezing point, the boiling point of water, steam, evaporation, absorption back into the atmosphere, the dew drop becoming the ocean, the cloud, the rain, the rain watering the sunflower seed. Where is center without an outer edge, where fullness without emptiness.

No child without a mother. No mother without a man. No man without a mother.

No life on earth without the sun. No sun without the galaxy. No galaxy without molecules. No molecules without that something-nothing beyond plasma we can't even imagine yet. No hope without imagination. No truth without what's real. No real without me. No me without we.

As above, so below. As within, so without. Do without, live within. On balance, trust the interplay.

{*The direction of an **electric current** is by convention the direction in which a positive charge would move. Thus, the current in the external circuit is directed away from the positive terminal and toward the negative terminal of the battery. Electrons would actually move through the wires in the opposite direction. | **Seme** (攻め, せめ, "attack", "offense") is a Japanese martial arts term for a kind of psychological pressure. The seme is the one inflicting something on to the uke. It is also an attitude meant to disrupt the opponent's sense of confidence and resolution, prior to an attack. **Uke** (受け) is the person who "receives" a technique.}

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As an uke for a Santa Cruz California Aikido sensei, I sat up and took notice when he said in effect, *'if intimidation comes to attack, you've let it go too far.'* A few days before Christmas 1980 a couple of drunk bikers stumbled into the dojo challenging sensei to a fight. He called the police.

"In Aikido we never attack. An attack is proof that one is out of control. Never run away from any kind of challenge, but do not try to suppress or control an opponent unnaturally. Let attackers come any way they like and then blend with them. Never chase after opponents. Redirect each attack and get firmly behind it." — Morihei Ueshiba O-Sensei (Founder of Aikido)

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"The secret of life is knowing when to stop," Alan Watts

"During that last evening of his life Alan Watts played with balloons. He described the weightless, floating sensation as being 'like my spirit leaving my body.' In the night he went on to a new journey of the spirit, riding the wind, laughing joyously," Al Chung-liang Huang.

In October 1973, Watts returned from a European lecture tour to his cabin in Druid Heights, California. Friends of Watts had been concerned about him for some time over his alcoholism. On 16 November 1973, at age 58, he died in the Mandala House in Druid Heights. He was reported to have been under treatment for a heart condition. Before authorities could attend, his body was removed from his home and cremated on a wood pyre at a nearby beach by Buddhist monks. His son, Mark Watts relates that Watts was cremated on Muir Beach at 8:30 am after being discovered deceased at 6:00 am. Mark investigated his death and found that his father had planned his own passing meticulously.

{Watts, Alan (1975). Huang, Chungliang Al (ed.). *TAO: The Watercourse Way* (Foreword) > <https://terebess.hu/english/watts-Tao-the-watercourse-way.pdf> | https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Watts}

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To find a wife you can adore, be adorable.
To keep a wife, keep her happy.

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your children feel your pervasive fear engendered anxiety,
even when you don't. your children feel loved,
when they are. live this precious life as if
you are going to die, . . . you are.

.....

*I don't subscribe to religions that find me guilty before I'm even born.
Original sin or whatever that crap is. Where do I truly find presumed innocence?*

Former Church Members say they were Conned: the power of belief

"They plant fear in you, saying that you are full of sin and corrupted, you will end up in hell, and your family will face a similar fate," says a former church member who goes by the pen name of Fumiaki Tada, because the church targets its critics. In addition to the sins of Adam and Eve, Tada says, church members are taught about the sins of Japan's colonial rule over Korea from 1910 to 1945. But the church also offered followers a path to salvation. "We were told that we must make up for it with money," Tada says. "So to the church's South Korean headquarters, the Japan branch is their wallet. Spiritual deliverance is not cheap. Saving seven generations on both sides of a worshipper's family, paternal and maternal, runs more than \$9,000 in Japan. Saving every ancestor going back 200 generations runs more than \$40,000. "Blessings" for dead predecessors are sold separately. Asked why the church doesn't conduct these rituals for free, Se-ta Funato, a Japanese devotee who spreads the gospel on YouTube, insisting their crusade must go on, cited the Bible. "Maybe you've heard about Abel and Cain," referring to the sons of Adam and Eve. *"In their time, they'd offer up a sheep, because livestock was valuable to them. But in modern times, it's necessary to sacrifice money."*

{Shinzo Abe's assassination spotlights Unification Church links to Japan's politics | July 28, 2022 > <https://www.npr.org/2022/07/28/1113777419/shinzo-abe-assassination-unification-church-japan> | There are about 7,000 Japanese wives: "Rural areas in South Korea have long suffered from a severe shortage of wives. A Japanese wife who participated in the mass wedding was sent as a countermeasure. The Unification Church refers to the Japanese believers in Korea as 'heavenly elite units with a special mission,' and this 'special mission' is to serve Korea. Many of the Japanese female believers who married into South Korea are living a hard life in a poor environment." > <https://六マリアの悲劇.com/> | Links to the church: So far, 179 of the 379 lawmakers from Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party have admitted links to the Unification Church. }

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"What do you do for a living?" Peculiar question, isn't it? Honestly, the living part's already a go, my mother took care of that. Of course, what's actually being asked about is money, how do I make money, "how do you render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's?" How do you be in the world? or more aptly,

how do you *do* in the world, but not *be* of the world? I don't. I mingle. It's not as if I'm made of something other, as if the true me is the non-material part. It's not, I'm not—I'm part and parcel of . I be the being, baby! No separation. I'm the sum of the stuff of life and the void of which we cannot speak from which life springs. It's not a parable. It is what it is and what it isn't. I am that. What do I do for a living? Live. I can do that whenever, where ever I am. Nothing to do. What do I do for a not-living—for its own joy? Well, we'll see, won't we? But let's not get ahead of ourselves? If you sincerely want to know what I do for a living, give me your presence and spend some of your living with me. Then we'll see, and feel, and . . . ha ha ha la de da. The truth of the my doing can't be known in one lifetime, these light foot doings will ripple in the pond for at least seven generations. Ask again when we meet *there* on final curtain. Personally, I'm still busy singing a symbol-free version of Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself*.

{*What is the main idea of Song of Myself by Walt Whitman?* There are three important themes: the idea of the self, the identification of the self with other selves, and the poet's relationship with the elements of nature and the universe. Houses and rooms represent civilization; perfumes signify individual selves; and the atmosphere symbolizes the universal self. > <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/l/leaves-of-grass/summary-and-analysis-song-of-myself/introduction#> }

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We're catching the news, babe . . . we're catching it on the chin.

Looking at the escalating divisiveness and political violence in America prompted by the media—the role the history of the *FCC fairness doctrine* plays and potential remedies. I sense the *harvardlawreview's Awareness Doctrine* holds good promise in addressing the scope of 'best hopes' for quelling both the hell-bent partisan and the silo bubble tendency of the majority of news consumers so exploited by provocateurs in today's unregulated wild wild west frontier landscape mega-powered by the exploding Information Age technology.

Here's to reining in the off-the-rails power of extremist and spurious content distributors. Finger's crossed it's not inevitable, in our persistent quagmire, we'll unwittingly roll into high noon at the O.K. Corral of Disinformation.

{*The Awareness Doctrine* | May 6, 2022> <https://harvardlawreview.org/2022/05/the-awareness-doctrine/> | *FCC fairness doctrine* > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FCC_fairness_doctrine | *Political violence in America isn't going away anytime soon* | November 3, 2022 > <https://theconversation.com/political-violence-in-america-isnt-going-away-anytime-soon-193597> }

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Cult Leaders use Devious Methods to Trap, Deceive and Control People

Behavior Control: A cult leader will strictly control a person's associations, living arrangements, food, clothing, sleeping habits, finances, and decisions of any kind to make sure the person stays powerless. This is usually done with manipulation, threats, rage, belittling, guilt, shame and playing on the person's fears.

Information Control: A cult leader deliberately withholds or distorts information, lies, and limits access to other sources of information, claiming his words come from God.

Thought Control: A cult leader uses language to mislead and misrepresent the truth. He discourages critical thinking and any speech that goes against him or his teachings. He uses an "us vs. them" mentality, implying that he is right and everyone else is wrong. He claims to know what's best for people to discourage his followers from questioning his authority and thinking for themselves.

Emotional Control: A cult leader manipulates his followers through fear—fear of losing salvation, fear of being shunned, possessed, filled with sin, of eternal hell, etc. He keeps people in fear by his behavior, words, thought control and emotional control so his followers will feel helpless and terrified, and won't want to live their lives without him.

All of these are forms of conditioning, indoctrination, programming and brainwashing—ways to ensure that people won't trust their own thoughts, feelings or desires. They are used to strip people of their autonomy and power—to negate their right to be who they are, to live an independent life and to make their own decisions. For a person who has been abused by a cult leader, the road back to trusting themselves and living their own life takes time and patience. Telling themselves the truth is crucial in changing the deeply held beliefs they were told were true. It's a process of being dis-illusioned—of breaking the illusion and seeing reality clearly.

{GUEST compilation edited by Carol Landrum, including: HANDOUT: WHAT MAKES A CULT? > <https://uucnrv.org/uucwp/wp-content/uploads/Cults-handouts.pdf> | *Are You, or Is Someone You Know, Involved in a High-Demand Group or Movement ("cult")?* > <https://drsteveichel.com/about-cults> }

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Fresh air fills your nostrils, your lungs, you love it. Clear water runs down you gullet, . . . refreshing, *aah!*
Why then go inside, closing the doors and windows, the taps tightly shut? The air gets stale, the water stagnates.
There is no room for your boat to go fishing for who knows what—all alone in an empty tub with a moldy rubber ducky.
What's become of you? When you put the sky in a box, the watercourse in a bottle, it loses its way. Then where are you?

{Funny how I can tell you what can't be said,
what you wouldn't want to hear if I could,
. . . but then you already know all this.}

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Reflections on The Media's recent history

in hopes it can help illuminate a way forward . . .

Yes, it would be a little good thing if "*Not True*" flashed on our screens in real time when appropriate with links to educate. The *Awareness Doctrine* is leaving the implementation of such to the good graces of the content providers. Unfortunately there are too many NOT-trustworthy media owners for that alone to be effective. Limiting how much media any one entity can own might help, but likely there will need to be a strong culture of fair-minded watch-dog groups evolving to stay ahead of the tsunami. Going back to the Tea Party and Newt Gingrich's mutual embrace of the embers of the ole 'the south will rise again' hell bent on Burning Down the House—there has been a concerted effort to subterfuge and undermine at any cost, and if you could make a buck doing it, all the better. At least now it's out in the open where we can perhaps blend with it and change its course. We'll have to be willing to mingle in the mud.

The 1987 repeal of the *Fairness Doctrine* enabled the rise of talk radio that has been described as "unfiltered" divisive and/or vicious: "In 1988, a savvy former ABC Radio executive named Ed McLaughlin signed Rush Limbaugh—then working at a little-known Sacramento station—to a nationwide syndication contract. McLaughlin offered Limbaugh to stations at an unbeatable price: free. All they had to do to carry his program was to set aside four minutes per hour for ads that McLaughlin's company sold to national sponsors. The stations got to sell the remaining commercial time to local advertisers." According to The Washington Post, "From his earliest days on the air, Limbaugh trafficked in conspiracy theories, divisiveness, even viciousness" (e.g., "feminazis"). Prior to 1987 people using much less controversial verbiage had been taken off the air as obvious violations of the Fairness Doctrine.

You see the real time effects of such unchallenged media in today's Russia as reported in Anne Garrels' *Putin Country*. Another clear complete cycle example in our times is Slobodan Milošević's state media promoting fear-mongering and utilizing xenophobic nationalist sentiments to draw Serbs to support his autocratic agenda. The director of Radio Television of Serbia during Milošević's era, Dušan Mitević, has since admitted on a PBS documentary "the things that happened at state TV, warmongering, things we can admit to now: false information, biased reporting. That went directly from Milošević to the head of TV." THAT more generally should be a chilling warning to un-surveilled, unchallenged 'self-monitoring' media. Fast-forward to Alex Jones' InfoWars founded in 1999 and operating under 'Free Speech Systems LLC', promoting conspiracy theories and fake news in the wild, wild west of the unregulated internet.

<<. . . *and here is where I find another key to accountability*: the Lewis and Pozner families, and the other families of children killed in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting filing defamation lawsuits "for spreading false claims, resulting in the harassment, stalking and threatening of survivors." Wish to God it never again comes to that, but using this precedent, I pray there is a movement to make it easier to use litigation against misinformation 'shock jocks' to nip that shit in the bud. >>

In 2022, for Jones' defamatory falsehoods about the Sandy Hook shooting, juries in Connecticut and Texas have awarded \$965 million and \$50 million (total: \$1.015 billion) in damages respectively from Jones to families of Sandy Hook shooting victims and a first responder; they had alleged that Jones' lies led to them being threatened and harassed for years. Hopefully that deterrent sends a powerful message to other copycat influencers. More like that, but again, . . . how do we encourage a strong culture of fair-minded watch-dog groups evolving to stay ahead of the ulterior motive dis-information tsunami? And simultaneously build a movement towards making it easier to use litigation to earlier-on prove the damages being done to individuals and our institutions, and hold the malevolent players accountable?

{The Awareness Doctrine | May 6, 2022> <https://harvardlawreview.org/2022/05/the-awareness-doctrine/> | FCC fairness doctrine: FCC fairness doctrine of the United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC), introduced in 1949, was a policy that required the holders of broadcast licenses both to present controversial issues of public importance and to do so in a manner that fairly reflected differing viewpoints > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FCC_fairness_doctrine | Alex Jones > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alex_Jones#Sandy_Hook_school_shooting | Slobodan Milošević > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slobodan_Milo%C5%A1evi%C4%87}

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The Tao of Doubt *is NOT the eternal*: doubt the tao

{*"But I don't like myself when I am sober,"* as Alan Watts surrendered to another shot of vodka at a time when he knew he need not and should not rely on it any more. ~ Al Chung-liang Huang, *Tao: The Watercourse Way*}

(who weigh what way Wu Wei, . . . human frailty?)

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In the eye of a category 5 hurricane is not the time to go out to repair those old leaks in your roof.

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I'm way outside the main event tent.
I'm not on the mainstream team.
I'm the answer to the question that never gets asked.

.....

There's nothing to say. There's a lot to say about nothing.
The terrors of human nature give us infinite opportunity to open to compassion, and
break our heart. A well-developed sense of humor can help.

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The hand having writ moves on,
I wrote on the face of the waters.
You didn't see that, you see this.
Remember?

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Without boundaries there is no center. To build a water feature in your garden is to invite your wild neighbors for whom your walls are no obstacle. Birds certainly, but also raccoons and other furry creatures. When walking your dog on the sidewalk in front of my house, keep him on a leash. Think about how durable you need the material to be, and how much control you need over the slack. I don't need your dog coming up the path wanting to lick my face. "He's friendly," you say, "he doesn't bite." Yeah, maybe he hasn't bit you, but I know perfectly well what that low growl is saying when I tell him to shoo. Not endearing, you waiting patiently while he pees in my bushes. When there's seven, soon to be eleven, cars who've waited two stop light cycles moderately frustrated behind you is not the time to be gracious to the guy who just pulled out of the alley and eagerly wants to merge into our lane. You may think highly of yourself for being generous giving the interloper a break with the minutes you stole from the others—your still a no count thief. Without clear boundaries you can't make true friends. If there is no one home, who is there to visit? A cage over you Koi pond does nothing to take away your fish's freedom. They'll most certainly gather and be happy to see you when you come to feed them.

.....

{the truth of what is (if I can't turn away)}

[The List is too long to list . . .]

If I face all the terrors, the horrors, the man-made suffering out there in the world,
both past and present, I have to wonder . . . is living worth it.
Then again, maybe I don't know enough.
Maybe life is driving towards some redemption so vast, so lastingly magnificent
I cannot even begin to imagine
and there's still a contribution I can make towards that good.
It's a close call—*the truth of what is* on one hand
and *holding out hope* for the dream on the other.
Is it worth it? [. . .]
I'm still here,
until I'm not.

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It's one thing to read the pernicious hate in history, another thing to see it playing out in real time and feel powerless to effect it. All the brazen Trump emboldened Republican Governors openly rigging the system with impunity, Mitch McConnell et al unscrupulously stacking the Federal and Supreme Court (the heretofore last bastion of Institutional Integrity) with partisan hacks, . . . and now it looks like Kevin McCarthy will be picking up the Newt Gingrich baton hell bent on Burning Down the House. I can't see any of this leading to a good place. Heart breaking. Heart breaking for an already pulverized heart. It most likely untrue that the Supreme Court was ever a bastion of Institutional Integrity, but that was the projected image. And that cover, at least, gave us shelter for our collective denial of reality.

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That's the key question isn't it—how so many people can be so hoodwinked by the greediness, hatred, and vitriol?
("I'm so sorry to know about your pulverized heart but feel like I'm mending from mine." —Dick Landrum)

Dick, I agree . . . when I meet people face to face the verbal interactions with almost all of them are very friendly, very personable. That's the funny thing. When I'm out running around town picking up and delivering food with a descent disposition and cordial manner, 99.99% of the people I encounter reciprocate in kind, even the raving lunatics camped out along the sidewalk. And it feels like, if I had the time, I could have a very interesting and enlightening conversation with most all of them, as long as I don't bring up abortion, guns and immigrants. Though, albeit, the tone, tenor and animation of the convo with the raving lunatic is going to vary widely from the guy wearing the sharp suit pressing the elevator button for the penthouse.

So how do we address that key question around how so many people can be so hoodwinked by the greediness, hatred, and vitriol? What happens to the conversation when we bring up abortion, guns and immigrants, and the myriad of hot-button topics Rupert Murdoch media and shock-jock podcast and radio hosts like Alex Jones prey on? What happens and why? Who are the influencers that shape this thinking and who are the forces behind it?

The framers of the Constitution treated private property as the cornerstone of a free society, because land was the most basic resource, its widespread ownership became the catalyst for the control of colonial economic and political development. Like the caste system in England, James Madison, et al wanted to allow the right to vote exclusively to aristocratic property owners, afraid that the interests of property owners would be overruled by a majority without property. A significant number of our founding fathers did NOT want democracy, but aristocracy. Eventually, the framers of the Constitution left details of voting to the states. Unfortunately, leaving election control to individual states led to unfair voting practices in the U.S. At first, white men with property were the only Americans routinely permitted to vote, and they have been slow to let loose of the reins. Thus in fact, we've never had a democracy, only the dream of one.

Fast forward to the likes of Peter Thiel, a German born-American billionaire entrepreneur, venture capitalist, and political activist. Thiel, a Silicon Valley "disrupter" who helped found PayPal alongside Elon Musk, himself stating as far back as 2009 that he no longer believed democracy to be compatible with freedom and expressed "little hope that voting will make things better". Many experts believe the attack on democracy began long before it became as explicit as Thiel has made it, because the whole point of funneling large amounts of money into the political system is to sway policy away from the will of the majority to the narrow interests of the donors and their friends. Thiel has an authoritarian streak, a longing for a *"more powerful chief executive"*, opining how all organizations – irrespective of size – are best managed by a single executive. Thiel expresses frustration with American democracy, *"America's constitutional machinery prevents any single ambitious person from reconstructing the old Republic."*

Just a taste as to why I sadly find my heart between mortar and pestle grinding away to smithereens. And although no one seems to use it any more, I'd like to give a shout out to the word 'fluke' —as in, it would be a fluke —a surprising piece of luck, if we could turn this boat around.

Peace Out with Love

{Peter Thiel's midterm bet: the billionaire seeking to disrupt America's democracy | Sat 15 Oct 2022
<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2022/oct/15/peter-thiel-who-is-he-republican-donor-tech-entrepreneur> |
Rise of a megadonor: Thiel makes a play for the Senate | 05/17/2021
<https://www.politico.com/news/2021/05/17/peter-thiel-senate-megadonor-488799>}

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Politics: best served as an interactive spectator sport

Speaking of defining broad categories with nebulous labels, all with the same accordion shaped amygdala, among others I've been an Abbie Hoffman *Yippie*, a Charlene Spretnak *Green*, a Jesse Jackson *Democrat*, a Ron Paul *Republican* and a Bernie Sanders *Independent*. Not that my vote counted. Inspired by Charlene Spretnak's "*Green Politics*" I spent a couple years in the 90's at the local, regional and statewide levels helping the Green Party get on the ballot. I once chaired a eight hour plenary session for the *Green Party of California*, which used an exhaustive consensus form of decision making. It taught me that consensus building is an arduous task and the tiniest bit of internal maleficence makes it damn near impossible, making it all too easy for doubt from disinformation to win the day and ulterior motivated players to manipulate, if not outright over turn the results. In the Green Party of California's effort to achieve statewide ballot status in time for the 1992 partisan elections, at the plenary session we hammered out an agreement that we emphatically wanted to grow the party base organically with true believers and would NOT pay to register voters in the party to attain ballot qualification. If we don't reach the required numbers this election cycle, then the next. Within weeks of the conference a large donor put up the money to pay to register voters Green, a point the plenary explicitly ruled out, and soon the party surpassed registrants needed for statewide ballot status. It was a slap in the face awakening for me that no matter how principled or ethically alternatively positioned from mainstream politics, without adequate safe guards to protect itself, human nature will reduce this collective effort to its least common base-acting denominator. For me, it was proof enough that efforts in the political arena were futile. I quit.

I see Politics with a capital C versus politics lower-case as akin the difference between Religion and spiritually. Invariably, when you organize institutions they'll become corrupt, whereas individuals can still regenerate the fresh spirit and trust their intuition to guide them back to wholeness. It's undeniable that there is something, something magnificent going on. To make that fact the center of what you organize around causes the magnificence to fade as players grab for power for powers sake festers. All institutions are inevitably self-corrupting, Don't be loyal to anyone religion. Individuals alone, uncontaminated by the group tumble can maintain the spirit that feeds the magnificence. Act on that! It's best to follow the lead of Groucho Marx and refuse to join any club that has members. Be a free thinker open to truth, willing to be disillusioned, face reality. Listen to others, be alone. Act appropriately, decisively, consistently or surprisingly. Act in concert, form loose confederacies, build alliances with like-minded individuals, don't give away the power you have, amplify those you agree with, be the opposite of Machiavellian—friendly, if not charitable. Flow like water, your eyes on the prize.

{Green Party of California Ballot Status History > <http://www.cagreens.org/history/ballot-status>}

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Center of Experience: Choice in the construction of Self

Stability and balance are intrinsic to the construction industry. It's why we build deep foundations, drive in specific ways up and down hills. Gravity is a force on the earth that draws objects towards its center. This force is what keeps planets orbiting and us from falling off our round planet. It makes balls fall when they are thrown upwards. It is what made the apple fall and hit Newton on the head. *The center of gravity refers to the point in an object where gravity appears to act.* Gravity is always present in an object. When an object is dropped, moved, tilted, shifted or lifted, the center of gravity is what is constantly trying to pull it back to earth. This center is determined by weight, length and width of an object. But the center of gravity for your *Self* is not an object. The center of gravity for your Self plays out of a relational network of environmental and social experience. Your Self *is* experiential learning tried and true intrinsically stable, balanced or not.

Your Self before self-awareness begins with default settings that remain core code. When as a baby you were uncomfortable for any number of reasons—may be a wet nappy, being too hot or cold, gas in their stomach or bowel, hunger, tiredness, feeling anxious or unhappy, or needing company—without reservation you expressed your discomfort with the experience, you didn't hold back. Crying, grunting, or breath-holding. Facial expressions, such as a furrowed brow, a wrinkled forehead, closed eyes, or an angry appearance. If the discomfort was chronic your sleep pattern might change, perhaps waking more often or sleeping more or less than usual, but even children in severe pain may take short naps because they are so tired, exhausted. And there's the rub as you grow into Self-consciousness—when and how, and if to express your discomfort, or your happiness for that matter. As you grow your experiences your social environment will coerce and *'teach'* you all manner of ways of how to express or suppress your comfort and discomfort, and you will integrate these expressions into your ideation of your Self. This is *'how you are,'* you'll think. You become your experiences trained to suit your physical and social environment. If there is a you, you are that interaction, those non-material amorphous interactions. Before you reach self-awareness you are at the mercy, you can only react. As you grow into your own agency you develop choice, primarily the choice not to merely react, but to respond, or not, from your own ever evolving center of gravity. *'The center of gravity refers to the point in an object where gravity appears to act'* is also true for a subject, a subject such as your ever evolving Self.

{FOUND: *What the Center of Gravity Is & Why it Matters in Construction* > <https://dozr.com/blog/center-of-gravity-in-construction> | *Crying and Unsettled Babies* > https://emed.ie/Patient-Info/Info_Crying_Baby.php | *Signs of Pain in a Child: Care Instructions* > <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/aftercareinformation/pages/conditions.aspx>}

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Relational Shift {FOUND: Charlene Spretnak}

Relational Reality reveals the coherence among numerous surprising discoveries of the interrelated nature of reality, most of which were made since the mid-2000s. Kindred discoveries in the 20th century in physics, chaos theory, and complexity studies did not effect widespread change in our systems of knowledge and our institutions, perhaps because most people considered them too abstract to be relevant, but the new wave of discoveries are very concrete and accessible (many are in human physiology). The applications of these recent and unexpected findings about dynamic interrelatedness as the way of the world are now transforming every mainstream field of human endeavor. All our basic assumptions (built on the old idea that everything in the physical world is essentially separate and functions mechanistically) are being reconsidered. No longer a marginal perspective, the *Relational Shift* is based on the realization that all entities in this world, including humans, are thoroughly relational beings of great complexity that are both composed of and nested within networks of creative, dynamic interrelationships. Nothing exists outside of those relationships. As we try to grasp the interrelated nature of reality, emergent relational approaches are already transforming the way we educate our children, attend to our health, design our hospitals, green our communities, and rethink economic activity. New analyses of the crises of modernity and abundant new solutions are the result.

Charlene Spretnak (born January 30, 1946) is an American author who has written nine books on cultural history, social criticism (including feminism and Green politics), religion and spirituality, and art. Throughout her life as a writer, speaker, and activist, she has been intrigued with dynamic interrelatedness, which plays a central role in each subject to which she has been drawn. She is particularly interested in 21st-century discoveries indicating that the physical world, including the human body-mind, is far more dynamically interrelated with nature and other people than modernity had assumed. Several of her books also proposed a "map of the terrain" of emergent social-change movements and an exploration of the issues involved. She has helped to create an eco-social frame of reference and vision in the areas of social criticism (including feminism and ecofeminism cultural history, critique of technology, and women's spirituality. Since the mid-1980s, Spretnak's books have examined the multiple crises of modernity and furthered the corrective efforts that are arising. Her book *Green Politics* (1984) was a major catalyst for the formation of the U.S. Green Party movement, which she cofounded in the months following its publication. Her essay *A View from the Chute* (2018) proposes a possible new approach in talking to climate-change deniers about climate-change action.

{**Relational Reality**: Charlene Spretnak at TEDxManhattanBeach > https://youtu.be/LzyDS19OH_o | **Charlene Spretnak: Relational Reality** > https://www.charlenspretnak.com/relational_reality_116771.htm | https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlene_Spretnak | *A View from the Chute* > <https://feminismandreligion.com/2018/02/21/a-view-from-the-chute-by-charlene-spretnak/>}

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The more distance you get from miserable road trips the better they look. Akin to 'big fish that got away' stories. Even when I'm not with you, you're within me, jiggling magically in my breast pocket. I feel you as love.

No distance.

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On Friday, November 18, 2022 at 12:01:56 PM PST, Dick Landrum wrote:

Thanks, again, Dan. Your second paragraph is so poetic in its message... a good read for all. And on the earlier email referencing Peter Thiel, it really boils down to the need to overturn Citizens United and leaving democracy to the actual individual... please.

From: Dan Landrum To: Beppy Owen; Dick Landrum
Sent: Friday, November 18, 2022 12:46 PM

Dick-- Yes, the landmark Citizens United decision opened the flood gates by seeing groups, corporations and other associations as citizens worthy of free speech the same as flesh and blood individuals and prohibiting the government from restricting independent campaign finance expenditures for political campaigns by corporations, further allowing

the contributions to be non-accountable anonymous 'dark money'. Such a blatant farce—even an imbecile can see a corporation is NOT a person! Let's just start there.

The 2010 contemporaneous dissenting opinion by Justice Stevens was telling. Joined by Justice Ginsburg, Justice Breyer, and Justice Sotomayor they argued, "A democracy cannot function effectively when its constituent members believe laws are being bought and sold." And pointed out that the court addressed a question not raised by the litigants and "changed the case to give themselves an opportunity to change the law". Thus the court's ruling "threatens to undermine the integrity of elected institutions across the Nation. The path it has taken to reach its outcome will, I fear, do damage to this institution." Boy did it ever, 'do damage to this institution.' The downhill slide is only accelerating. Yet another banana republic boat heading in the wrong direction with no one at the helm. --Dan

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Speaking of big money in governmental politics . . .

ON A PERSONAL NOTE: the wealth generated from DuPont and General Motors stock was the prime basis of the inheritance passed on to me by my mother on 12/12/21. Even at a tender age I recall the disruptive feeling when the Supreme Court ordered DuPont to divest itself of GM stock in 1957. Jump to Apr 11, 2019 Forbes magazine: "*America Has A Monopoly Problem, "Without realizing it, we've become a nation of monopolies. A large and growing part of our economy is "owned" by a handful of companies that face little competition.*"

In 1915, Pierre S. du Pont (January 15, 1870 – April 4, 1954) was elected a director of General Motors where he was a significant figure in the success of the company and was noted for building a sizeable personal investment in the company as well as supporting John J. Raskob's proposal for DuPont to invest in the automobile company. In 1920, he became president of General Motors succeeding William C. Durant, and serving until his resignation in 1923, when he was succeeded by Alfred P. Sloan Jr. **Pierre du Pont resigned the chairmanship of GM in response to GM President Alfred Sloan's dispute with Raskob over Raskob's involvement with the Democratic National Committee.** When du Pont retired from its board of directors, GM was the largest company in the world.

In 2009, based on Obama's *Presidential Task Force on the Auto Industry's* assessment that automobile manufacturing was a critical sector of the economy, liquidation was imminent and the break up would devastate the U.S. economy, the U.S. government became involved and spent \$50 billion to bail out GM.

{**Pierre S. Du Pont and the Making of the Modern Corporation** by Alfred Dupont Chandler, Stephen Salisbury, Adeline Cook Strange, 1971. *This meticulously researched biography demonstrates specifically and clearly why Pierre S. du Pont, head of the Du Pont Company and later of General Motors, is justly considered one of the great pioneers in the organizing and managing of large corporations* > https://books.google.com/books/about/Pierre_S_Du_Pont_and_the_Making_of_the_M.html | Pierre gave the DuPont company a modern management structure and modern accounting policies and made the concept of return on investment primary. **During World War I, the company grew very quickly due to advance payments on Allied munition contracts--the largest American munitions producer during World War I.** He also established many other DuPont interests in other industries. > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_S._du_Pont | **John Jakob Raskob** (1879-1950) was a financial executive and businessman for DuPont and General Motors, and the builder of the Empire State Building. He was chairman of the Democratic National Committee and a key supporter of Alfred E. Smith's candidacy for President of the United States. After Franklin D. Roosevelt became President, Raskob was a prominent opponent of the New Deal through his support of a number of anti-Roosevelt organizations including the American Liberty League. Raskob was also a leader in the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment. > https://www.chemeurope.com/en/encyclopedia/John_J._Raskob.html }

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Chairmen of the Board of General Motors

- Pierre S. du Pont—November 16, 1915 – February 7, 1929
- Lamot du Pont II—February 7, 1929 – May 3, 1937 (Lamot, Pierre's younger brother by 10 years was the head of the du Pont family's E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company for 22 years.)

General Motors & The Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890: By 1900, William C. Durant's Durant-Dort Carriage Company of Flint, Michigan had become the largest manufacturer of horse-drawn vehicles in the United States. Durant was averse to automobiles, but fellow Flint businessman James H. Whiting, owner of Flint Wagon Works, sold him the Buick Motor Company in 1904. Durant formed the General Motors Company in 1908 as a holding company, with partner Charles Stewart Mott, borrowing a naming convention from General Electric. Under Durant, GM went on to acquire Cadillac,

Elmore, Welch, Cartercar, Oakland (the predecessor of Pontiac), the Reliance Motor Truck Company of Owosso, Michigan, and the Rapid Motor Vehicle Company of Pontiac, Michigan (predecessors of GMC) in 1909. Durant, with the board's approval, also tried acquiring Ford Motor Company but needed an additional \$2 million. Durant over-leveraged GM in making these acquisitions, and was removed by the board of directors in 1910 at the order of the bankers who backed the loans to keep GM in business. The action of the bankers was partially influenced by *the Panic of 1910–1911* that followed the earlier enforcement of the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890.

[The Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890 is an antitrust law which prescribes the rule of free competition among those engaged in commerce. It was passed by Congress and is named for Senator John Sherman, its principal author. Teddy Roosevelt (President from 1901 –1909) told Congress he opposed banning monopolies. Instead, **Roosevelt preferred that the federal government "assume power of supervision and regulation over all corporations doing an interstate business."**]

{**America Has A Monopoly Problem**, "*Without realizing it, we've become a nation of monopolies. A large and growing part of our economy is "owned" by a handful of companies that face little competition.*" > <https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnmauldin/2019/04/11/america-has-a-monopoly-problem/> | **Monopoly by the Numbers** > "*The fruits of economic growth are being hoarded by America's profitable corporate giants, who face negligible competition.*" > <https://www.openmarketsinstitute.org/learn/monopoly-by-the-numbers>}

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Chairmen of the Board of General Motors: Pierre S. du Pont—November 16, 1915 – February 7, 1929

GM was reincorporated in Detroit in 1916 as General Motors Corporation and became a public company via an initial public offering. By 1917, Chevrolet had become successful enough that Durant, with the backing of Samuel McLaughlin and Pierre S. du Pont, reacquired a controlling interest in GM. The same year, GM acquired Samson Tractor. Chevrolet Motor Company was consolidated into GM on May 2, 1918, and the same year GM acquired United Motors, a parts supplier founded by Durant and headed by Alfred P. Sloan for \$45 million, and the McLaughlin Motor Car Company, founded by R. S. McLaughlin, became General Motors of Canada Limited. In 1919, GM acquired Guardian Frigerator Company, part-owned by Durant, which was renamed Frigidaire. With this acquisition, the General Motors Acceptance Corporation (GMAC), which provides financing to automotive customers, was formed.

In 1920, du Pont orchestrated the removal of Durant once again and replaced him with Alfred P. Sloan. At a time when GM was competing heavily with Ford Motor Company, Sloan established annual model changes, making previous years' models "dated" and created a market for used cars. He also implemented the pricing strategy used by all car companies today. The pricing strategy had Chevrolet, Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Buick, and Cadillac priced from least expensive to most, respectively.

In 1926, the company introduced the Pontiac brand and established the General Motors Group Insurance Program to provide life insurance to its employees. The following year, after the success of the 1927 model of the Cadillac LaSalle designed by Harley Earl, Sloan created the "Art and Color Section" of GM and named Earl as its first director. Earl was the first design executive to be appointed to leadership at a major American corporation. Earl created a system of automobile design that is still practiced today. At the age of 24, Bill Mitchell was recruited by Harley Earl to the design team at GM, and he was later appointed as Chief Designer of Cadillac. After Earl retired in December 1958, Mitchell took over automotive design for GM. In 1929 GM acquired 80% of Opel, which at that time had a 37.5% market share in Europe, for \$26 million. It acquired the remaining 20% in 1931.

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Chairmen of the Board of General Motors: Lamot du Pont II—February 7, 1929 – May 3, 1937

The GM labor force participated in the formation of the United Auto Workers labor union in 1935, and in 1936 the UAW organized the Flint Sit-Down Strike, which initially idled two key plants in Flint, Michigan, and later spread to 6 other plants including those in Janesville, Wisconsin and Fort Wayne, Indiana. In Flint, police attempted to enter the plant to arrest strikers, leading to violence; in other cities, the plants were shuttered peacefully. The strike was resolved on February 11, 1937, when GM recognized the UAW as the exclusive bargaining representative for its workers and gave workers a 5% raise **and permission to speak in the lunchroom.**

{**Supreme Court orders DuPont to divest itself of GM stock**, June 3, 1957: "*On this day [06/03/2018] in 1957, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Co., a major chemical company, to divest itself of its 23 percent stock holding in General Motors Co. The shares, it said, interfered with the free flow of commerce. From 1917 to 1919, DuPont invested \$50 million in GM, becoming*

the automaker's largest stockholder. Pierre S. du Pont, the chemical firm's president, served as GM's president from 1920 to 1923 and chaired GM's board from 1923 to 1929. GM had surpassed Ford Motor Co. as the nation's largest car manufacturer." >
<https://www.politico.com/story/2018/06/03/supreme-court-order-du-pont-divest-itself-of-gm-stock-june-3-1957-615544> }

{211223}

Why I prefer to receive my portion of the Mutual Funds that our Grandmother set up for us in cash, even knowing the benefit to not taking the cash option is to stave off paying the capital gains immediately.

"Does person 7 fully understand they can take their portion of the Mutual Funds and cash them out, keeping the other 6 with their preference? That way, everyone can decide to cash them out at their own convenience."

I very much like that you refer to me as "person 7." In 'White People' Allan Gurganus writes, "Without much accuracy, with strangely little love at all, your family will decide for you exactly who you are, and they'll keep nudging, coaxing, poking you until you've changed into that very simple shape." I'm thrilled that you have given me a new shape. Especially as 7 is my current favorite number.

My preference centers around two main issues: simplicity and morality, but mostly simplicity.

On Christmas Day 2021 I got a CT scan of my head, finally getting definite proof that I have a brain. The irony for me is, now that I am losing my mind, my short-term memory and ensuing cognitive functions, and am reduced to a 'do the next thing' decision making operating system, I find vastly more peace, more calm, more certainty. One of the cognitive functions I'm rapidly losing is the ability to retain enough in memory to deal with complex problem solving or dense associative concepts.

It is an increasing struggle for me to pay my relatively simple self-employment tax, I can't image being about to handle the complexity of accounting for capital gains on so many different stocks. And if we did receive the stock in kind, how would it come? Would it already be placed with a brokerage? Could I sell all the stocks with only one transaction fee, or would there be a fee on each stock transaction separately. I just looked at Sun Trust's transaction details through 12/31/20, and my eyes glazed over and my mind froze. The learning curve for addressing these and related questions is very daunting for me, not how I want to spend my precious time, so I'd likely have to find an expert I trusted to help, another unwanted learning curve.

If there is one thing mom's little experiment of having us manage investments for each other, way back when, taught me, it is that I never want to have the anxiety of bobbing up and down with the ebbs & flow of the stock market again. So, I'd want to get out ASAP, and for me the simplest, most expedient path to that, my dear, is cash. Take the money and run. And then there is the whole privileged legacy morality question. I know this is sticky wickets, and it could be just me, the ole hippy infused 'let's right our generational wrong' thing, but still, it sticks in my craw.

The inequality of capital gains. Capital gains and how it is taxed differently from ordinary income is why Steve Jobs and Elon Musk didn't/don't take a salary, but were/are paid in stock. Is a significant tool allowing oligarchs to have an outsized influence in diluting democracy. It's a gross way for the rich not to pay their fair share and sink the wealth in a treasure hole to the detriment of the poor. The 'woke' realization of the is why, "The near-doubling of the capital gains tax on wealthy Americans is a centerpiece of United States President Joe Biden's \$1.8 trillion American Families Plan. Biden described the proposal as "fiscally responsible" and added that the wealthiest Americans will "pay their fair share". I could climb higher on my soapbox with the progressives, "In an era of profound inequality, few issues illustrate such stark differences in economic priorities as capital gains taxes. Capital gains accrue overwhelmingly to the wealthy and receive favorable tax treatment in several ways. Cutting capital gains taxes would confer another windfall on the wealthy, exacerbate the tax preference for income from wealth over income from work, increase inequality, and drain revenue. By contrast, raising capital gains taxes and closing loopholes would make the wealthy pay more of their fair share, lessen tax code disparities, reduce inequality, and raise substantial revenue for the country."

So my blah, blah, blah, selfish ineptitude and high & mighty proselytizing aside, the Libra in me feels that cashing out, knowing clearly we all got the same 'thing' -- none of this stripe for stripe business, just has the ring of no revisited pointed questions asked down the road.

{Will raising the US capital gains tax help tackle inequality? > <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/4/29/will-raising-the-us-capital-gains-tax-help-tackle-inequality> | Capital Gains Tax Preference Should Be Ended, Not Expanded > <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/capital-gains-tax-preference-ended-not-expanded/> }

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I don't need a plan. Reality is relational.

I just need to follow the thread and it'll inevitably unravel the whole story in all its splendiferous awful awesome detail.

For Bateson (1972), *relational reality* is a central concept.

He posited that the understanding and shaping of relationships is the most central and enveloping human interest.

{Gregory Bateson (May 09, 1904 - July 04, 1980) This English born anthropologist, once married to Margaret Mead, contributed to the double bind theory of the etiology of schizophrenia. "Relational Reality" definition extracted from Family Process, Inc.

<https://www.familyprocess.org/> : *Language of Family Therapy: A Systemic Vocabulary and Source Book*}

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All in on final Jeopardy at the Tournament of Champions 2022! I'm warming up to Ken Jennings' generous and magnanimous moderator style, though usually his nerdily awkward sense of humor makes my eyes roll up into the back of my head. I'm pulling for Sam Buttery in tonight's match. Sweet guy. Besides I'd like to see a seventh game, a '*this is it*' final showdown would be thrilling. More interested in an exceptional game than who wins it. Rare to see such equally matched intellects of this caliber. I'm rooting pretty equally for all three, but more for whoever's the underdog at any given moment. The runaway attempts of big wagers on the Daily Doubles is one thing, but more I'm impressed with the apparent calm of Andrew He taking his time to be sure of his answers before he speaks. Cool under fire. Even more impressive is that, along with Amy Schneider, all 3 finalists represent such distinct cultural slices of the American melting pot, and that even though it's a competition at the highest level, they all 'play nice,' authentically, even heartfully, applauding each other's successes.

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{221123}

SEE: I Recognize Reckoning, I so melancholy ache (220725)

Thanks Dick, that clears up a lot. On one hand it helps put in place that nebulous underlying feeling from an early age that we should 'hide' (ipso facto be ashamed?) of our heritage. And on the other it gives me a sense of how social conspiracy theories can get distorted and thrive, which in turn surprisingly gives me something of an appreciation for how conspiracy theories emerge on the internet and now for the first time can be confronted in real time.

What a world, hey?

(Pre-script: I know I have a tendency in my zeal to over write TMI, too much information. I just love to follow the threads and share my modest findings. The other day I showed Carol a longish piece, to which she said, "I hope you didn't send this to Dick." Implying that I was over burdening you with too much random detail. Let me know if you feel it is so, and I'll work on moderating myself. Cheers!)

" . . some people blamed US entry into some war (can't remember which) on the DuPonts . . "

My take: It was most likely WW1, for which, Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles "placed all the blame for starting the war on Germany and its allies." But it gets complicated as to the U.S. motives for entering the war. Two years before the U.S. entered the war, DuPont was "supplying the European Allies (and later the U.S. Army) with high-powered explosives for artillery shells, manufacturing up to 40% of the munitions used by the Allies over the course of the war." Antiwar critics blasted powerful political players like J. P. Morgan and Senator Henry S. DuPont who had millions at risk for promoting "profiteering munitions makers (like Bethlehem Steel, which made armor, and DuPont, which made powder) and unspecified industrialists searching for global markets to control." As we can only imagine, politics in that era was extraordinarily mixed and messy. It's a fascinating pivotal point in history catapulting the world into the Industry Age at the unprecedented expense of natural resources, destruction, and animal life and human suffering.

(A slight aside addressing the conspiracy theories that 'DuPont Sold Black Powder to the Confederacy During the American Civil War,' Hagley.org says, "The answer: Absolutely not!")

Bringing some of the culpability of DuPont Co history more up-to-date: I was under the impression that the family was out of the management of the company years ago until I watched the 2019 American legal thriller, **Dark Waters**. Based on the 2016 New York Times Magazine article "*The Lawyer Who Became DuPont's Worst Nightmare*" by Nathaniel Rich. The story dramatizes the case "against the chemical manufacturing corporation DuPont after they contaminated a town and their own workers with unregulated PFOA chemicals." PFOA is perfluorooctanoic acid, used to manufacture Teflon and used in American homes for nonstick frying pans and carpet flooring. DuPont had been running tests of the effect of PFOA for decades, finding that it causes cancer and birth defects, but did not make the findings public. PFOA and similar compounds are forever chemicals, chemicals that do not leave the blood stream and slowly accumulate. DuPont dumped thousands of tons of toxic sludge in a landfill next to Wilbur Tennant's farm in Parkersburg, West Virginia. I was sad to learn, cousin Eleuthere I. du Pont sits on DuPont's board of directors and was complicit in the cover-up and the attack on Wilbur Tennant's efforts to clear up the nightmare.

Again, what a world, huh?

Towards understanding the good, the bad, and the ugly,
Dan

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{NOTES}

Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Article_231_of_the_Treaty_of_Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles, signed following World War I, contained Article 231, commonly known as the "war guilt clause," which placed all the blame for starting the war on Germany and its allies.

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American entry into World War I

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_entry_into_World_War_I

The Democratic party saw the Preparedness movement as a threat. Roosevelt, Root and Wood were prospective Republican presidential candidates. More subtly, the Democrats were rooted in localism that appreciated the National Guard, and the voters were hostile to the rich and powerful in the first place. Working with the Democrats who controlled Congress, Wilson was able to sidetrack the Preparedness forces. Army and Navy leaders were forced to testify before Congress to the effect that the nation's military was in excellent shape.

In fact, neither the Army nor Navy was in shape for war. The Navy had fine ships but Wilson had been using them to threaten Mexico, and the fleet's readiness had suffered. The crews of the Texas and the New York, the two newest and largest battleships, had never fired a gun, and the morale of the sailors was low. In addition, it was outnumbered and outgunned when compared to the British and German navies. The Army and Navy air forces were tiny in size. Despite the flood of new weapons systems created by the British, Germans, French, Austro-Hungarians, Italians, and others in the war in Europe, the Army was paying scant attention. For example, it was making no studies of trench warfare, poison gas, heavy artillery, or tanks and was utterly unfamiliar with the rapid evolution of aerial warfare. The Democrats in Congress tried to cut the military budget in 1915. The Preparedness movement effectively exploited the surge of outrage over the Lusitania in May 1915, forcing the Democrats to promise some improvements to the military and naval forces. Wilson, less fearful of the Navy, embraced a long-term building program designed to make the fleet the equal of the Royal Navy by the mid-1920s, although this would not be achieved until World War II. "Realism" was at work here; the admirals were Mahanians and they therefore wanted a surface fleet of heavy battleships second to none—that is, equal to Britain. The facts of submarine warfare (which necessitated destroyers, not battleships) and the possibilities of imminent war with Germany (or with Britain, for that matter), were simply ignored.

Wilson's program for the Army touched off a firestorm. Secretary of War Lindley Garrison adopted many of the proposals of the Preparedness leaders, especially their emphasis on a large federal reserve and abandonment of the National Guard. Garrison's proposals not only outraged the localistic politicians of both parties, they also offended a strongly held belief shared by the liberal wing of the Progressive movement. They felt that warfare always had a hidden economic motivation. Specifically, they warned the chief warmongers were New York bankers (like J. P. Morgan) with millions at risk, profiteering munition makers (like Bethlehem Steel, which made armor, and DuPont, which made powder) and unspecified industrialists searching for global markets to control. Antiwar critics blasted them. These special interests were too powerful, especially, Senator La Follette noted, in the conservative wing of the Republican Party. The only road to peace was disarmament, reiterated Bryan.

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World War I Centennial: Breaking Up DuPont

<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/30916/world-war-i-centennial-breaking-dupont>

By Erik Sass | Jun 13, 2012

Another high-profile case from this period, all the more sensational because it involved national security, concerned E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., which owned the DuPont Powder Company – the nation's largest manufacturer of gunpowder and explosives, including all the gunpowder used by the U.S. military. DuPont owned some 40 gunpowder and explosives plants around the U.S., putting it in a position to dominate its smaller competitors. Rather than simply crush their rivals, however, the DuPont family realized it would be wiser to cooperate with them behind the scenes, forming an industry organization, the Gunpowder Trade Association, for that purpose in 1872.

In 1906 Robert S. Waddell, a former sales agent for DuPont Powder Company, launched a crusade against his former employer, alleging that DuPont was colluding with its competitors to reap huge profits by restraining competition and price-fixing. According to Waddell -- who not coincidentally had founded his own powder company to compete with DuPont -- the "Powder Trust" was bilking the U.S. government to the tune of \$2,520,000 a year in illegal profits through its monopoly on the manufacture of gunpowder for the military. Waddell further alleged that the company was relying on the protection of a powerful member of the DuPont family, Senator Henry S. DuPont, to get away with it.

Nor were these charges unsubstantiated. Waddell was able to produce letters, price agreements, and internal documents from his time with DuPont showing how it worked together with other companies in the GTA to restrict competition and keep prices high. Presented with this evidence, on July 31, 1907, the U.S. Department of Justice charged DuPont and the other powder companies in the Gunpowder Trade Association with "maintaining an unlawful combination in restraint of interstate commerce" in violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.

Break It Up: After almost five years of legal wrangling, on June 13, 1912, the District Court of the United States for Delaware ordered that the DuPont Powder Company be broken up as part of the dissolution of the Powder Trust. The court decreed the formation of two new companies, Hercules Powder Company and Atlas Powder Company, which would receive some of DuPont's assets in order to become effective competitors. However, as with other anti-trust decisions, the outcome was less dramatic than it looked, as the companies were still effectively controlled by DuPont through back channels.

Moreover, DuPont itself got to keep its monopoly on the manufacture of gunpowder for the U.S. military – supposedly the object of the anti-trust action in the first place. The company would go on to make a fortune during the Great War by supplying the European Allies and later the U.S. Army with high-powered explosives for artillery shells, manufacturing up to 40% of the munitions used by the Allies over the course of the war. DuPont's revenues from the sale of powder and explosives soared from \$25 million in 1914 to \$319 million by 1918, totaling an astonishing \$1.245 billion in this five-year period.

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Pierre Samuel du Pont: American industrialist

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Pierre-Samuel-du-Pont-American-industrialist>

Pierre Samuel du Pont, (born January 15, 1870, Wilmington, Delaware, U.S.—died April 5, 1954, Wilmington), manufacturer and the largest American munitions producer during World War I.

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Last night I watched the 2019 movie *Dark Waters*, which was based on the 2016 New York Times article "The Lawyer Who Became DuPont's Worst Nightmare", telling the story of DuPont de Nemours' hideous knowing callous deceit poisoning the world and their own employees in the chase for outrageous fortune developing 'forever chemicals' for products such as Teflon and scotch guard. Is this my family!? Is my DuPont lineage still involved in the same named company? In 2017, DuPont merged with competitor Dow Chemical, then split into three companies -- DuPont, Dow and Corteva -- in 2019. Eleuthere I. du Pont sits on DuPont's board of directors. Is this the basis of my inheritance? Makes me wonder, can I disavow my heritage? Of course I can't. Our inhumane history can't be reconciled. Only grieved, remembered. Corrections can only mindfully, heartfully be made going forward. Thank you, dear heart for sharing the pain. It's too much for me alone.

{*Dark Waters* (2019 film) > [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Waters_\(2019_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Waters_(2019_film))}

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"Honk if you don't exist," says the bumper sticker.
Thing is, the part of me that wants to honk doesn't exist.

.....

The day before Thanksgiving *"Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas"* plays over the shopping mall sound system.

I wonder where are the Thanksgiving songs?

Maybe even The Beatles' *"Wild Honey Pie"* . . . something.

Cal Smith's *"Country Bumpkin"*, Carrie Underwood's *"Stretchy Pants"* . . . anything?

.....

Energy schmenergy. Feng Shui is whatever my wife says it is.

No use arguing, . . . move the damn mirror. As the public face of an artist, my success was that I dared to fail . . . and I did. As a person there is no such dichotomy. I couldn't help but be who I am.

.....

Competition is a lame organizing principle, one leg will always be shorter than the other.

Whereas graceful cooperation invariably works towards perfecting a smooth and easy stride.

Then again, not as entertaining—all movies and TV shows are based around some kind of inherent conflict.

Squeaky wheel gets the audience. Oct 16, 2020 the Daily News headline reads, *"Limping marathoner gets assist from work release prisoner."* More of human interest that the guy who won the race? To my point, competition is lame.

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In the brisk Autumn morning air

I wanted to squeeze the crows too hard in admiration.

.....

The vast majority of people are vastly more intelligent than the work they do to make a living.

Therein lies the rub.

{SEE: **Lowell Mill Girls** [Factory Girls Association] > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lowell_mill_girls}

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The war with words isn't won with logic or reason as much as tone. The primary tone of the trolls, shock jocks and political provocateurs is derisive fed outrage, the voice of the victim. These boisterous victims are thieves. Derisively cutting remarks are invariably at the other's expense with the aim of riling up conflict and discontent. The main aim of the Thief-Bully's prattle is the shake you down for lunch money—'*subscribe, donate here, buy these magic potions, you're not enough without being one of us*'. Comedians, on the other hand, are the flip side of Thief-bullies. Comedy deals with emotional conflict stressors by emphasizing the amusing or ironic aspects of the conflict stressors themselves. Humor tends to relieve the tension around conflict in a way that allows everyone to share in it, rather than inventing an

enemy <insert name here> to scapegoat. Beware, listen to the tone first . . . don't buy into the raucous noise of the swindle Swag vendors when you can be listening to the dulcet sounds of your own One Love inner sacred cosmic funny.
.....

Frosting a 'Good' Neighbor while taking out the trash cans

After thirty years our plastic city issued trash cans were too beat up, dilapidated. I put them out by the curb for the city's environmental services department to pick up and deliver new ones as scheduled. Across the street a nosy neighbor walking his dog called out, "*It's not the day for trash collection!*" I've had plenty of such '*none of your business*' run-ins and trespasses with this guy over the years. I do my best to ignore him. What I didn't say was, 'Reread that poet would talked about good fences making good neighbors, will ya? It's quite apparent your abundant neediness causes you to over reach to where you don't belong, thinking you're helping when you're not. Grow some boundaries, will ya? Things may not be as they appear. There's always going to be things you'll not know about. Don't assume otherwise. Until I've been certified to the contrary, trust that I know what I'm doing. Butt out!'

That's what I didn't say. What I did do, being a good neighbor, was wave him off with a wisp of my hand like a pesky fly.
.....

Best served as a made for TV mini-series, I can imagine pitching Tom Hanks or someone of his cinematic acumen producing the bio-pic saga of a truly epic American story: the du Pont family centering around Pierre S. du Pont (January 15, 1870 – April 4, 1954). The story unfolds as, following graduation from MIT with a degree in chemistry in 1890, Pierre Samuel became assistant superintendent at Eleutherian Mills on the Brandywine River.

SCENE ONE: Opening in 1902 when Pierre and his first cousins Alfred I. du Pont and T. Coleman du Pont wrestled E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company from the old guard (who had never taken a full inventory, didn't know what they had) after the death of its president, Eugene I. du Pont and began to bring it forward into modernity. The cousins set about buying smaller powder firms. Until 1914, during Coleman du Pont's illness, Pierre du Pont served as treasurer, executive vice-president, and acting president. In 1915, a group headed by Pierre, which included outsiders, bought Coleman's stock. Alfred was offended and sued Pierre for breach of trust. The case was settled in Pierre's favor four years later, but his relationship with Alfred suffered greatly, and they did not speak after that. Pierre, a bachelor until age 45, on October 16, 1915, after the death of his mother, married his first cousin Alice Belin.

Flash back to Pierre's great-great-grandfather, and namesake Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours, an ennobled French economist fleeing a mob during the French Reign of Terror and immigrating to America with relatives including his son, Eleuthère Irénée du Pont, who founded the the gunpowder manufacturer E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company in 1802.

Pierre Samuel initially supported the French Revolution and served as president of the National Constituent Assembly. Still, He and his son Eleuthère were among those who physically defended Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette from a mob besieging the Tuileries Palace in Paris during the insurrection of 10 August 1792. Condemned to the guillotine during the Reign of Terror, du Pont was awaiting execution when Robespierre fell on 9 thermidor an IV (27 July 1794), and he was spared. After du Pont's house was sacked by a mob during the events of 18 Fructidor V (4 September 1797), he, his sons and their families immigrated to the United States in 1799.

With minor nods to du Pont de Nemours and Co's contributions to the War of 1812 and the Union during The American War, *JUMP FORWARD* to the Old Hickory DuPont Gunpowder Plant located at a bend in the Cumberland River near Nashville, Tennessee when in February 1918, DuPont built and operated the plant, under contract for the United States government, to manufacture smokeless gunpowder for the Allied World War I effort. Workers cleared land, "macadamized" roads, and laid miles of train track. On March 4, 1918, workers broke ground for the plant and by July 2, 1918, powder was being manufactured in record time. The Old Hickory gunpowder plant was the largest munitions plant in the world at the time of operation, 1918-1919, occupying some 4,700 acres and producing half a million pounds of powder a day. Moreover, the refrigeration section of the plant, which at the time was the largest of its kind anywhere in the world, had the capacity to make 3.2 million pounds of ice every 24 hours; an amount "sufficient to supply a city of 1 million people." Simply put, the Old Hickory gunpowder plant was a massive operation, which significantly transformed the mid-Tennessee region.

Take a slight step back to 1915 when Pierre Samuel Du Pont was elected a director of General Motors, where he began his odyssey as a significant figure in transforming the company into the first modern corporation. When du Pont retired from its board of directors in 1923, GM was the largest company in the world. NOTE: Pierre S. du Pont on the cover of TIME Magazine, January 31, 1927. Pierre retired from DuPont's board in 1940. He also served on the Delaware State Board of Education and donated millions to Delaware's public schools, financing the replacement of Delaware's dilapidated Negro schools. In 1943, his genealogical research book, *Genealogy of the Du Pont family, 1739–1942*, was published.

End the TV mini series with the fireworks display closing the 2000 DuPont Family Reunion bicentennial celebration of 200 years of the du Pont family in America at the showcase event held on Pierre Samuel's estate of Longwood Gardens overlooking the Brandywine Creek just north of Wilmington, Delaware. More than 3,500 living relatives were invited.

{Old Hickory Gunpowder Plant > <https://tslablog.blogspot.com/2018/08/old-hickory-gunpowder-plant.html> | Hagley Museum & Library > <https://www.hagley.org/> | Celebrating 200 Years: Du Pont Family Portraits > <https://tfaoi.org/aa/2aa/2aa4.htm> | 2000 - Two Hundred in Two Thousand (A DuPont Family Reunion) > <https://www.abebooks.com/2000-Two-Hundred-Thousand-DuPont-Family/30944393348/bd> | 1870-1954: Pierre S. du Pont > <https://longwoodgardens.org/history/1870-1954>}

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Is it busy today? Traffic's light, restaurants are slow.

If my customers are staying in, they're ordering out.

Leaving less traffic for me when I'm out and about.

Then again it's the Monday after Thanksgiving,

and apparently everyone has leftovers.

So I wait. No, it's not busy.

.....

My wife takes her sweet time in living her life. Something I very much enjoy, except when I have something I have to do more than I want to do it.

.....

It's imperative to be enmeshed in the social fabric larger than your home and family. Choose your cloth wisely.

.....

True, authoritarian regimes tend to have a flagrant disregard for the welfare of their workers, but here Qatar appears to be particularly brutal in the desert sun to its foreign labor building stadiums for the World Cup. We can only guess how the Chinese city of Wuhan was able to complete a 1,000 bed hospital in only six days in order to treat patients suspected of contracting the coronavirus at the outbreak of the pandemic. The efficiency of this kind of top down bureaucratic mobilization is what Peter Thiel et al are single mindedly perusing. I'd call it psychopathic. But then is today's single minded psychopath tomorrow's world dominate despot? All this only underscores the importance of supporting the people in Ukraine, and anywhere else, who are desperate to form democratic rule, even it takes a little longer to rebuild the bridges demolished in the struggle to get there. It's extremely hard and futile for the individual, particularly the individual soldier, to resist authoritarian regimes, which is why it's all the more important for you and me and *'we the people'* to question authority, not timidly follow orders, but work to form a more just social order for who decides. As Buffy Sainte-Marie sang in her 1963 song *"Universal Soldier"*:

He's the Universal Soldier and he really is to blame

His orders come from far away no more

They come from here and there and you and me

And brothers, can't you see?

This is not the way we put the end to war

Here's to lighting a fire under the protests in Iran following the death of Mahsa Amini for not wearing her hijab correctly, and the COVID lockdown protests in China, and the protests in the Democratic Republic of Congo denouncing Rwanda's alleged support for the M23 rebels, and, and . . .

But then as I rant am I ranting into the open air? Is this human nature playing? Playing as it does.

"What Made my Mother": The Discovery Doctrine and Why my Father Lied

From a child's perspective I sensed my mother hugely adored the memories of her father. She admired and respected her mother, Elizabeth Gardner DuPont Huidekoper (1889-1973), but she adored her father, Reginald Shippen Huidekoper (1876-1943), like no other—a man, beyond the mythic stories my mother told, I never had the privilege to meet in person. I recall, probably around 1964 or 65, going on a family outing, just our family of mom, dad and 7 kids, to help clean up an abandoned church property, and put up the flag pole for what would become one of the first of two Boys Club in Broward County. Decades later when mom was being inducted into The Broward County Women's Hall Of Fame, the Fort Lauderdale *Sun Sentinel* reported, "Once a male domain, the Boys Clubs of Broward County became the Boys and Girls Clubs, thanks to the efforts of Elizabeth Landrum Clark. Clark led the drive in the 1980s to include girls in the clubs, which target children and teens at risk in low income or high crime neighborhoods." True to her kind, my mother did good in the world. Her persistent mottos of those times were '*share the wealth*' and '*the more the merrier*'. As a young woman, granny, the daughter of A.I. du Pont, "a Victorian man" was a ballerina. She was invited to dance with a troupe in the inaugural celebration opening the Panama Canal. Her father forbade it. As I knew her, granny exemplified the du Pont family motto, *Rectitudine Sto* (latin for 'Stand upright') and faithfully adhered to the commonly held notion "*To whom much is given, much will be required*" (Luke 12:48). Throughout her life, granny volunteered as an aid in hospitals, among other community services. My mother had to make appointments to see her mother. She was primarily raised by nannies, some kind, endearing to her, others not. Often willful, exuberant with a tenacious drive, mom's harsher nanny would resort to locking her in the closet for long periods of time. Love was an abstraction for my mother. She was better in a crowd, leading a group, than with people individually, especially alone with small children. Beginning at age 21, my mother had seven children and two miscarriages within 10 years. My mother was largely shaped by being the third of four born into 'the Greatest Generation'. A month before my lanky, skinny Uncle Hank turned 23, caught up in World War II, he was in a vicious dog fight with a Mitsubishi Zero over the Solomon Islands, my mother, just turned 18, wrapped bandages for the Red Cross to send overseas. My Uncle Hank was in some ways the embodiment of both the fear & the faith my mother stood up to. Her older sister, my Aunt Ann was for a lifetime what my mother measured herself by. And her precious baby brother, my Uncle Pete was and remains at the center of Joy that through thick or thin prompted my mother to muster on. Having eloped with my father to the relative cultural wilderness of southern Florida in part to flee Washington D.C. society, later in life she'd reconcile her faith in describing herself as 'a northern Presbyterian and a southern Episcopalian'. My father was not of the same ilk, and had no such religion. My father was born of a broken working class family and private military boarding schools in New Mexico. If anything my father was a charming 'serf lineage' chameleon opportunist. He sternly taught us to call him 'Sir' and my mother 'Ma'am' and above all, obey orders. At birth he was Hanson, but when a teenager he took his stepfather's last name of Landrum. He never spoke of his parents, was clearly never loved, and never learned to love another in any real sense. I'm told my father never made money, and I'd say because he didn't have to. He didn't have the ways of the aristocracy in his bones the way my mother did, no compulsion to do 'good in the world'. He lived off my mother's inheritance posing as a 'strong silent type'—a big band blaring on the hifi brooding alcoholic, which my mother enabled in her more genteel manner of nightly shooping her kids away as the 'grow-ups' had their nightly cocktails ritual. My father died of alcoholism when he was 45 years old. I recall my father's mother, Vivian Mae Glenny came to visit us but one time when I was a small child. She was so drunk for days on end my parents had to send her packing. My mother never seemed to recognize or understand class or what informs social class, though wittingly or not, her inborn imperious upper-class manners did soften with time and experience. She apparently couldn't discern who my father actually was beyond what he told her. Once late in her life I asked my mother why she married my father, why she choose him. She replied, "He lied to me about who he was."

<Land is Power>

From the beginning of The Agrarian Age land is power. In 1620 the vast majority of people made their living off the land. English pilgrims would ultimately steal and control virtually all of the Aboriginal people's land. My mother's mother's mother Bessie Gardner's lineage traces back through a succession of kings and queens (Matilda of Scotland) of the House of Wessex to Alfred the First in England. On the way it includes a father and son who left England on the Mayflower in 1620. *<SEE above Rough Rant: Today, I looked again at the list of wars >* "I looked again at the over-reaching spirit of the Monroe Doctrine, going back before to my ancestor Thomas Rogers and his 17 year old son

Joseph and the other Puritans, fresh off the boat, the Mayflower, in their greed and avarice decimating their Pokanoket Nation hosts — the tribe who taught them, saved them from certain annihilation from the cold harsh winters. The sad source of our fabled Thanksgiving Dinner. <SEE above *Rough Rant: Off-shore: my mother's final resting place* 7 Pokanoket Lane: My Uncle's Summer Retreat in Dartmouth, Massachusetts>

The Doctrine of Discovery is a series of papal decrees which became de facto law for European colonizing countries on the authority of *Romans 13*, "Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God." The Doctrine of Discovery were decrees issued by Pope Nicholas V in 1452 and 1455 and in 1493 by Pope Alexander VI over the discovery of non-Christian lands in the Americas to conquer "Saracens, pagans and other enemies of Christ, and reduce their persons to perpetual servitude while also taking their land and goods to convert them to you, and your use, and your successors and to bring them to the Catholic for the salvation of all in order to pardon . . . their souls."

Buffy Sainte-Marie, "What people don't put it together is that when indigenous people in the world were discovered, Europe was in the throes of the Medieval Inquisition. There were serial killers on the thrones of Europe: Henry the eighth, Vlad the Impaler, Ferdinand and Isabella and the church—forget Christianity for a second, which is very beautiful, Christ very beautiful, but the racketeers who got a hold of Christianity, they put out this thing called the Doctrine of Discovery. We rephrase as the *Doctrine of Domination*, which said that if explorers from Portugal, Holland, France, England, Spain if they're out exploring—they don't want to step on each other's toes so—the Pope says if explorers are out discovering things and they come upon a land that is inhabited by people who are non-Christians it is your duty to kill them enslave them or convert them and if you convert them then their job is to work for us of course they were saying work for Christ ,no it's not how it turned out. The Doctrine of Discovery is something that we still have to deal with in Canada because it's embedded in Canadian law, it's embedded in American law and in the law of all of the countries who were colonized by those five European countries, . . . and it's still referred to in the 2000s, it's not a thing of the past! So it's not a matter of going back and learning all of history. It's not the way that we need to get across. What we need to get across is that we need to do away with the Doctrine of Discovery."

The Dutch Empire or the Dutch colonial empire comprised the overseas territories and trading posts controlled and administered by Dutch chartered companies and subsequently by the Dutch Republic (1581–1795), and by the modern Kingdom of the Netherlands after 1815. It was initially a trade-based system which derived most of its influence from merchant enterprise and from Dutch control of international maritime shipping routes through strategically placed outposts, rather than from expansive territorial ventures. The Dutch were among the earliest empire-builders of Europe, following Spain and Portugal.

<**Industrial Revolution** begins in earnest by mid 1700s. The Dutch are the leading world empire powered by trade. My mother's father's great-grandfather, **Harm Jan Huidekoper** immigrates to The United States of America.>

Harm Jan Huidekoper immigrated to America in 1796. In the summer of 1804 he became an agent of the Holland Land Company. Harm Jan writes in his autobiography "I purchased from the Holland Land Company about Twenty-two thousand acres of land north of Toby's Creek with the addition of a superintending Agency of the Company's lands in the 5th and 6th districts east of the Allegheny river. This was the first of my land speculations, and it proved in the issue, a profitable one." The Holland Land Company was an unincorporated syndicate of thirteen Dutch investors from Amsterdam who in 1792 and 1793 purchased the western two-thirds of the Phelps and Gorham Purchase, an area of 6,000,000 acres from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for \$1,000,000 (£300,000), and the pre-emptive right to the title on the land from the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy for \$5000 that afterward was known as the Holland Purchase. The syndicate hoped to sell the land rapidly at a great profit. Instead, for many years they were forced to make further investments in their purchase; surveying it, building roads, digging canals, to make it more attractive to settlers. They sold the last of their land interests in 1840, when the syndicate was dissolved. Harm Jan Huidekoper noted that his father was not an educated, worldly man. He himself was an accomplished self-made businessman, philanthropist, essayist and lay theologian, becoming a leader of the American Unitarian Association, and a founder of the Meadville Theological School. His children and grandchildren, including my mother's father were Harvard educated.

Harm Jan's job was to sell lands The Company purchased consisting originally of about 500,000 acres in what is now western Pennsylvania near Meadville. He wrote, "The law under which these lands were taken up required, that the warrantee should make, within two years, a settlement improvement and residence on each tract of 400 acres, unless

prevented by the enemies of the United States. As the Indian War continued till 1795, the warrantees contended that they were thus prevented, and that this excused them from making the required residence and improvement." The land in question was soon covered with squatters. Harm Jan continues, "In the spring of 1805 the case of Huidekoper vs. Douglass was tried in the Supreme Court of the United States and decision had in favor of the warrantees [Huidekoper's Lessee]. That decision by which the title of the warrantees was declared to be complete, gradually restored peace to this country; and by a couple of years of exertion, those intrusions, so extensive and formidable when I entered on the Agency, were reduced to a few scattering, isolated cases. The angry feelings, however, which the contest had engendered, survived long after the contest itself had ceased and the injurious effects arising from a disputed title, were felt for many years afterwards. In all the troubles of those early days, however I never met with any personal violence; though such was frequently threatened. I have however reason to think that in a journey which I took in 1805 through the 7th district, I was once in imminent danger, though unconscious of it at the time. It was twenty years afterwards that I was one day fired at and my horse wounded. This was on the State road between the two Brokenstraw Creeks."

Harm Jan's son Edgar Huidekoper (1812-1862) as reported by the *History of Crawford County, Pennsylvania 1885* was said to be "a man of good judgment, great industry and strict integrity in his business relations in life. He was an able financier. And yet out of the strong came forth sweetness. He was affectionate, with a love passing the love of a woman. His thoughtfulness for others was kind and generous. He established the first steam grist-mill at Meadville, contributed toward public improvements and built for himself and family a comfortable home on Chestnut Hill. Whatever he did, he did well." Edgar's son, Frederic Wolters Huidekoper (1840-1908)—Reginald's father—was a railroad baron, who took up residence in Washington D.C. in 1883. Although his specialty was reorganizing bankrupt Southern railroads, Huidekoper also speculated in land; at one time his United Land Company of Florida owned a million and a half acres of that state. Reginald's older brother Frederic L. Huidekoper (1874-1940) is the author of: "*The Military Unpreparedness of the United States; a history of American land forces from colonial times until June 1, 1915.*" In 1907 William Howard Taft, then Secretary of War, said in speaking of a work of Frederic entitled *Is the United States Prepared for War?*, "that every American who has defense of his country at heart ought to read Mr. Huidekoper's article." <Regarding the Preparedness Movement SEE: the above Rough Rant: *American entry into World War I*>

<With World War I, power globally shifts more towards Industry . . . more than land??>

In 1800 **Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours** (1739 –1817) with his two sons and their families immigrated to the United States His son Éleuthère Irénée du Pont was the founder of E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company. He was the patriarch and progenitor of one of the United States's most successful and wealthiest business dynasties of the 19th and 20th centuries.

In 1902 **Pierre Samuel du Pont** (1870-1954) with his first cousins **Alfred I. du Pont** (1864–1935) (my mother's mother's father) and T. Coleman du Pont wrestled E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company from the old guard (who had never taken a full inventory, didn't know what they had) after the death of its president, Eugene I. du Pont and began to bring it forward into modernity. The cousins set about buying smaller powder firms to create an enduring monopoly. Until 1914, during Coleman du Pont's illness, which rendered him unable to work, Pierre du Pont served as treasurer, executive vice-president, and acting president. In 1915, a group headed by Pierre, which included outsiders, bought Coleman's stock. Alfred was offended and sued Pierre for breach of trust. The case was settled in Pierre's favor four years later, but his relationship with Alfred suffered greatly, and they did not speak after that. Following the acrimonious fall out with his cousin, Alfred I. duPont embarked on business of his own, investing in land and banking in Florida. Jessie Ball duPont (1884–1970) had met and befriended Alfred I. duPont (1864-1935) when she was 14 and he 34, and they maintained a correspondence thereafter. After the 1920 death of Alfred I.'s second wife, they entered a courtship which resulted in marriage on January 22, 1921. The couple made their home in the *Nemours Mansion and Gardens* in Wilmington, Delaware. Retired from teaching, Jessie oversaw maintenance of the family estate, took over raising her husband's daughter, Denise, and began to assist duPont in his business. In 1923, Alfred I. hired Edward Ball, Jessie's brother, which freed Jessie from some of her business concerns so that she could dedicate more time to her charities. When Alfred I. died in 1935, Jessie became the director of the Florida National Bank and also undertook the preservation of Stratford Hall Plantation, where Confederate General Robert E. Lee had been born. Ball duPont was also a major donor to Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia. However on 23 November 1951, she wrote to Dean Stanley Brown-Serman, 'I have been told that one or more negroes are members of the student body... I do not contribute to schools in the south that take negroes as students.' A subsequent letter stated, 'As long as the Virginia Theological Seminary is open to negroes, I have made my last contribution to it . . . '

The du Pont de Nemours and Co's supplied munitions to the US for the War of 1812 and for the Union during The American Civil War. The company would go on to make a fortune during World War I by supplying the European Allies and later the U.S. Army with high-powered explosives for artillery shells, manufacturing up to 40% of the munitions used by the Allies over the course of the war. In 1915 Pierre Samuel Du Pont was elected a director of General Motors, where he began his odyssey of pulling the company out of bankruptcy and become a significant figure in transforming the company into the first modern corporation. When du Pont retired from its board of directors in 1923, GM was the largest company in the world.

In 2017, DuPont de Nemours merged with competitor Dow Chemical, then split into three companies -- DuPont, Dow and Corteva. The namesake of the founder, cousin Eleuthere I. du Pont II (1966) sits on DuPont's board of directors. The 2019 movie *Dark Waters*, from the 2016 New York Times article "*The Lawyer Who Became DuPont's Worst Nightmare*", tells the story of DuPont de Nemours' hideously callous deceit in poisoning the world and their own employees in the chase for outrageous fortune developing 'forever chemicals' for products such as Teflon and scotch guard.

The *Doctrine of Domination* as Buffy Sainte-Marie says, ". . . it's not a thing of the past!" The saga continues.

[\[The Dutch Empire > | Harm Jan Huidekoper > | History of Crawford County, Pennsylvania, 1885](#), the preface describe itself as: "... the truthful narration of facts relating to its aboriginal and pre-American period, the coming of the white race to occupy its soil, and the dangers, hardships and privations encountered by its pioneers while engaged in advancing the standards of civilization, together with its subsequent moral and material growth and development." | [Huidekoper's Lessee v. Douglass](#), 7 U.S. 1 (1805) > <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/7/1/> | [Buffy Sainte-Marie on God, Reconciliation and The Doctrine of Discovery > https://youtu.be/LKdnivsJdtY](#) | [DuPont de Nemours, Inc > | Pierre Samuel du Pont](#) (1870 – 1954) | [Alfred Irénée du Pont](#) (1864 – 1935) | [Jessie Ball duPont](#) | [Two Hundred in Two Thousand: A Du Pont Family Reunion](#) | [Better Living Through Mind-Boggling Wealth](#) by Steve Hendrix, [August 9, 2000, Washington Post](#): "They think of us as an aristocracy, but we're not," says Irene du Pont Jr., 80, a half-billionaire who lives in a house the size of a sanitarium but proudly drove the same 1980 Chevette hatchback for almost 20 years. "We're people whose parents struck it rich by working very hard. All in all, we're a pretty regular bunch."

My lineage through my mother's mother's mother:

- 1). Alfred the Great (849-899)
- [...]
- 9). Matilda of Scotland (1080–1118)
- [...]
- 26). Thomas Rogers (1586-1621, married Grace _____)
- 27). James Rogers (1615-1676, married Mary _____)
- [...]
- 36). **Bessie Gardner** (1864-1949), married **Alfred Irene Du Pont** (1864-1935)
- 37). **Bessie Cazenove Du Pont** (1889-1973), married **Reginald Huidekoper**
- 38). Elizabeth Gardner Huidekoper (1925-2021), married Richard Henning Landrum
- 39). Daniel Christie Landrum (1951) married (1979) Herta Boehm Herbst (1939-1988), married (1991) Carol Sharon Silverman (1949)

My lineage through my mother's mother's father:

- 1). Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours (1739-1817)
- 2). Éleuthère Irénée du Pont, (1771-1834) founded the gunpowder manufacturer E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company.
- 3). Alfred V. Du Pont (1798-1856) eldest son and successor of Éleuthère Irénée du Pont,
- 4). Eleuthere Irene Du Pont II (1829-1877)
- 5). **Alfred Irene Du Pont** (1864-1935) married (1887) **Bessie Gardner** (1864-1949) and (1921) **Jessie Dew Ball** (1884–1970)
- 6). **Bessie Cazenove Du Pont**(1889-1973, married **Reginald Huidekoper**)
- 7). Elizabeth Gardner Huidekoper (1925-2021), married Richard Henning Landrum
- 8). Daniel Christie Landrum (1951) married (1979) Herta Boehm Herbst (1939-1988), married (1991) Carol Sharon Silverman (1949)

My lineage through my mother's father:

- 1). Harm Jan Huidekoper (1776-1854)
- 2). Edgar Huidekoper (1812-1862)
- 3). Frederic Wolters Huidekoper (1840-1908)
- 4). **Reginald Shippen Huidekoper** (1876-1943), married **Bessie Cazenove Du Pont** (1889-1973)
- 5). Elizabeth Gardner Huidekoper (1925-2021), married Richard Henning Landrum
- 6). Daniel Christie Landrum (1951) married (1979) Herta Boehm Herbst (1939-1988), married (1991) Carol Sharon Silverman (1949)
- }

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When it's hot you like cool,
when it's cold you like warm.
That's why I like you.

.....

REMEMBER, going with the flow *includes* stopping at the stop lights.

.....

With a smile too broad the young man replied,
"Any day above the dirt is a good day."

.....

My wife and I don't work so well together,
but that's okay . . . mostly we play.
We play really well together.

.....

How do you find your way out of living a reactionary life?
Stop reacting.

.....

*A great spirit walks among us, a boon to the earth and all her inhabitants.
She has known heavy laden travail and maintained a peacefully loving heart.
We are blessed with her presence in our times, when we need her most.
Buffy Sainte-Marie I sing of thee and bow to the brightness of your light.
Thank you, Dear One, for showing the way so magnanimous.*

I recently had the occasion to watch American Masters Film's

Buffy Sainte-Marie: Carry It On (Nov 2022) directed by Madison Thomas. Such a gift.

I am particularly struck by the segment depicting how Buffy's unique activism changed perceptions of Indigenous people. It touched me to the core as I felt, really felt the deep stab of the Doctrine of Discovery still lingering in our chests. This pain sparked the "I Recognize Reckoning, I so melancholy ache . . . continues" Rough Rant piece above "What Made my Mother: The Discovery Doctrine and Why my Father Lied." This introspection and how it relates to me and my lineage, and how what Buffy Sainte-Marie re-frames as the Doctrine of Domination illuminates the class difference I both saw in my parents and informed my formative years. A 'melancholy ache' I struggle with to this day.

{Buffy Sainte-Marie, American Masters > <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/masters/buffy-sainte-marie/> | Buffy Sainte-Marie's unique activism changed perceptions of Indigenous people > <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/buffy-sainte-maries-unique-activism-changed-perceptions-of-indigenous-people/24427/> }

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Alfred the Great to Elyssa Grant—some wheres between myth, history and dungeon & dragon fantasy role play:

Alfred the Great oversaw the conversion of Viking leader Guthrum to Christianity.

Wouldn't you just loved to have been a fly on the wall for that conversion conversation,
. . . especially after having been starved into submission?

Christianity was first brought to Britain during the Roman occupation. However, in 407 the last Roman soldiers left Britain. In the 5th and 6th centuries Pagan peoples, the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes from Germany and Denmark invaded what is now England and gradually conquered it.

SKIP 39 generations ago to my greatgrandpappy, Alfred the Great. In the seventh week after Easter (4–10 May 878), Alfred won a decisive victory in the ensuing Battle of Edington which may have been fought near Westbury, Wiltshire. He then pursued the Danes to their stronghold at Chippenham and starved them into submission. One of the terms of

the surrender was that Viking leader Guthrum convert to Christianity. Three weeks later, the Danish king and 29 of his chief men were baptized at Alfred's court at Aller, near Athelney, with Alfred receiving Guthrum as his spiritual son.

Wouldn't you just love to oversee the writing of the screenplay script for a TV mega-series bringing this story up to date 40 generations later from the POV of my niece Elyssa's story and what she does for a living? I only know the bare bones of what Elyssa actually does for a living, but from what I do know it appears the backbone is supported by fantasy role playing games derivative of Dungeon & Dragons with all the updated medieval ramifications implied.

Me? Where am I in all this? Still amazed rolling in the tumbleweeds . . .

{[Alfred the Great](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_the_Great) (alt. Ælfred 848/849 – 26 October 899) > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_the_Great | [DwDnD – Interview with Elyssa Grant, Mastering Dungeons](#)}

There's good evidence that all reasoning is rationalization.
We act first, give reasons later. Planning is simply plausible deniability.

The light turns green—after a significant amount of time—I honk my horn at the convertible Jeep Wrangler JK a h e a d of me to tell the driver to get his millennial head out of his digital arse. Again.

A big tough guy once told me he didn't want the things everyone else wants. I said you still want to eat, sleep, fuck and fight. You're just too socially broken to recognize your natural desires. His reply, "humph."

My wife takes the circuitous route.

She sets out from A and goes through S M G N H O I P K F before getting to B. Begins for just one little thing, but first . . . And but firsts her but firsts. Thus by consequence I, the innocent bystander stands waiting, ruled by the exception to the exception to the rule.

Being fair to myself is to be fair to the universe, and vice versa.

Vice versa: with the main items in the preceding statement the other way around, with the order changed : with the relations reversed : conversely.

Dear,
Your outrage, your hate. Your choice.
Sorry. I can't help you.
Love,
Dan

PS: I can't tell you how many times you broke her heart. I want to thank you for that. It softened her up to realizing *she* can't help you.

Sacred heart, I am not responsible for my ancestors. Reparations *are* warranted. Knowing how to interrupt a reactive response is worthwhile, but avoiding it is even better.

Reforming my tribal/familial conditioning to more compassionately serve life on this planet is slow going. As it is, there is still so much more to do to undo. Tell me, why are there so many songs about heartache & pain? Do you know, is it true that we wouldn't appreciate happiness, if we didn't experience sadness? How could we know?

Honey, I'm not sure if you got my message or not, but it's okay, I've always lived on the edge of society. Invisible for the most part. I'm used to being ignored. Prefer it. I have everything I need. A great love, great happiness. All else is entertainment.

You'd think that after some seventy-odd years I'd know how to wipe my butt. But no, it keeps changing. All I really know is *every time* I have to pay attention.

(221207)

Ethereum, the world's second-largest cryptocurrency, reportedly uses an estimated 78 terawatt hours of electricity each year, comparable to the power consumption of Ireland. Ethereum plans to shift its security mechanism away from what's known as a 'proof-of-work' method towards so-called 'proof of stake' cutting 99.95% of its energy use in the process, which will effectively reduce its power consumption down to the equivalent of a pub in Dublin.

Or, in all sanity, I'd say about the whole topsy turvy kit and caboodle, equivalent to "*a dub in Publand.*"

{Ethereum change cut cryptocurrency power demand > <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-63872983>}

All that. It really is all that. All the highs, all the lows. All the pain, all the pleasure. All the anxiety, all the ecstasy. It's all that, . . . everything you'll ever experience and more. If you're lucky, and you live long enough, your senses will dull, be less acute. The highs will be lower, the lows higher. You'll mellow out. And here is where you can simply float in the hum and embrace, enjoy the ever constant background buzz for what it is—life in the *all that is* paradox.

That light, this sun, that mountain.
Whoosh!

Police woman parked in the red zone as she gets a coffee at Starbucks.

*"You're setting a bad example."
"Do you have a problem with that?"
"Just because you can, doesn't mean you should."*

From the start you are broadly encouraged to be a hero, extraordinary. At best, no matter what, you'll merely stir the pot. More fulfilling for all around the table, the flavor of life is better served savoring the stew, and adding your spice to taste.

Let's speculate our sadness. There's no getting rid of it once and for all. Let's just filter out the impurities and aerate our sorrow for now.

NOAM CHOMSKY: I didn't do any research at all on Adam Smith. I just read him. There's no research. Just read it. He's pre-capitalist, a figure of the Enlightenment. What we would call capitalism he despised. People read snippets of Adam Smith, the few phrases they teach in school. Everybody reads the first paragraph of *The Wealth of Nations* [originally published: March 9, 1776] where he talks about how wonderful the division of labor is. But not many people get to the point hundreds of pages later, where he says that division of labor will destroy human beings and turn people into

creatures as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human being to be. And therefore in any civilized society the government is going to have to take some measures to prevent division of labor from proceeding to its limits.

He did give an argument for markets, but the argument was that under conditions of perfect liberty, markets will lead to perfect equality. That's the argument for them, because he thought that equality of condition (not just opportunity) is what you should be aiming at. It goes on and on. He gave a devastating critique of what we would call North-South policies. He was talking about England and India. He bitterly condemned the British experiments they were carrying out which were devastating India.

He also made remarks which ought to be truisms about the way states work. He pointed out that it's totally senseless to talk about a nation and what we would nowadays call "national interests." He simply observed in passing, because it's so obvious, that in England, which is what he's discussing — and it was the most democratic society of the day — the principal architects of policy are the "merchants and manufacturers," and they make certain that their own interests are, in his words, "*most peculiarly attended to,*" no matter what the effect on others, including the people of England who, he argued, suffered from their policies. He didn't have the data to prove it at the time, but he was probably right.

This truism was, a century later, called *class analysis*, but you don't have to go to Marx to find it. It's very explicit in Adam Smith. It's so obvious that any ten-year-old can see it. So he didn't make a big point of it. He just mentioned it. But that's correct. If you read through his work, he's intelligent. He's a person who was from the Enlightenment. His driving motives were the assumption that people were guided by sympathy and feelings of solidarity and the need for control of their own work, much like other Enlightenment and early Romantic thinkers. He's part of that period, the Scottish Enlightenment. The version of him that's given today is just ridiculous. But I didn't have to do any research to find this out. All you have to do is read. If you're literate, you'll find it out. I did do a little research in the way it's treated, and that's interesting. For example, the University of Chicago, the great bastion of free market economics, etc., etc., published a bicentennial edition of the hero, a scholarly edition with all the footnotes and the introduction by a Nobel Prize winner, George Stigler, a huge index, a real scholarly edition. That's the one I used. It's the best edition. The scholarly framework was very interesting, including Stigler's introduction. It's likely he never opened *The Wealth of Nations*. Just about everything he said about the book was completely false. I went through a bunch of examples in writing about it, in *Year 501* and elsewhere.

But even more interesting in some ways was the index. Adam Smith is very well known for his advocacy of division of labor. Take a look at "division of labor" in the index and there are lots and lots of things listed. But there's one missing, namely his denunciation of division of labor, the one I just cited. That's somehow missing from the index. It goes on like this. I wouldn't call this research because it's ten minutes' work, but if you look at the scholarship, then it's interesting.

I want to be clear about this. There is good Smith scholarship. If you look at the serious Smith scholarship, nothing I'm saying is any surprise to anyone. How could it be? You open the book and you read it and it's staring you right in the face. On the other hand if you look at the myth of Adam Smith, which is the only one we get, the discrepancy between that and the reality is enormous.

This is true of classical liberalism in general. The founders of classical liberalism, people like Adam Smith and Wilhelm von Humboldt, who is one of the great exponents of classical liberalism, and who inspired John Stuart Mill — they were what we would call libertarian socialists, at least that is the way I read them. For example, Humboldt, like Smith, says, Consider a craftsman who builds some beautiful thing. Humboldt says if he does it under external coercion, like pay, for wages, we may admire what he does but we despise what he is. On the other hand, if he does it out of his own free, creative expression of himself, under free will, not under external coercion of wage labor, then we also admire what he is because he's a human being. He said any decent socioeconomic system will be based on the assumption that people have the freedom to inquire and create — since that's the fundamental nature of humans — in free association with others, but certainly not under the kinds of external constraints that came to be called capitalism.

It's the same when you read Jefferson. He lived a half century later, so he saw state capitalism developing, and he despised it, of course. He said it's going to lead to a form of absolutism worse than the one we defended ourselves against. In fact, if you run through this whole period you see a very clear, sharp critique of what we would later call capitalism and certainly of the twentieth century version of it, which is designed to destroy individual, even entrepreneurial capitalism.

There's a side current here which is rarely looked at but which is also quite fascinating. That's the working class literature of the nineteenth century. They didn't read Adam Smith and Wilhelm von Humboldt, but they're saying the same things. Read journals put out by the people called the "*factory girls of Lowell*," young women in the factories, mechanics, and other working people who were running their own newspapers. It's the same kind of critique. There was a real battle fought by working people in England and the U.S. to defend themselves against what they called the degradation and oppression and violence of the industrial capitalist system, which was not only dehumanizing them but was even radically reducing their intellectual level. So, you go back to the mid-nineteenth century and these so-called "factory girls," young girls working in the Lowell [Massachusetts] mills, were reading serious contemporary literature. They recognized that the point of the system was to turn them into tools who would be manipulated, degraded, kicked around, and so on. And they fought against it bitterly for a long period. That's the history of the rise of capitalism.

The other part of the story is the development of corporations, which is an interesting story in itself. Adam Smith didn't say much about them, but he did criticize the early stages of them. Jefferson lived long enough to see the beginnings, and he was very strongly opposed to them. But the development of corporations really took place in the early twentieth century and very late in the nineteenth century. Originally, corporations existed as a public service. People would get together to build a bridge and they would be incorporated for that purpose by the state. They built the bridge and that's it. They were supposed to have a public interest function. Well into the 1870s, states were removing corporate charters. They were granted by the state. They didn't have any other authority. They were fictions. They were removing corporate charters because they weren't serving a public function. But then you get into the period of the trusts and various efforts to consolidate power that were beginning to be made in the late nineteenth century. It's interesting to look at the literature. The courts didn't really accept it. There were some hints about it. It wasn't until the early twentieth century that courts and lawyers designed a new socioeconomic system. It was never done by legislation. It was done mostly by courts and lawyers and the power they could exercise over individual states. New Jersey was the first state to offer corporations any right they wanted. Of course, all the capital in the country suddenly started to flow to New Jersey, for obvious reasons. Then the other states had to do the same thing just to defend themselves or be wiped out. It's kind of a small-scale globalization. Then the courts and the corporate lawyers came along and created a whole new body of doctrine which gave corporations authority and power that they never had before. If you look at the background of it, it's the same background that led to fascism and Bolshevism. A lot of it was supported by people called progressives, for these reasons: They said, individual rights are gone. We are in a period of corporatization of power, consolidation of power, centralization. That's supposed to be good if you're a progressive, like a Marxist-Leninist. Out of that same background came three major things: fascism, Bolshevism, and corporate tyranny. They all grew out of the same more or less Hegelian roots. It's fairly recent. We think of corporations as immutable, but they were designed. It was a conscious design which worked as Adam Smith said: the principal architects of policy consolidate state power and use it for their interests. It was certainly not popular will. It's basically court decisions and lawyers' decisions, which created a form of private tyranny which is now more massive in many ways than even state tyranny was. These are major parts of modern twentieth century history. The classical liberals would be horrified. They didn't even imagine this. But the smaller things that they saw, they were already horrified about. This would have totally scandalized Adam Smith or Jefferson or anyone like that....

{*Education is Ignorance*, Noam Chomsky (excerpted from *Class Warfare*, 1995, pp. 19-23, 27-31) > <https://chomsky.info/warfare02/>
| *Year 501: The Conquest Continues*, Noam Chomsky (first published January 1, 1992) > <https://znetwork.org/year-501/> jobs

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Liberation Theology is a Christian theological approach emphasizing the liberation of the oppressed. In certain contexts, it engages socio-economic analyses, with "social concern for the poor and political liberation for oppressed peoples". In other contexts, it addresses other forms of inequality, such as race or caste. Liberation theology is best known in the Latin American context, especially within Catholicism in the 1960s after the Second Vatican Council, where it became the political praxis of theologians such as Gustavo Gutiérrez, Leonardo Boff, and Jesuits Juan Luis Segundo and Jon Sobrino, who popularized the phrase "preferential option for the poor". This expression was used first by Jesuit Fr. General Pedro Arrupe in 1968 and soon after the World Synod of Catholic Bishops in 1971 chose as its theme "Justice in the World". The Latin American context also produced Protestant advocates of liberation theology, such as Rubem Alves, José Míguez Bonino, and C. René Padilla, who in the 1970s called for integral mission, emphasizing evangelism and social responsibility. Theologies of liberation have also developed in other parts of the world such as black theology in the United States and South Africa, Palestinian liberation theology, Dalit theology in India, and Minjung theology in South Korea.

"As a theologian who grew up during the civil war in El Salvador, I emphasize to my university students that it is impossible to grasp the beating heart of this theology without paying attention to the poverty and legacies of colonialism in Latin America," Leo Guardado, assistant Professor of Theology, Fordham University

The key principle of liberation theology is "the preferential option for the poor."

El Salvador's saint: To advocates of liberation theology, embracing the "preferential option for the poor" means struggling alongside people whose societies consider insignificant, and sharing their life and death. Oscar Romero, archbishop of San Salvador in the late 1970s, is often admired as an example of a Catholic leader living out liberation theology. "All those who draw close to suffering flesh have God close at hand," he said in one homily. In the lead-up to El Salvador's 12-year civil war, Romero fought for agrarian reform for landless rural farmers. He mediated between labor unions, popular guerrilla organizations and the military to try to prevent armed conflict. He established the country's foremost human rights and legal aid organization and urged U.S. President Jimmy Carter to cease U.S. financial support for El Salvador's military. In one of his last homilies, he asked soldiers to stop the killing – just a day before being assassinated by military agents in March 1980. Romero was canonized in 2018 by Pope Francis, who has said that prioritizing the poor is "the key criterion of Christian authenticity."

Controversial then – and now: One of the most persistent critiques against liberation theology is that it gives rise to revolutionary violence and that, since it is influenced by Marxist analysis, it believes violent class conflict is inevitable. Most strands of liberation theology condemn violence, although they draw a distinction between the institutionalized violence of inequality and violence against injustice itself.

Critics of liberation theology have proclaimed it is passe, irrelevant, even dead – but prematurely, it seems. Today, liberation theology's reach has spread far beyond Latin America and Roman Catholicism: from Black theology of liberation to Islamic liberation theology; from Hindu to Jewish and Palestinian ones; and to feminist and queer theologies that have been influenced by liberation theology. Liberation theology will likely always have its critics, but its supporters continue to build on the legacy of the past 50 years wherever they see poverty, injustice and oppression.

{After 50 years, 'liberation theology' is still reshaping Catholicism and politics – but what is it? by **Leo Guardado** December 13, 2022 > <https://theconversation.com/after-50-years-liberation-theology-is-still-reshaping-catholicism-and-politics-but-what-is-it-186804> | Liberation Theology > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberation_theology}

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"Don't get us wrong: We love a sleek and clean space as much as the next design enthusiast; however, we have to admit that the neutral color palette and lack of funky details feels, well, sterile,"
Lifestyle editor and writer Kelsey Mulvey, Apr 11, 2019

Minimax and Maximin Optimization

A *minimax problem* seeks to minimize the maximum: "**Maximal minimalism** is exactly what it sounds like: The intersection of the spaciousness of minimalism and the personality of maximalism. When you hear the word 'minimalism,' you probably assume it's best to keep your mementos and collectibles in a cabinet, right? Think again. Not only does maximal minimalism call for you to show off your stuff, but it can actually keep clutter at bay. "Overwhelming a dedicated area with objects instead of trying to spread them out throughout your space can actually decrease the feeling of clutter and is a cool way to exhibit your favorite finds," argues Stephanie Dixon, editorial director at Society6. "Just make sure to keep the other areas in that room relatively clear of stuff so that you're creating an intentional contrast," Kelsey Mulvey.

A *maximin problem* seeks to maximize the minimal: Zen

{**Small Is Beautiful: A Study of Economics As If People Mattered** is a collection of essays advancing small, appropriate technologies, policies, and politics as a superior alternative to the mainstream ethos of "bigger is better" published in 1973 by German-born British economist E. F. Schumacher. > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Small_Is_Beautiful | "A *minimax problem* seeks to minimize the maximum value of a number of decision variables. It is sometimes applied to minimize the possible loss for a worst case (maximum loss) scenario. A *maximin problem* maximizes the minimum value. It is used to maximize the minimum objective (such as profit or revenue) for all potential scenarios." > <http://apmonitor.com/me575/index.php/Main/MiniMax> | This Emerging Style Combines the Best of Both Minimalism and Maximalism > <https://www.apartmenttherapy.com/maximal-minimalism-268532> | Zen: The meaning of ZEN is

a Japanese sect of Mahayana Buddhism that aims at enlightenment by direct intuition through meditation, a state of calm attentiveness in which one's actions are guided by intuition rather than by conscious effort. > Merriam-Webster dictionary | **Zen Minimalism**: As a design philosophy, minimalism is characterized by extreme sparseness and simplicity. It was originally inspired by Japanese architecture and the way it infused Zen buddhist ideals into elements of buildings. Japanese Zen Buddhism seeks truth by revealing the 'Ma' that lies within materials and objects. Ma can be roughly translated as "gap", "space", "pause" or "the space between two structural parts", it captures the value placed on rejection of the unnecessary and embracing life's simple treasures. Revealing the essence of an object through the removal of the unnecessary is the principle that the entire movement is based on; a movement that would go on to change the world. > <https://www.modularclosets.com/blogs/themodule/minimalism-zen-and-simplicity-in-design-a-movement-that-changed-the-world> }

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{221206}

Noam Chomsky — The Vile Maxim: "All for ourselves, nothing for anyone else."

The Grim Question remains. "Is the gap unbridgeable between what we know how to do and our capacity to implement that knowledge for the common good?"

26:19, <https://youtu.be/Q5G11rdWcX4> > . . . let's go back to the trajectory outlined by the World Meteorological organization, the trajectory continues. The United States is opening up vast new fields for exploration for oil along with others it's opening huge numbers of new miles of new pipelines. The euphoria at the fossil fuel industry headquarters is unconstrained, it's buoyed not only by the stellar prospects for the march to the precipice, but also by profits beyond the dreams of avarice. Last week Exxon, Exxon Mobil, posted the highest profit in its 152-year history, as natural gas demand and prices surged. The second largest company, Chevron also blew past estimates to post their second highest profit effort net income at over 11 billion dollars for the quarter, others follow suits and their laggards by Middle East standards. Well, their partners among the Masters are not lagging behind. Military production is skyrocketing along with profits. The few mega corporations that dominate food production are reporting record-breaking profits, thanks to the hunger that's stalking the world. Pursuit of the Vile Maxim is relentless, and there are major impacts everywhere. As you know there's an election coming in the United States in a few days it will probably empower the far right, as it just did yesterday in Israel, the religious right. The major reason is concern over inflation, about 40 percent of the recent inflation in the United States can be attributed to fêter corporate profit margins, but those are untouchable in the political system dominated by the Masters. There are also unmentionable in the information system that they largely control. Those are the institutions we have created. It's highly instructive to look closely at details. Individual cases yield a good deal of insight into the Vile Maxim and the institutional imperatives that lie behind it. All of this must be understood and brought under control if not ended, if there's to be any hope of closing the Grim Gap. So I'll just take a quick look. U.S government just passed a climate bill. It's a pale shadow of what had been proposed by the Biden Administration under the impact of popular climate activism, step by step it was cut back. Republicans who are set to win the coming election or a hundred percent opposed to anything that might pursue, that might impede pursuit of the Vile Maxim by their ultra-rich and corporate backers, and a few right wing Democrats joined them. In the end the popular organizations dedicated to preserving viable life on Earth could not compete with the power of the true Masters in the corporate sector. Where the final shadow that survived is not meaningless, it is however radically insufficient in its reach and it's also burdened with measures to ensure that the interests of the Masters are most peculiarly attended to. to borrow Adam Smith's words. "The bill that the Masters were willing to accept includes vast government subsidies that are already driving forward large oil and gas projects that threaten a heavy carbon footprint with companies including Exxon Mobil and others, positioned for big payouts." I'm quoting The Washington Post, one of the two national journals. One of the devices that was established to satisfy the needs of the Masters, I'm continuing to quote, "one of the devices is a vast ward of money for carbon capture." I add my own comments: the proper translation of the phrase 'carbon capture' is 'let's keep poisoning the atmosphere freely and maybe someday somebody will figure out a way to remove some of the poisons,' actually that's too kind it's much worse. I'll continue to quote the Washington Post story, "the irony of carbon capture is that the place it has proven most successful is getting more oil out of the ground, all but one of the major projects built in the United States is geared toward fossil fuel companies taking the trapped carbon and injecting it into underground wells to extract crude oil." These are our institutional structures, more to say about that, but I'll go on . . . "these are one product of higher intelligence, they take diverse forms but all within the general State Capitalist framework that's prevailed everywhere for the past century. There has been progress in constraining their worst excesses, and in the past 40 years serious regression. We have some measures of the success of the savage class war that's misleadingly called Neoliberalism. The United States, of course, is the leader of the pack by virtue of its enormous power. In the United States 50 trillion dollars has been transferred from the general population to the pockets of the top one percent during the 40 years since Reagan opened the door to unconstrained class war. That's pretty impressive highway robbery. In the traditional domains of savage European injustice, it's been even worse. The

structural adjustment programs that were a core part of the Neoliberal package imposed two decades of stagnation on Latin America. They tore up the social order elsewhere, notably in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda where the breakdown of social order laid the groundwork for the terrible crimes that ensued. Well, can this be reversed? In principle, yes. We know how, just as we know how the climate crisis can be contained by readily available measures that will make it possible to move on to a much better world. The Grim question remains. Is the gap unbridgeable between what we know how to do and our capacity to implement that knowledge for the common good?

Well with that in mind, let's turn to the second of the threats to survival. This one is imminent. It's not lingering in mounting horror, like the climate crisis. The second threat is nuclear war. With regard to nuclear war, the Grim Question of the unbridgeable Gap was posed in stark terms almost 80 years ago, August 1945, the day of the first use of nuclear weapons. That made it very clear that human technical competence had risen, or perhaps descended, to the level where it could destroy life on Earth. Not quite the bombs . . . were still too small, but it was clear then that technology would move on to the capacity to destroy everything, and it did. In 1952, when the U.S and the USSR included thermonuclear weapons. At that point the hands of the famous Doomsday Clock were advanced to two minutes to midnight, midnight meaning termination of the human experiment. The hands have oscillated since varying with assessments of the global security situation. They did not reach two minutes again until president Trump's term in office. In his last year the analysts abandoned minutes they moved to seconds . . . 100 seconds to midnight, where the hands now stand. They'll be reset in a few months and I suspect they'll be moved still closer to midnight. They certainly should be. The nature of the threat of mutual destruction is stated very clearly in the official strategic posture of the United States. Under Trump it was shifted from focus on terrorism to what was called 'pure competition, the need to prevail' in two nuclear wars with China and Russia, just remember was 2018, well before the invasion of Ukraine. Well that might seem to be a definition of clinical insanity. A war with either of the two would be the end. We have moved beyond. The Biden Administration adopted the policy including the official words "to encircle China with a ring of sentinel States" heavily armed with precision weapons aimed at China backed with major naval maneuvers in the Pacific, came to China and with insistence on transit of U.S naval vessels in the exclusive economic zones, which are accorded to China by the law of the sea, which the United States alone has not ratified. The U.S justification of this is defense of the right of free passage which actually has not been threatened in the least. What's at stake is a technical dispute about an unclear phrase in the law of the sea. The U.S claims it permits military vessels to pass through the zones. China disagrees. It's backed by India and Indonesia. The most crucial issue is Taiwan. There is an official policy was set in the 1970s declares Taiwan to be part of China with what is called 'strategic ambiguity.' Neither China nor the United States will disrupt this arrangement by force. The agreement has kept the peace for 50 years. Not a bad record in international affairs.

There was a Party Congress just recently in China, the policy was reaffirmed. President Xi declared the matter moot until 2049, that's the anniversary of Chinese Independence. Well, neither side is blameless, but it's Washington that has recently been taking steps to undermine the fragile agreement. The 'enhanced encirclement' policy is one example. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's reckless visit to Taiwan is another. China did react, responding by demonstrating its capacity to blockade Taiwan. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee then passed State bipartisan Taiwan Policy Act that declares Taiwan to be a non-native ally of the United States. Calls for Taiwan to have the same diplomatic status as any other country, along with an enhanced flow of U.S arms and integration with U.S forces with interoperability of weapons. Biden then moved even further with the virtual declaration of war a couple days ago. I'll quote the world's leading business Journal, the London Financial Times here's what they say about it, "Joe Biden launched a full-blown economic war on China, all but committing the U.S to stopping China's rise. History is likely to record Biden's move as the moment when U.S China rivalry came out of the closet. America is now pledged to do everything short of fighting an actual war to stop China's rise. The U.S is now committed to blocking China in all kinds of civilian technologies that make up a modern economy" . " The New York Times declared their support for these policies, their words, " . . . a new policy of actively strangling large segments of the Chinese technology industry, strangling with an intent to kill, the regulations apply to any company in the world that uses American semiconductor technology. So if an American chip manufacturer agrees to make Chinese designed chips could lose access to the American chip making market. They can't get it anywhere else. The U.S is seeking to ensure that China has no access to the advanced components necessary to run a modern economy. And like U.S sanctions all must adopt these U.S decrees whether they like them or not for fear of severe retribution." Whatever one thinks of this wide range of strategic and economic policies, there's no doubt that they enhance the prospects of moving the hands of the Doomsday Clock closer to midnight. A couple of days ago the Biden Administration announced the new nuclear policy, which the Arms Control agency calls a significant expansion of the original mission of these weapons, which was deterring existential threats against the United States. Well the significant expansion is spelled out by Admiral Charles Richard, the head of the U.S strategic command charged with nuclear weapons. Under this new policy, nuclear weapons are provided, what Richard calls the maneuver space

necessary for the United States to project conventional military power. Strategically nuclear power is therefore a course for conventional military operations around the globe deterring others from interfering. Nuclear weapons, deter old countries all the time from interfering with U.S actions. Admiral Richard again, "well the press described all of this as not much of a change, they all right but for reasons of which they are no doubt unaware. Commander Richard Shirley could inform them that this has been U.S policy since 1995, since Clinton. It was elaborated then in a U.S. Strategic Command document on post-cold war deterrence with Clinton policy the U.S declared Its Right of first strike against non-nuclear states. Nuclear weapons must be available always because they cast a shadow over conventional use of force deterring others from interfering. Dan Ellsberg described it, "nuclear weapons are constantly used just as a gun is used in a robbery even if it's not fired." So it's correct that the new doctrine is not very new. Americans are unaware of the facts, not because of censorship, the documents have been public for decades, quoted in critical literature that receives little notice. I have not even mentioned the rising threat of nuclear war in Europe arising from Russia's criminal aggression in Ukraine. It's much more extensively discussed, although not with sufficient urgency. The longer the war continues, the longer diplomacy is avoided, the greater the threat which is real and severe. That brings us back to the Grim Question, and the obstacles to giving the answer that we must, if it is not to be the final question raised in the brief's adjourn of humans on the earth -- can we bridge the yawning gap between the technical capacity to destroy and the moral intelligence required to control this impulse? I leave that to you to answer.

Ferial Ghazoul , 49:11 > thank you, thank you Professor Chomsky . . .

{The Edward Said Memorial Lecture by Professor Noam Chomsky > <https://youtu.be/Q5G11rdWcX4> 1h24m43s| Dec 6, 2022, AUC, School of Humanities and Social Sciences: The Department of English and Comparative literature hosted the Edward Said Memorial Lecture on Global Realignments and the Prospects for a Livable World by Professor Noam Chomsky, Linguist and Public Intellectual. | U.S. Strategic Command > <https://www.stratcom.mil> | Doomsday Clock - Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, January 20, 2022, "It is 100 seconds to midnight." > <https://thebulletin.org/doomsday-clock/>}

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Kissinger and *realpolitik* in US foreign policy: a tortured and deadly legacy

When Kissinger entered government as Richard Nixon’s national security advisor, he espoused a narrow perspective of the national interest, known as “*realpolitik*,” primarily centered on maximizing the economic and military power of the United States. This power – and transactionalist-oriented approach to foreign policy produced a series of destructive outcomes. They ranged from fomenting coups that put in place murderous dictatorships, as in Chile, to killing unarmed civilians, as in Cambodia, and alienating potential allies, as in India.

Damaging approach: In his dissertation turned first book, Kissinger argued foreign policy makers are measured by their ability to recognize shifts in political, military and economic power in the international system - and then to make those changes work in their country’s favor. In this model of foreign policy, the political values – democracy, human rights – that make the United States a distinctive player in the international system have no role.

Despite the fact that Cambodia was not party to the conflict fought in Vietnam, U.S. bombing of Cambodia is estimated to have exceeded the total tonnage of all the bombs dropped by the U.S. during World War II, including the nuclear bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The campaign killed tens of thousands of Cambodians and displaced millions. The destruction caused by the bombing as well as partial American occupation in 1970 were crucial to creating the political and social instability that facilitated the rise of the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime. That regime is estimated to have killed 2 million Cambodians.

‘*Amoral vision*’: After Kissinger left government service in 1977, he founded Kissinger Associates, a geopolitical consulting firm. Publicly, Kissinger has consistently advised U.S. policymakers to bend U.S. policy to accommodate the interests and actions of important foreign powers like Russia and China. Over decades, Kissinger’s amoral vision of national self-interest has produced its own set of disasters, a reality the American public and foreign policy leaders are well-advised to bear in mind.

{A tortured and deadly legacy: *Kissinger and realpolitik in US foreign policy*, published: Dec 14, 2022 by Jarrod Hayes, UMass Lowell > <https://theconversation.com/a-tortured-and-deadly-legacy-kissinger-and-realpolitik-in-us-foreign-policy-192977> | *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon, and the Destruction of Cambodia* by William Shawcross > <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9780815412243/Sideshow-Kissinger-Nixon-and-the-Destruction-of-Cambodia-Revised-Edition>}

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Evolving the Emotional Wherewithal to implement that knowledge Noam Chomsky speaks of regarding the Grim Question, which still remains, "Is the gap unbridgeable between what we know how to do and our capacity to implement that knowledge for the common good?"

We have sufficiently demonstrated that we as a people are intellectually intelligent enough to innovate and solve the problems that confront us in comfortably sustaining life for ourselves. What we have as yet to show is that we have the emotional wherewithal to evolve our basic 'instincts' for conquest—that 'taking for me and mine and to hell with the rest' competitive impulse—and learn to cooperate with all life forms on this planet in sustaining life.

"I leave that to you to answer."

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Water . . . Sun . . . Time. Oh, geez! Too pleased.

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It's not likely that I'll be studied at the university any time soon. Though I certainly am worthy of a synopsis.

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"YT Makers' Secret Santa" (third year running) round-robin event. If we can squeak out an hour or so, I'd love to give you a sneak peak sampler taste of these delightful Maker/Youtubers! Yes, I envy their state-of-the-art workshops and the brilliant crafts they craft, but it's their presenter personalities that really win me over. You'll see . . .

Xyla Foxlin > <https://youtu.be/73nxUFp71uc>

Jimmy DiResta > https://youtu.be/cqAaAWTmF_M

Colin Furze > https://youtu.be/nK9wYzIEk_g

Emily the Engineer > <https://youtu.be/O-534DDWG8E>

{youtube> #ytmakerssecretsanta | YT Makers Secret Santa 2022 playlist > <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBsFTOjKcQe9Kw8hLmO8mmNIpraOUF-c7> }

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Good time to be a comedian. So much material to draw from.

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Why do I feel so much like Anne Frank, diarist, describing everyday life from my family hiding place, hiding away from the ubiquitous fighting over political ideology atop the suffering caused by man?

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If I were to have a cooking show, it would begin with dessert first, breakfast for dinner and leafy greens . . .

Simple Foods, Easy Clean-up would be the name of my cooking show, if I had one. Most cooking shows don't mention clean-up at all, mine would give equal billing. Tidying up the mess is half the fun. Besides, in washing up you get to play with water and in modern kitchens that can mean both hot and cold running water and every temperature in between. So if it's cold outside you can turn on the cozy hands, if it's a hot, balmy day you've got the cool on tap. Where else does that happen in life?

Oats & Apples would be the pilot episode of Simple Foods, Easy Clean-up.

Ingredients:

- Organic rolled Oats
- Organic Red Apples
- Organic ground Cinnamon (optional)

Organic is important here, both for your health and the health of the environment. Actually there's no difference between your health and the health of the environment. It's all one healthy system, regardless of what the capitalist system says about the costs, organic is the way to go. You pretty much have to trust your farmer to work out what that practically means, what organic practically means in their application of the spirit and the fact of the word. If you have a

personal relationship with your farmer, invite 'em over for tea and ask a lot of questions. The boogie's in the details. The organic for the oats will be very different than the organic for the apples, and most likely be grown by two different farmers, so plan on getting social. The cinnamon? Well, that's a bit more exotic, hence optional. You may have to travel long distances to have that conversation. BTW, oats date back about 32,000 years when wild oats were hand ground by Paleolithic hunter gatherers. The apple is thought to have been domesticated 4000–10,000 years ago in the Tian Shan mountains, and then to have travelled along the Silk Road to Europe, with hybridization and introgression of wild crabapples. Cinnamon, which of course is optional, is a relative new comer, dating back to only about 2800 B.C.. It was originally grown wild in the central hill country of Sri Lanka. Cinnamon is mentioned in the Bible when Moses used it as an ingredient for his anointing oil in ancient Rome.

Tools: a sauce pan with lid, wooden cooking spoon, a cutting board and a paring knife. I'm partial to a stainless steel sauce pan with a see through glass lid and a bamboo wooden cooking spoon, but that's just personal preference, go with what you've got.

I'll be cooking for two, so add 1 cup of Oats in the sauce pan and 2 cups of good water. '*Good water*' is my little personal shorthand for reverse osmosis filtered water. I'll use tap water in the clean-up, but I like to filter out unwanted molecules and large particles such as contaminants and sediments like chlorine, salts, and dirt from the waters I directly ingest. Most cooking shows emphasize the taste and mouth-feel of the food and don't much mention nutrition and the qualities of the substances that are going into your body, the overall incidental and unwanted effects down to the molecular level. I feel it's worthwhile making notes, keep it simple where you can and look into the more complex issues when you can. So it's filtered for cooking and drinking water for now. From here, put the 1 cup of Oats in the 2 cups of good water in the sauce pan on the stove, turn it up to a moderately high setting, put the glass lid on the pan and bring it up to a boil. As soon as you see the first signs of a boil, take the lid off and start stirring. Stir and stir, stirring up anything sticking to the bottom until it reaches the desired texture and density. It won't take long, so be swift about it. When satisfied, turn off the stove and replace the lid back on the pan. Let it continue to cook in the cool down.

As the oats cool down, rinse the apple in the good water being sure you remove that annoying little organic label—organically grown fruits and vegetables have labels with five digits starting with the number 9, and to my mind the adhesive often used in those labels are generally too strong to easily peel off the delicate skin of a ripe apple—caution to detail required. In our house we favor Fuji apples for their sweetness certainly, but also for the crispness and their tart & tang. I just like the name Fuji. Fuji, who has latched on to us, is the name of our neighbor's cat, and then there is the graceful mystical Mount Fuji in Japan—all lovely references to chew on. Anyways, core your apple and cut the edible pulpy parts into bite-size pieces.

Now let's put it all together. I recommend ceramic bowls as your host for the meal. Ceramic is amazing stuff. Sure if you smash it on the hard floor it'll shatter, but if cared for, it will serve you well and make your clean-up life a breeze. Technically, a ceramic is any of the various hard, brittle, heat-resistant and corrosion-resistant materials made by shaping and then firing an inorganic, nonmetallic material, such as clay, at a high temperature. It's glazed and fired to create smooth, colored, often decorated surfaces, decreasing porosity through the use of glassy, amorphous ceramic coatings on top of the crystalline ceramic substrates. It's the wonder of the non-stick '*glassy decreasing porosity*' part that allows you to surf the alpha wave breeze while washing the dishes. Sooo . . . you're putting your bite-size pulpy apple pieces in the bottom of your ceramic bowl. With due flair, take the glass lid off of your sauce pan on the stove, releasing the remaining steam and stir one last time with the bamboo cooking spoon before you slop the now mushy oatmeal on top of the apple bits. Viola! That's it! Breakfast made. My wife likes to sprinkle a couple of pinches of cinnamon on top to spice it up to taste. She also likes to eat her Oat & Apple mush with a soup spoon. I go with the dessert spoon for smaller, more savorily 'oat forward' bites. Parenthetically, you may be asking, "Where's the protein?" Typically, for digestive simplicity, I try not to overtly combine protein with carbohydrates. Kind of like multi-tasking—you *can* do both at one meal, but neither well. One of the first things I did after waking this morning was shake-up and drink 2 scoops of Organic Rice Protein Powder in good water, which gave me 22g of easily digestible protein. Good start on the day. The producers of this product use enzymes to extract the protein from the rice, which in effect pre-digests it for me and makes it easier to assimilate. No muss, no fuss.

All of that took less than 10 minutes. Not enough to fill up a TV broadcast, even with commercials. So we'll need a segment sitting around the round breakfast table eating our mush and chatting away about our plans for the day, or peculiar vivid dreams we might have had last night. Leave that to spontaneity, it's not part of the recipe per se. Whatever comes up. But here's where the artistry of the dishwasher kicks in. Be aware of when the last of the Oat &

Apple mush has been scraped from the side of the ceramic bowls. Dehydration has begun. While all these ingredients are easily water soluble, the sooner you tend to them in their drying-out process the smoother the wiping-out and washing up will go. If you excuse yourself and get on it right away it's a snap. If you need to be polite, or the conversation is especially riveting, just a minute to soak the dishes will help. I prefer to do it all in one go—wipe out the big stuff, rinse out the sponge just used to wipe out the big stuff, load the sponge with the dishwashing enzymes and/or earth friendly detergent, finish the sudsy washing, rinse, cloth towel dry and put the dish back in the cupboard. Again, that'll take only a couple of minutes. So for the closing segment I'll go back to the cleared breakfast table to leisurely finish our conversation. Not to ignore my home audience, at just the right moment, I'll turn to the camera and proclaim with a wink, "Oat & Apple mush, give it a try. Simple Food, Easy Clean-up!"

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Leafy Deep Greens: Swiss Chard, Lacinato (AKA "Dino" or "Tuscan") Kale and Collard greens are a great source of trace minerals and micronutrients to help keep your organic machine running smoothly. You probably could eat them raw right off the plant, but that would be a bit chewy, bitterer and less easy to digest, unless you have a stomach like a cow, which you don't. All three are more or less fibrous; these readily soluble fibers easily break down with a light massage and/or a little heat. Leafy deep green fibers aid in digestion in a few ways. For instance, the fibers bind with LDL cholesterol in the intestine so it's excreted. What's more, the fiber attaches to bile acids, increasing the excretion of bile salts and prompting the liver to produce more. And fiber generally provides a good cleaning house 'scrub' to all the systems it passes through. I find Chard is the most delicate fiber, whereas Collard is the toughest, and thus the cook time on Collard is going to be a bit longer than Chard with Kale somewhere in the middle. My preferred cook method is steaming, which leaves the leaves somewhere in between the Goldilocks's happy place of being too soggy or too dry—if you boiled or baked them. With the optimum cook times for each, Kale will be the most crisp, Collard the chewiest and Chard the most limp. The stems and leafstalk offer the same nutrients as their beloved leaves, but are considerably denser, a very different texture altogether. Terri Brownlee says, "Just like massaging those kale leaves makes them more palatable (and tasty!) by releasing some of the bitterness and breaking down the tough-to-eat fiber, a few kitchen hacks [*Blanch 'em, Quick pickle, Blend in a smoothie, Braise on the stove, Toast 'em crispy when making kale "chips,"*] will have you devouring those stems instead of trashing them." Personally, I'd devour the stems and leafstalk separately, . . . but that's for another meal.

{[Could You Be Throwing Out The Best Part Of Your Kale?](https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/best-part-of-your-kale) Terri Brownlee, April 12, 2017 >
<https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/best-part-of-your-kale>}

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Cabbage steamed. Every day. Breakfast. Good old green Irish cabbage. Organic. Let's get on it. First, remove any damaged or browned outer leaves and give the head a thorough rinsing under cold water. Place the head of cabbage on a cutting board or clean work surface with the stem side down. Locate the stem, or core, of the cabbage. With a chef's knife, cut in half lengthwise, all the way through the core. Remove the triangular core. To do this, cut into the core at an angle where the stem meets the leaves of the cabbage, and remove it from each half. Place the halves, cut side down, on the cutting board. If you have a very large head, you'll find quartering it is easier. Starting at the end opposite the stem, cut crosswise from top to bottom into thin slices. Cutting against the grain means to cut through the fibers and make them shorter. A large, dense cabbage head makes knife work a breeze. Most cabbages have thick, alternating leaves. Cabbages with heavy head weight and high head density yield diced or shredded cabbages with less waste. Most folks cut out and discard cabbage cores, but what they're throwing away is a crunchy, radish-like vegetable part worth eating all on its own—raw or cooked. Like broccoli stalks and kale stems, a cabbage core is a delicious, nutritious ingredient when prepared well—for me, that's for another meal.

I dice a large organic green cabbage once a week to feed us two, my wife and I, at breakfast. Each morning I steam a couple handfuls of the raw cabbage for about 11 minutes. Easy cooking, easy clean-up. Yes it's true, eating fiber foods leads to gas, but eliminating them from the diet would starve the gut microbes that are so essential for health. While raw cabbage has the highest nutrient content it also produces the most gas. It's a balance. Steaming cabbage retains more of the nutrients than boiling or stir-frying. While producing less gas than when eaten raw. Cooked and raw cabbage contains a type of carbohydrates called oligosaccharides, which resist breakdown by salivary and digestive enzymes. Once they reach the colon, they serve as food for gut bacteria. While this process creates gas, it's no cause for alarm and is actually very healthy. Insoluble fiber comprises around 70% of the fiber in cabbage. It adds bulk to stools and helps food move through your gut more easily, reducing the risk of constipation. Cabbage provides nourishment for the beneficial microbes living in the gut. When the bacteria feed on the carbohydrates in cabbage, gas is formed; yet the

process also makes molecules that enhance immunity. Mayo Clinic gastroenterologist, Purna Kashyap said that people shouldn't stop eating these foods to reduce the gas they experience. Cabbage is a low-calorie vegetable that is rich in vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that help reduce inflammation. Cabbage is an excellent source of vitamin K1, which is critical for blood clotting. Cabbage belongs to the brassica genus, which includes broccoli, cauliflower and kale. It's packed with nutrients. Studies show eating cabbage may help reduce inflammation, protect the immune system, and lower blood pressure and cholesterol.

Cabbage is a relatively easy crop to grow as long as you get the plant's moisture needs right. You'll want to grow your cabbage in well-drained yet moisture-retentive, fertile soil with a pH of 6 to 7. Depending on variety, transplants should be ready to harvest in 6-8 weeks. Also you'll have to be on the lookout for pests and diseases. Cutworms, imported cabbageworm, cabbage looper, diamondback moth larvae, and cross-striped cabbage worm can each cause substantial damage to cabbage. These pests can cause serious damage to young transplants as well as causing serious leaf feeding damage to older plants. There are several organic ways to prevent and control cabbage worms including: Floating Row Covers, Polyculture & Companion Planting, Beneficial Insects, Decoy Moths, Bacillus Thuringiensis (Bt) Spray, Neem Oil Spray.

Cabbage is relatively inexpensive given the rich soil and water needs, plus the organic ways required to prevent and control other species getting to it and eating the crop first. As a long time cabbage eater, I can attest it's worth it. From field to fork, organic green cabbage is a good gut companion worthy of a lifelong *respect and appreciation* friendship, which mixes well with virtually any carb or protein.

{Digestion of Raw Cabbage > <https://www.livestrong.com/article/548046-digestion-of-raw-cabbage/> | 9 Impressive Health Benefits of Cabbage > <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/benefits-of-cabbage> | Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) > <http://npic.orst.edu/factsheets/btgen.html> | How to Cut Cabbage > <https://www.culinaryhill.com/how-to-cut-cabbage/> | Field to Fork: Cabbage > <https://www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/publications/field-fork-cabbage>}

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Avocado, Ginger, Lemon and Vegenaize . . . *what can I say*, . . . when the stand alone combine —the proof?

Ginger root? Grate! As in, it's always great to add fresh ginger to my ready-made *Organicville Balsamic with Olive Oil Vinaigrette & Marinade* salad dressing. Ginger is loaded with antioxidants, compounds that prevent stress and damage to your body's DNA. They may help your body fight off chronic diseases like high blood pressure, heart disease, and diseases of the lungs, plus promote healthy aging. Fresh ginger root, all the better, as the taste goes zing!

Vegenaize? Essentially, think mayonnaise without the eggs. The one I use, *Follow Your Heart Original Vegenaize*, "perfect for sandwiches, spreads and anything you can think of," is made from these fresh ingredients: "Canola oil, filtered water, apple cider vinegar, brown rice syrup, soy protein, sea salt, lemon juice, and mustard flour". Contrastingly, *Hellmann's® Real Mayonnaise* ingredients are: "Soybean oil, water, whole eggs and egg yolks, vinegar, salt, sugar, lemon juice, calcium disodium EDTA (used to protect quality), natural flavors." The FDA *has* approved calcium disodium EDTA as a safe food additive, but has set limitations on the amount of the substance a food can contain. Even so, it comes with a list of Side Effects & Warnings as long as your arm. Why bother for the sake of "used to protect quality"? I'll go fresh with Vegenaize's simple straight up ingredients. NOTE the 'lemon juice' in both. There goes that zing! taste again.

Lemons! Zing! Zest! and OOwAhh! Who doesn't love the wakeup call of fresh lemon juice or the zest of its grated rind? My house came with a prolific lemon tree that has fruited continuously for the past 30 years. {SEE the above Rough Rant: *When life gives you lemons, give them away—people like free and love, just love the zest*} The Food Network will again and again tell you to neutralize the excess acidity and mask too much lemon flavor—add sugar or honey to counteract the sourness, salt to obscure the bitterness, cut it by adding some fat like butter or cheese, or even baking soda to neutralize the lemon and balance the flavor. For taste maybe, but *Healthline* says phooey, "Lemon juice has an acidic pH before it is digested. However, once metabolized by the body, it produces alkaline byproducts. These alkaline byproducts can make your urine more alkaline but have very little effect on the pH of your blood." I say take her as she comes. Nothing beats the taste of nature straight up, especially when you pucker-up to the Zing! Zest! and OOwAhh!

Avocado!! Pits and all. Also in our yard we have a ninety-something year old Avocado tree. I can't say enough about it. Such a gift. And what could be easier than peeling a ripe avocado, removing the pit and savoring the chomp through the

creamy avocado mesocarp? A banana? Maybe, bananas are potent for potassium, but contain no fat and so, so much naturally occurring sugar. Besides, bananas are exotic and don't grow much around here. When the squirrels haven't gotten to them first, these avocados could fall perfectly firm, unblemished and ripe into my outstretched hands at just the right moment, given a little encouragement. Along with a generous helping of yummy monounsaturated fats (the good kind) and low sodium levels, avocados contain no cholesterol and are nutrient-dense—high in folate (B12), magnesium, phosphorus, iron and potassium, containing even more potassium per gram than bananas. The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center says researchers have found that avocados protect the heart in a similar way as olive oil and nuts do in the heart-healthy Mediterranean diet. Avocados, a festive staycation in a ready to eat package.

Avocado! Ginger root, Lemon juice & zest, and Vegenaïse . . . are you getting a feel for a creamy symphonic mix & match dish here? Each simple whole food a standalone favorable mouth-feel treasure, when sensibly combined will nutritiously digest nicely. In the end, that's what you're looking for. The proof is in the pooping, but that's another story.

{An avocado a day is good for your heart health > <https://utswmed.org/medblog/avocado-a-day/>}

Salmon & Pickles—*putting it together à la Tartar sauce*: a complimentary digestive pairing

A simple, sound lunch for two . . . begins: drain the brine from a 7.5 ounce can of Wild Alaskan Red Sockeye Salmon, de-bone and de-skin the fish and add luscious amounts of Tartar sauce. Serve in a salad bowl atop red leaf lettuce, kale and/or chard, cauliflower florets, celery, red and green bell peppers, with perhaps tomato slices or black olives to taste. Add slices of a ripe avocado, grated fresh ginger and a squeeze of lemon for a 5 star feast.

Salmon, Red sockeye Salmon. Salmon is one of the most popular types of fish and for good reason—it's one of the lightest, making it incredibly easy to digest. Almost all the sockeye salmon harvested in the United States comes from Alaska fisheries. Though Sockeye salmon are also harvested off the West Coast, mainly Washington, with a small amount harvested in Oregon. The sockeye from Copper River in Alaska is considered amongst the best tasting salmon in the world. Whereas pink salmon is light and mild, sockeye salmon is a flavorful and rich. Sockeye comes in many forms including canned, fresh, and frozen. For convenience and storage, we go with the canned. Sockeye salmon remains the preferred species for canning due to the rich orange-red color of their flesh and being rich in Omega-3 fatty acids, which support good heart health by decreasing blood vessel inflammation and supporting the overall vascular system. I sadly realize overfishing salmon is a significant problem. I'm not sure what I can realistically do about it. The solution has to come for an authority above consumer demand. *Why are the salmon being overfished?* Generally, it comes down to two things and both are Humans: we have damaged their habitat, hindered their migration, and polluted their waters. We've overfished, forced them to compete for limited resources, and made their journey home that much harder.

Pickles, *Woodstock Farms Organic Kosher Baby Dill Pickles* and *Vegenaïse* as 'the sauce' of the Tartar. Tartar sauce is a condiment made (in my case) of Vegenaïse and chopped organic kosher baby dill pickles. You *could* add relish, capers, and herbs such as tarragon and dill . . . , but for simplicity of need, we just stop with the pickles and the sauce. Pickled cucumbers are high in an antioxidant called beta-carotene, which your body turns into vitamin A. Pickles are also high in particular types of fiber that feed beneficial gut bacteria, acting as prebiotics—food for the probiotic gut bacteria helping with digestion. While that bacteria is essential for digestive health, too much of it at once can cause upset in sensitive stomachs, ultimately leading to bloating. Pickles are also high in sodium, so moderation is the word.

{NOTES: Problems Facing Salmon—*Recreation and Conservation Office* > <https://rco.wa.gov/salmon-recovery/problem/> | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: *Status of Salmon Stocks Managed Under the Magnuson-Stevens Act on the West Coast* > <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/west-coast/sustainable-fisheries/status-salmon-stocks-managed-under-magnuson-stevens-act-west-coast> | *Woodstock Farms Organic Kosher Baby Dill Pickles*, ingredients: Organic cucumbers, water, organic vinegar*, salt, contains less than 2% of dehydrated organic garlic, calcium chloride**, natural flavors (contains mustard), organic gum Arabic, organic turmeric extract (color). *Vinegar is an aqueous solution of acetic acid, usually produced by a double fermentation, converting simple sugars to ethanol using yeast, and ethanol to acetic acid by use of Gram-negative bacteria. As the most easily manufactured mild acid, it has a wide variety of uses, including pickling. Baby cucumbers become pickles by simply marinating and fermenting them in vinegar for 3 to 4 weeks at 70°F. **Calcium chloride is an inorganic compound, a salt with the chemical formula CaCl₂. It is a white crystalline solid at room temperature, and it is highly soluble in water.}

Hummus, Potatoes, Pasta and Eggs in olive oil sautéed onions

Hummus: Garbanzo Beans AKA Chickpeas, sprouted, whipped to silky perfection. Garbanzo beans boast an impressive nutritional profile—a moderate amount of calories and several vitamins and minerals. They're also a good source of fiber and protein. When you sprout garbanzo beans, the anti-nutrients get removed which make them even more digestible and improves the absorption of other vitamins. While the heat in cooking destroys the amount of vitamin, sprouting actually increases and improves the nutritional value. As to where it truly comes from, no one can say for certain, though the earliest mention of the spread dates back to Egypt during the 13th century. The truth is, hummus has been made all over the Middle East for hundreds of years, a dish likely imported west from the garbanzo beans growing Arab countries to Greece. For us at home, the right place for *Majestic's Sprouted Hummus* is spread on *Wasa's light Rye Crispbread*, or on gluten-free rice penne pasta or dolloped on a bowl full of baked red Russet and ruby red garnet sweet potatoes AKA yams. The ultimate nutritionally celebrated comfort food! Vincent van Gogh's *The Potato Eaters* comes to mind.

Grade A Eggs Cage-Free [chickens] Plus Large White . . . hard boiled, or fried with sautéed onions lightly caramelized in olive oil. First off, let's address the cholesterol issue. Eggs in general have gotten a bad rap when it comes to cholesterol. Total cholesterol is a measurement of both good and bad cholesterol. LDL ("bad") cholesterol moves cholesterol into your arteries. HDL ("good") cholesterol moves cholesterol out of your arteries. A high HDL cholesterol number lowers your risk for coronary heart disease. A high LDL cholesterol number raises your risk for coronary heart disease. But mostly it's the balance the two. Most healthcare providers want the ratio to be below 5:1. A ratio below 3.5:1 is considered very good. A simple blood test can accurately tell you what your Total Cholesterol is. I regularly eat 3 eggs a day and my ratio is consistently below 3.5 to 1. Secondly, picking on chickens as a steady source of excellent, easy to digest protein isn't ideal, but I do what I can to support making hens' lives as quality as possible. The first of January 2022, California law banned eggs that are not from cage-free hens. That means all eggs produced in California must be procured only from hens in cage-free housing. The state of California has the largest population (almost 40 million people) of any state, so that's a significant step. Wholefoods, where we get our eggs, says, "365 Everyday Value® Eggs go beyond cage-free. Eggs sold in Whole Foods Market stores meet standards which require that farms adhere to these living conditions for laying hens: Cage-Free Plus: Birds live indoors with perches and shelters. Outdoor Access: Birds have at least as much space outdoors as indoors. Pasture-Raised: Birds have access to rangeland or grassland. Mobile Houses on Pasture: Birds live outdoors with mobile houses for shelter. These four standards go beyond cage-free by providing requirements for the comfort, physical safety and health of the birds. The new standards require perches for laying hens and prohibit the use of mammal or poultry byproducts in bird feed."

Eggs for breakfast with a clear conscience. One day boiled, the next day fried. My boiled eggs will be quartered—looking for that bright orangey-yellow indicating a goodly amount of Omega-3 fatty acids—and mixed with my wife's light and lovely garbanzo bean salad, a handful of steamed green cabbage, a dash of cayenne pepper and a modest rectangular wedge of raw cheddar Goat cheese. The pan fried eggs with onions will be treated to Woodstock's Organic Tomato Ketchup, steamed green cabbage, slices of raw cheddar Goat cheese and a copious dollop of *Lazy Acres' Organic Guacamole*, if not a half of a ripe avocado.

Why the white shelled eggs and not the brown? Because the white shell is thinner, thus easier to peel after being boiled for 11 minutes. Unfortunately, the downside of being thinner, white shells are more likely to crack or fissure when I transport them home from the store. So, I've made a custom corrugated cardboard box inside a canvas grocery bag where my cartons of eggs can fit snugly and arrive home safely—problem solved.

An additional word about red Russet and ruby red garnet sweet potatoes AKA yams: *yum!*

A word, in their own words, about *Tinkyada Organic Brown Rice Penne Pasta* (ingredients: Organic Brown Rice, Water.) "Pasta Joy Ready. A classic in texture and taste. Wheat free. Gluten-free. Good consistent texture. Not mushy. Al Dente. We specialize - Our entire factory premise and all machines are dedicated to the manufacture of rice pasta—no other grain or cereal to prevent cross-grain contamination at production. Cholesterol free. Low fat. Low sodium. Source of fiber. Easy to digest. Promising a delightful eating experience. From whole-grain. Kosher Certified. 100% Organic. Certified Organic. Just right! Perfect for a light, healthy and tasty family meal, for serving your loved ones and guests who are sure to appreciate, with joy! No preservatives added. This product is made from 100% quality rice, stone-ground and formed to gourmet class. An ultimate in the enjoyment of pasta. It cooks like regular pasta. Award-winning taste. Al dente and not mushy. Its texture, superb. Product of Canada."

In the high octave voice of Julia Child, "Bon appetit!"

{Wholefoods: 365 Everyday Value® Eggs go beyond cage-free > <https://media.wholefoodsmarket.com/365-everyday-value-eggs-go-beyond-cage-free/> | [California law bans eggs that are not from cage-free hens](#) | Lipid Panel with Total Cholesterol: HDL Ratio > <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/encyclopedia/...> | Majestic Sprouted Hummus – *Original* ingredients: Sprouted Raw Organic Garbanzo Beans, Blend Of Cold Pressed Organic Olive Oil & Safflower Oil, Organic Cold Milled Flaxseed Milled Cumin, Sea Salt, Lemon Juice, Garlic.}

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Jamie Raskin is brilliant in a way that you don't notice his brilliance as much as you deeply appreciate his clarity and heartfulness. And, oh yes, Raskin's humanity. Let's throw in on his unwavering humanity.

{Unthinkable review: *Jamie Raskin, his lost son and defending democracy from Trump.* > <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/jan/09/unthinkable-review-jamie-raskin-son-tommy-capitol-attack-trump-impeachment> *The Maryland Democrat has written an extraordinary memoir of grief, the Capitol attack and the second impeachment*}

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Aaron Rodgers, integrity props. Speaking his truth to power, a hand on a deserved helm of note, yet still taking the road less traveled by. Rodgers has been vocal about his use of alternative medicine and treatments. He revealed in 2022 that he had previously sought offseason trips to Peru where he consumed ayahuasca. He has been one of the NFL's most prominent players to voice his concerns about his decision to not be vaccinated with any of the mRNA vaccines that combat COVID-19, but rather follow a homeopathic protocol. All the while, Rodgers is considered by many sportscasters and players to be one of the greatest and most talented quarterbacks of all time. And his measure for his competitive drive for excellence, "knowing you did your absolute best. That's true success."

{Aaron Rodgers > https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aaron_Rodgers#Personal_life | *Aaron Rodgers Clears the Air on "Immunized" Controversy* > <https://youtu.be/LI25Zwp09F> | *Aaron Rodgers takes 'full responsibility' for comments about COVID-19 vaccination status* > <https://www.nfl.com/news/aaron-rodgers-full-responsibility-misleading-comments-covid-19-vaccine> | **Aaron Rodgers dropped the ball on critical thinking** – with a little practice you can do better, December 1, 2021 > <https://theconversation.com/aaron-rodgers-dropped-the-ball-on-critical-thinking-with-a-little-practice-you-can-do-better-172362> | *Aaron Rodgers's Ayahuasca Experience* > <https://youtu.be/Wl6w8tXbJaY> | **Aaron Rodgers' Challenging Journey To Self Love & Mental Health** | *Aubrey Marcus Podcast* > https://youtu.be/Px3_IDaXHJM}

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December 4, 2022

Who are we to sit in audience of the 45th Annual Kennedy Center Honors honoring national cultural icons—honorees George Clooney, Amy Grant, Tania León, Gladys Knight and U2? Smart, well-heeled, well-educated—not a homeless or hungry in the mix. When we stand to applaud our idols, do we see ourselves, do we recognize reckoning? You ask. Who do I tell? What can I say? Tell the truth. Don't be singing the old tunes to a new beat. Tell the truth—first to yourself. Then to your trustworthy friend, tell the truth. Don't tell truth to power, don't tell truth to change agents, influencers. Tell truth, all your truth, to love and caring. Stay seated. Stay home. Celebrate the honor of the small wonders of the grand magnificence recognized? After all, it's not a staged song & dance for a see & be seen captive audience . . . it's truth.

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Rest in Peace
... for now

{**Until We Meet Again—75 Beautiful Rest In Peace Quotes and Messages to Help You Through Your Grief** by Michelle Parkerton > <https://parade.com/1394149/michelle-parkerton/rest-in-peace-quotes/>}

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