

# AOTCJournal

Welcome to the **Journal of the Aware Ones of the Treasure Coast**, a secular humanist gathering, providing companionship, conversation, support, and good times, within honest and objective atheist, agnostic and freethinking values.

Vol.5, No.2

March/April 2020

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– Produced by the TC Secular Writers –

## INTRODUCTION

Time passes quickly! It has been a short year since I've had the honor to edit the Aware Ones of the Treasure Coast's Journal. I am having a great time working with a remarkable group of people and I sincerely hope that what I do is an asset to your stories and articles.

In many ways, AOTC reminds me of the Kansas City counter-culture organization I was a member of in the 1970's called the Foolkiller. Our motto was an iconoclastic "fuck you" to pretentious, snooty theater; *We prefer crude vigor to polished banality*. We fiercely believed that the creative motivation resided in each individual, it just needed encouragement to come out.

We felt we were the *Aware Ones* then, the revolutionaries if you will. It was the Vietnam War, the selective service and civil rights. It was sex, drugs and rock n' roll. It was executive privilege, slush funds and inoperative statements.

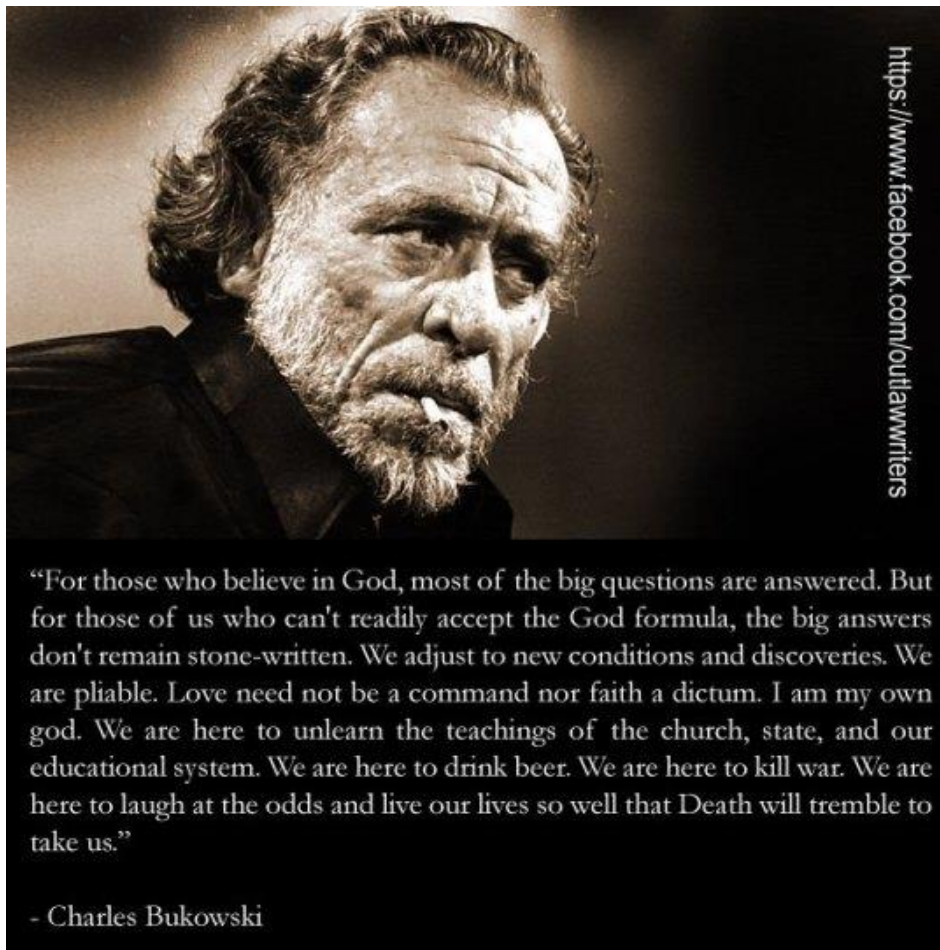
Our quest was education and the truth will make you free. Know what you think and think what you mean. If you see hypocrisy, call it out and expose it. Write about it, sing about it, whisper in the night about it. Laugh at it, make it feel small. Never stop trying to right a wrong. Don't let a wrong win without screaming about how fucked up it is. We took what we saw and tried to make sense of it. Sometimes it lived, sometimes it died. But what you got was brutal honesty with each production and performance and a desire to learn and to do it again, only better.



**"Kids don't have a little brother working in the coal mine, they don't have a little sister coughing her lungs out in the looms of the big mill towns of the Northeast. Why? Because we organized; we broke the back of the sweatshops in this country; we have child labor laws. Those were not benevolent gifts from enlightened management. They were fought for, they were bled for, they were died for by working people, by people like us. Kids ought to know that. That's why I sing these songs. That's why I tell these stories, dammit. No root, no fruit!"**

~UTAH PHILLIPS

Time marched on and so, after many miles and many years, what you see is what you get, and that's how I feel about the Aware



Ones of the  
Treasure  
Coast.

Here's another  
issue, let's  
kick ass. –  
Virgil Thorp,  
Editor.

We continue the  
process of  
increasing the  
distribution of  
this Journal in  
the hopes of  
attracting new  
members. If you  
are new to the  
Aware Ones and  
would like to  
know more  
about us please

visit our website at <http://www.AwareOnesOfTheTreasureCoast.com>. You are also welcome to join our table at Importico's Bakery, 555 S. Colorado Ave., Stuart, where we gather every Sunday *around* the hours of 9:30 to 11:00 to share ideas and challenge your mind.

*If you do not want the journal and wish to have your address removed, please email [vmthorp@outlook.com](mailto:vmthorp@outlook.com) for confirmation.*

## AOTC MEMBERS

Joan Auerbach  
Marsha Banks  
Ernie Breud  
Eddie Buitrago  
Rick Burkhart

Stretch Graton  
Bob Haskins  
Barbara Lange  
Jim Longo  
Yashi Nozawa

Sandra Burkhart  
Paul Carlos  
Gloria Cosgrove  
Ray Duryea  
Marilyn Graton  
Gail Baker  
Bert Mautz

Roberta Synal  
Lucy Thorp  
Virgil Thorp  
Dan Vignau  
Ed Zillioux  
Linda Webb  
Betty Tewksbury

## MEETINGS & EVENTS

### Meetings

Sunday Coffee – Every Sunday, Importico's Bakery, 555 S. Colorado Ave., Stuart, 9:30 amish, outside when weather's agreeable.

TC Secular Writers – Every other Thursday, Jensen's House of Brews, 6:30 pm; March 12, 26; April 9, 23; May 7, 21.

### Events

Feb. 29 – Leap Day

March – National Women's Month.

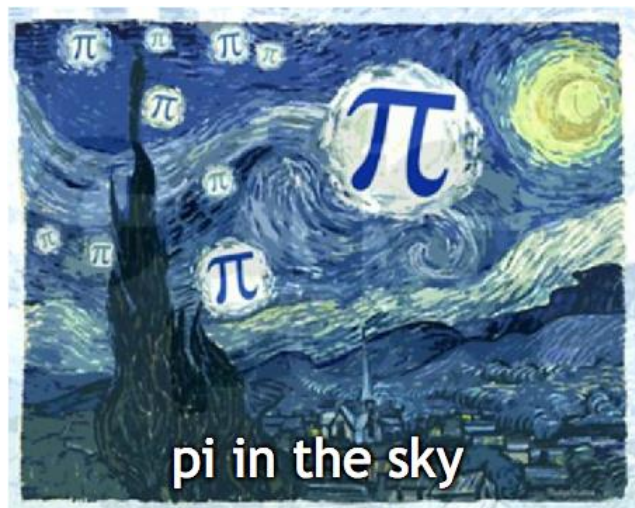
Mar. 3 – National Cold-cuts Day (good day to make a sandwich).

Mar. 6 – Remember the Alamo Day.

Mar. 8 – Daylight Savings Returns (adjust your clocks if you give a shit).

Mar. 14 – National Pi Day. (Square your hypotenuse today)

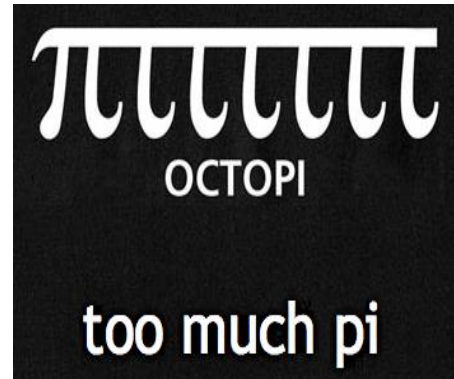
Mar. 20 – Spring Equinox



Mar. 21 – AOTC Equinox Potluck, 4pmish. Hosts; Virgil & Lucy Thorp. 8402 Pensacola Rd., Ft. Pierce (Lakewood Park) RSVP [vmthorp@outlook.com](mailto:vmthorp@outlook.com) or 772/466-8005, and for directions.

Mar. 28 – Word Appreciation Day (who knows what that means? Listen to John Prine's *Illegal Smile*).

April – National Poetry Month (or National Pastry Month, I can't read my own note scratches. Eat an éclair and recite a rhyme just to be safe).



Apr. 1 – April Fool's Day (don't let anyone tell you that you are not beautiful).

Apr. 8 – AOTC Journal 5-3 deadline. National Zoo Lover's Day (not for those with dirty minds).

Apr. 12 – Easter (Snowbirds looking North day).

Apr. 22 – Earth Day (pick up any litter you come across).

Apr. 26 – Chernobyl Remembrance Day (gaze across the Indian River between Midway and Walton roads and keep your fingers crossed).

Apr. 27 – National Prime Rib Day (Meat Lovers' delight).

May – National Barbeque Month

May 1 – International Tuba Day

May 5 – Cinco de Mayo (Taco Tuesday – Cinco de Mayo coincide – it's taco day!).



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### Thoughts from Daily Ingersoll



The myth of hell represents all the meanness, all the revenge, all the selfishness, all the cruelty of which the heart of man is capable.

– Robert Green Ingersoll



## An Assessment of AOTC Journal –

Virgil,

What can I say? In this journal there (is) some good writing interspersed with a lot of leftist claptrap, but there is some real writing talent here. I loved Yashi's memoir of the war years. Still digesting things, but would you please forward this to Dan Vignau? He cracks me up.

Dear Dan,

*"Senator Warren, we know you meant well in your identification with Native Americans. It was not your error, but the error of a culture of ego rationalization for the alleviation of the dissonance of self-hatred."*

What are you smoking, Dan, and where can I get some? "Give me a little time and I will concoct some psychobabble to justify Donald Trump's lies ... all right, make that a LOT of psychobabble."  
Kentex99



## Passings –

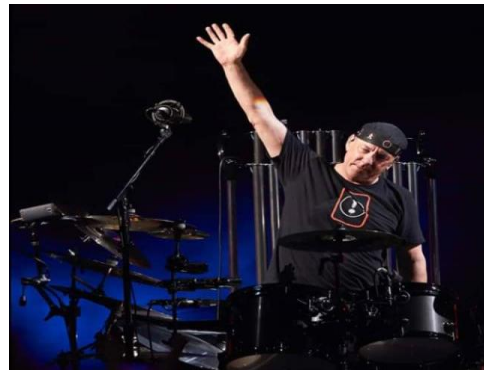
### **Terry Jones**

Frenetic Monty Python stalwart, Terry Jones, 1 February 1942 – 21 January 2020, portrayed Sir Bedevere in *"The Holy Grail"* and the infamous Mr. Creosote in the Python's irreverent *"The Meaning of Life"*.



### **Neil Peart**

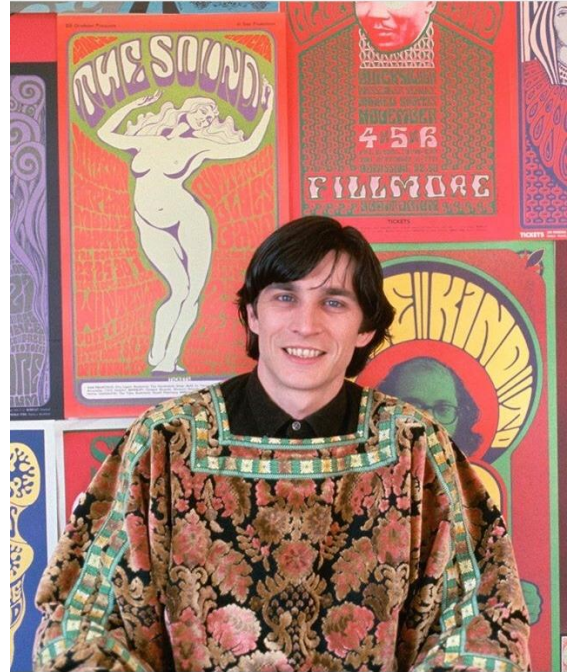
Drummer and lyricist for the Canadian Rock Super Group, *Rush*. Peart was renown for his exciting live performances, his technical proficiency and his stamina. Born September 12, 1952 Neil passed away January 7, 2020. The rock world mourns.



## Wes Wilson

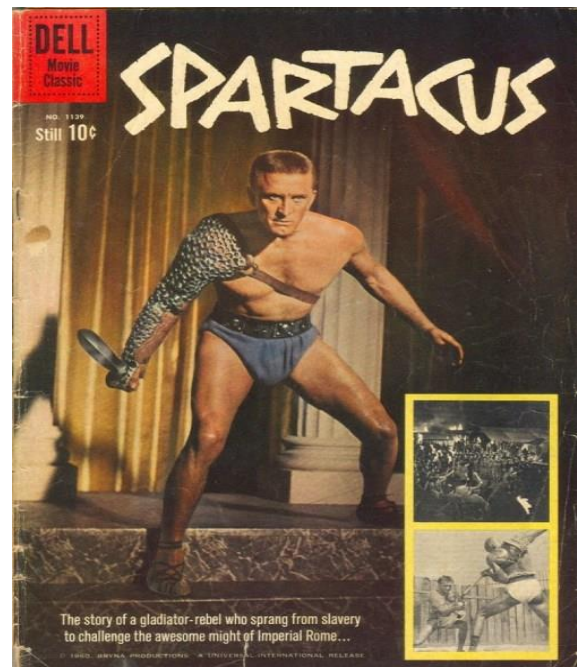
July 15, 1937 – January 30, 2020, Wilson was a Rock Concert poster artist of the early San Francisco hippie era. Wilson invented, *Psychedelic eraand*, a font that appeared to be moving or melting.

If you know of anyone who pack-ratted away an original poster from those days, they will have a very valuable relic.



## Kirk Douglas

He was Spartacus. Arguably the last of the Hollywood Golden Age leading men, Douglas, as a producer, broke the blacklist of the Hollywood 10 by hiring blacklisted screenwriter, Dalton Trumbo, to write the screenplay for the 1960 historical drama, *Spartacus*, directed by Stanley Kubrick. Douglas was 102 when he passed away February 5, 2020.



# COMMENTARY

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# Justice?

By Gale Baker

There has always been a complaint that justice was only for the rich and influential. [Not the poor and the dark of skin]

Now, every day we see that justice is being taken over by the White House and its toadies and that the separation of powers is being demolished. How can justice be saved? How can our all-important Constitution be saved? How can we be saved from tyranny?

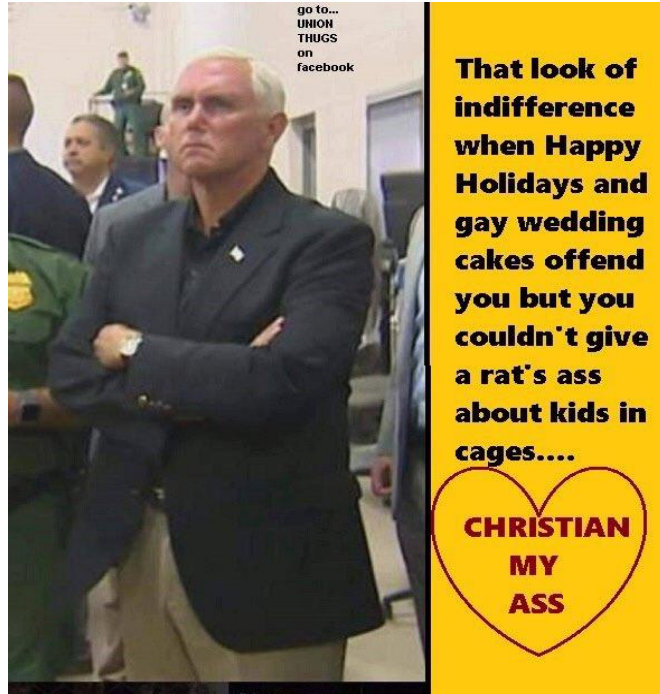
**"Socialism" means that society pools its resources to provide things for everyone. In America today, that includes:**

Fire departments	Medicare
Police	Social Security
Ambulances	FEMA
Public schools	GI bill
Public hospitals	National Parks
Student loans	Food & Drug safety
Veterans' benefits	NASA
National Weather Service	CDC
Road & bridge construction	Hazardous waste disposal & clean-up
Unemployment insurance	Sewers
Bank deposit insurance	Military

**Republicans want you to be afraid of socialism.**

**Which of these things scare you?**

Humorists' Christmas for America



Isn't there anyone out there strong enough to take our country back from Donald Trump without destroying our children's future?

Socialism may look good to young people who are searching for better and freer benefits; but young people [as we all were when we were young] think more about today than tomorrow. When I was young, I thought nothing about where I



would be now. I was indestructible. I never thought about what it would be like providing food and shelter for my future children, or taking care of them when they were sick, or sending them to college. Although we are the "smartest" people on earth when we are young; we have not yet realized that tomorrow will come no matter what we do.

Many young people now are so depressed they search for anyone to uplift them. Some are trying to solve the problems of their own futures, like climate change.

How will these young people vote? Hopefully with great scrutiny and not with campaign promises that can never be realized.

## Good Days come with love



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# 2017 World Series Champions Stealing Signs? Bodacious Brouhaha or Crotch Peeking?



By Bert Mautz

Distilled to its over simplistic essence, in any sport, playing defense amounts to guessing, or figuring out, somehow, what the team on offense is about to do; end around, bunt, drop back for a three-point basket, and stopping or interfering with that intention. Simultaneously the offense intends to deceive the defense, pretending to go left, but going right for huge yardage if it works. Virtually every competitive team sport depends on the dynamic of deception versus correct code breaking, guessing what's coming and stopping it.



The Astros being discovered banging garbage can lids to audibly signal a batter what pitch is coming from the center field camera broadcasting the catchers' pitch signs to the pitcher. For some reason this code breaking crossed the line of unfair gamesmanship. No different really than a teammate having reached second base, also clearly seeing the catcher's finger signs, interpreting them, and doing his own signals to the batter.



*Jose Altuve apologizing*

Signal stealing, taping quarterbacks play calls, for use in games is another no-no. Every game is taped. That's what the defensive coaches study with their players. "When he shouts these particular and likely nonsensical words; '*California-bingo-Montana*' to his offensive line, we drop back into pass defense mode."

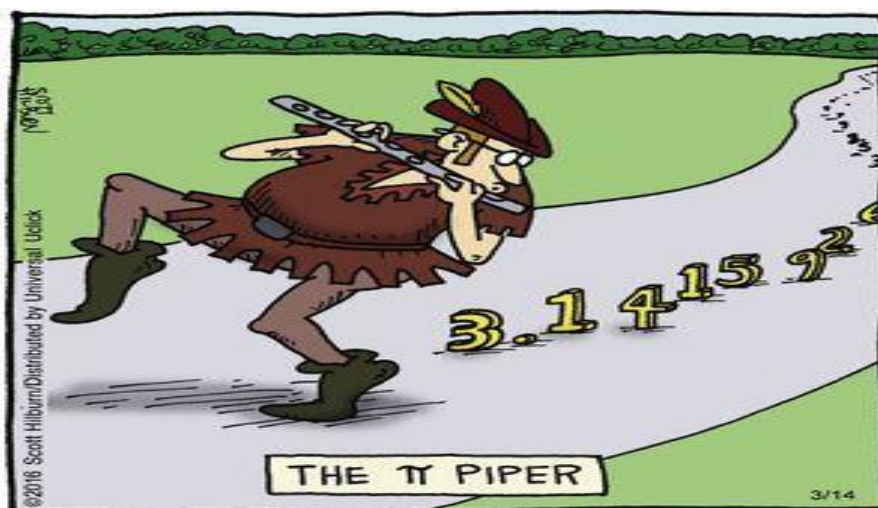
Everybody does it. Judging by past experiences the tapes are legal when made during the game in the stadium; and cheating when tapes come from sideline rehearsals shot from one team's booth. You tell me, what's the difference.

Quarterbacks have radios in their helmets. The green dot on the back says so. When will many more players have earphones and



receivers to get advanced cues from coaches up in the team booth? Then, surely, someone will figure how to hack those messages. Sounds way more sophisticated than banging trash can lids two times for an outside fast ball. Just sayin.

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# Speculative projection ... and rote learning

By Dan Vignau

*"The Lady doth protest too much, me thinks."*

This famous – oft misquoted – line from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was used when Queen Gertrude is asked about the leading lady's performance in a play within a play that Prince Hamlet used to try to trap his father's murderer. Gertrude was simply pointing out that anyone who blames someone else this fervidly, must have something to hide.

Freud called this phenomenon of, sometime vehemently, pointing to another person's guilt, projection. Akin to a movie projection, their own feelings of guilt are put on display, but through blaming someone else, thereby helping to resolve their inner cognitive dissonance of guilt for their own actions by giving the blame to someone else. We see it a lot when politicians and preachers, who are having homosexual affairs, rant and rave about the supposedly gay agenda.

*Why can't their supporters learn  
that they are being used?*





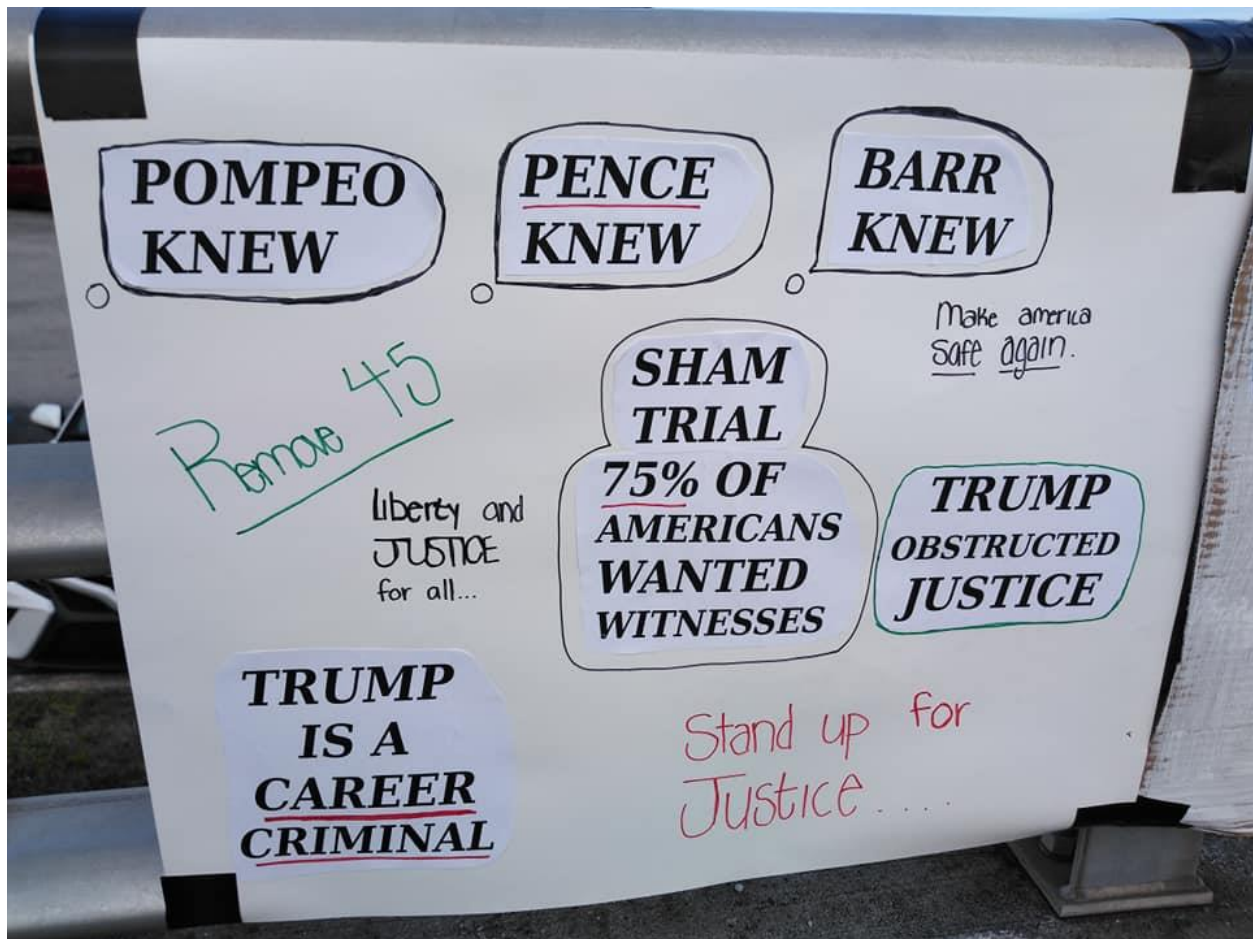
In addition to splitting America into *Us Versus Them*, as Reagan did when he kept asking, "Are you with us or against us?", the GOP has not only perfected this ego defense mechanism, but it has added reverse psychology and denial to this arsenal of lies by projecting guilt onto the other party's future actions.

Current fears and emotions are used to alleviate past guilt and blame, and to make their rote learning worshipers be totally brainwashed about what the GOP actually is doing now, covertly in the present, but also for they are planning in the future. Blame is preemptively placed onto the opposition both during and even before subversives acts which are being planned for the future. Here are some of the more overt:

*Voter Fraud? Hell yes, there is voter fraud.*

The GOP has been terribly successful by district gerrymandering, by suppressing voting blocs, by rigging voting machines and ballots – think of hanging chads – and by deleting voter registrations to win at all levels of placing their business interests, e.g. securing campaign donations, over the needs of the populace, and more importantly, over the security of our country. This business of securing money to stay in power is the main problem with our monopolistic form of capitalism.

*Because, their supporters are rote learners, void of reasoning skills.*



*America is being overrun by immigrants!*

They are the cause of our economic distress, not the trillions of dollars that workers make for their masters that are whisked away free of tax burdens, to never be seen again.

*Perverts are corrupting our youth!*

Of course they are, and the largest most evil of these perverts are the preachers and politicians, not the various genders that have always existed in all stable societies, nor the immigrants the business owners themselves import to support their profits at the expanse of American workers' wages.

*Why can't their supporters learn that they are being used?*

Because, their supporters are rote learners, void of reasoning skills. It was easy to fool these minions who already believe that a man in the sky will eternally punish them if they are not saved by the blood of Jesus.



We need a name for the phenomenon of projecting future crimes onto others, while hiding their own corrupt and deviant, at least to their followers, actions and sins. Besides, just knowing it is a sin makes it exciting.

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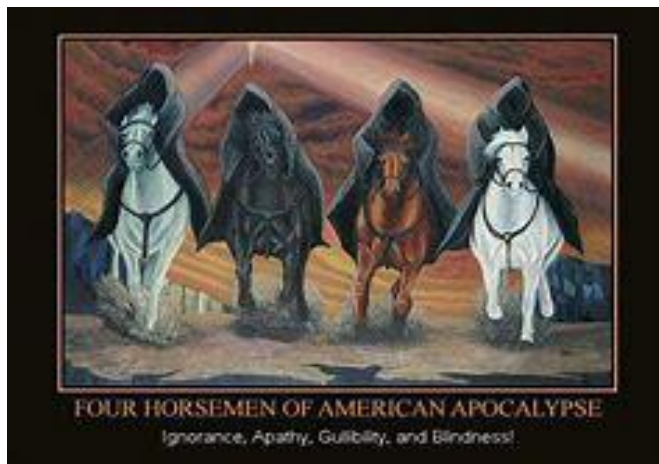
# Absolutely Nothing

By Virgil Thorp

I know of no one, who has experienced the terror of combat, who frivolously wishes to initiate an action that would unleash a consequence that is pestilence, war, famine and death; the legendary Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. No sane combat veteran would. Only the sick, only the twistedly childish would allow such a thought to become a mechanism on their fellow men and women and children; the kind of self-centered, scurrilous moron who says something stupid like, "nuke 'em till they glow."



Yet, I also identify with the traumatized, wounded souls who have lost comrades to the battlefield and sometimes ... their own precious bodily parts. Such a person is my congressman, the honorable, Brian Mast.



Brian's inner being was revealed in a "bearing witness" speech he gave recently in congress addressing the necessity of assassinating Iranian general and suspected guerrilla

warfare prodigy, Qassem Soleimani (whose name is remarkably similar to Sulieman the Magnificent, the 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman Sultan who conquered much of southeastern Europe), and





opposing the legislative restraint of the president's ability to start a war without congressional approval – the war powers act.

His address to congress started off much like I would have started it:

*"I know most in here haven't seen or heard or smelled that death, but let me tell you about it ..."*

The story by Abraham Mahshie in the Palm Beach Post (and reprinted in TC Palm newspapers) reported Mast delivered his "determined" remarks "forcefully", "passionately and painfully"

and apparently convinced the reporter that it was Soleimani who should be impeached for the crimes of warfare against humanity and President Trump was justified in ordering his assassination ... although Trump had approved the execution seven months previously.

*"They were burned alive inside of their Humvees, their lungs were scorched by the flames of the explosions," Mast said. "The vehicle fragments were blown into their skulls. Some of them had their legs blown off. Some of them will never see again. Some of them will never be recognized again by those who knew them previously."*

This attitude has been described as "War". Edwin Starr sang in 1969, "War-huh, good god ya'all, what is it good for? Absolutely nothin. Say it again!"



What is war? Action, reaction, escalation, hyperbole, let's march, let's nuke 'em until they glow?



*Dresden, Germany WW II  
devastation*

Attitudes towards who started what and who killed who, are now bouncing around like a scene from a Monty Python skit but unfortunately becomes more like a historical feud similar to the Hatfields and the McCoys – no one remembers who started it, but the dying continues. Someone is going to get killed and most often is it the poor unfortunates – considered “collateral damage” in modern

warfare lexicon – who just happen to be living in the area where belligerents want to play their pitiless games of death.

How casual can such conflicts be? In such volatile situations, some fool may start something that could bring us all to the brink of nuclear annihilation. Empirical evidence has shown there is no such thing as a “surgical strike” and collateral damage is always treated like an embarrassing “oops.”

*What have you made of me? I loaded  
those bombs. I armed those bombs*

*“Some of us are more suited to speak about different things based on our life experiences,”* Mast told the Palm Beach Post justifying his anger that his house colleagues had voted for the resolution which was really nothing but a symbolic spanking to a draft-dodging president who admires himself more like a mob boss than a statesman or diplomat. A man who has callously used the excuse of death to deflect from his own culpability and larceny and other high crimes and misdemeanors that he proudly

admits to nearly every day. A man who has no compunction about bringing us alarmingly close to a world conflagration.

Unfortunately, Brian bought that lie and responded like the cannon fodder he was and continues to be.

He explained, *"The more upsetting part to me was – as I brought it up – was that many people felt that we were not justified for killing*

*(Soleimani). That for me was the biggest rub of my life. That this guy has killed literally hundreds, would have been happy to kill thousands, would do it again if he could still do it and somehow there were folks that felt there wasn't this justification to remove him."*



I think Brian wants revenge – and I really can't blame him – but there can be horrendous, regretful consequences in the retribution business.

## *Those bombs were intended for belligerents firing back, not children*

Brutality affects humans differently and it causes some people to



become vindictive maniacs. Former Navy corpsman and SEAL, Eddie Gallagher, certainly could have been affected by the cruelty of war that led him to disgusting acts of inhumanity. Similar to my Vietnam generations' obsession with "gook" ear collections, Gallagher took pictures of his victims, posing for photographs with their

lifeless bodies and perversely bragging of his murdering of the old and the young. Somebody please explain the difference between Gallagher and some perverted serial killer. The shitty part is that Gallagher is *our* creation.

Samuel Johnson said, "Revenge is an act of passion, vengeance of justice, injuries are revenged, crimes are avenged." Who wouldn't want revenge for his legs? There is another quotation I like from an old Latin proverb that is even more revealing about Brian; "Revenge is a confession of pain."

I feel Mast's pain every time I read the story. I have felt that animosity to the enemies I faced, too. In Vietnam we had been indoctrinated into de-humanizing our foes into being "slopes", "chinks", and anything but a human being. However, I felt sick when a strutting A-4 Skyhawk pilot boasted about his accomplishment of bombing a mechanized vehicle that turned out to be a child on a bicycle and then smirked about dropping a 500-pound bomb on an old man fishing on a bank of a rice paddy for the squadron's daily sortie report.

*You made me an accomplice to their murders. You asshole!*

What have you made of me? I loaded those bombs. I armed those bombs. I assisted in the delivery of that death. Those bombs were intended for belligerents firing back, not children, not grandfathers. And you made me an accomplice to their murders. You asshole!





*"By the rules of war, he was a lawful target,"* Mast declared about Soleimani as he was rationalizing his warmongering.

Brian, I'm sure your words are soothing to you but what about the families of the 176 innocent persons on Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 who suffered because our morons and their morons felt validated in playing a game with weapons that know no pity or unintentional targets.



*Faces of the victims of flight 752*

But didn't those same enemies, those same "lawful targets", feel justified to set ambushes, to maim and kill for what they felt were equivalent reasons, as well? It's almost like looking into a mirror. If you were them, wouldn't you do the same if all you had were crude elements that could be fashioned into IED's? You sure would if it had been your daughter on her bike blown to smithereens or your granddaddy reduced to a smoking hole on the bank of a rice paddy. Let's be truthful. Hearts and minds, *n'est-ce pas*?

The questions burn my soul; who wants it? Why do they want it? Do they want it for their children, their wives, their mothers and fathers? Their grandmothers and grandfathers? Their tiny,

precious grandchildren? If I think about us, what about “them”, the enemy? I shudder when I think about the absurdity of the vicious results.

I come back to the idiot who snickered as he said, “nuke ‘em till they glow.” It can only be stupidity for anyone to say such a noxious thing. There is no humor in it. Someone should show such idiots full color pictures of people with radiation poisoning and sickness. It would have to be pictures, because the poor irradiated subjects would not last long enough for you to escort the bellicose militants to some hospital that has patients from a nuclear accident.

## *I shudder when I think about the absurdity of the vicious results*

Sanctioning a war of revenge could be disastrous. Confucius purportedly said, “before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves.” In this case there are 176 extra graves to dig. Will there be more?



# THE WAY WE WERE

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“I grew up in this house.”

By Bert Mautz

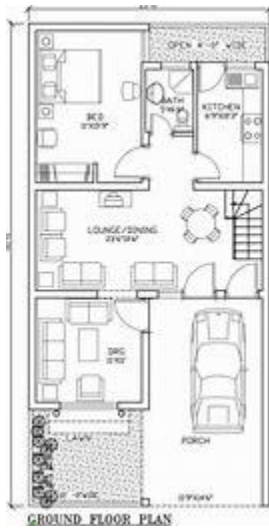
Bonding with the home, the physical house in which you grew up, your parents' home combined with the neighborhood and one's schools, form lifelong impressions. A recent article in the *Times* recount a now elderly couple figuring out how they can continue living in their four-story Brooklyn brown stone. In this case the verticality and resulting stairs are the challenge. The couple are determined not to have to move out. They've been in their home for decades and intend to continue, but for all those stairs.



*“How long  
did you live here?”*

A succession of houses can affect one in absolute terms. Surrendering two substantial brick homes, both in good school districts accounts for my negligible personal wealth at this stage in my life. Thus, the final “cottage,” on the water required gutting and re-do, as defined by this now bachelor architect.

Regarding the architecture, the design, the appearance of one's home matters to many homeowners. Have sat at the dining room table with homeowners, sketching and resketching a bathroom mirror and light fixture detail to achieve the owner's satisfaction. For some, their house, perhaps like their car is an expression of



who they are. Whether it be class, social standing, wealth, even values, their physical house says things about them, and with design they can project those messages, subtle or not. It must be mentioned, there are those who defiantly live in direct contrast to the image their home makes. "It's only shelter, where I sleep at night. It isn't who I am."

John had been my next-door neighbor for my eighteen years on Channel Avenue. Adjacent driveways only added to the frequency of contact between two long time bachelors. During a brief conversation this morning, just a week since John sold and closed on his house, I asked, "How long did you live here?"

With a wistful expression emerging on his face, "It's been twenty-six years. Ya know, I grew up in this house."

"John, that's almost half of your life. Yeah, I guess that's possible. Something to think about." Said our well wishes for the week ahead, and John drove off.

*"It's been  
twenty-six years."*

There was always a lot going on over at John's place. Not the least of which were a series of lovely women; moved in, lived next door for a couple of months, or years, and moved on. John was a carpenter and cabinet maker in his early professional years. Told me he took a Dale Carnegie public speaking course, elevating his effervescent personality and went into sales. As I was remaking my little house on Frazier creek, John took on similar projects, so we compared notes. Designed my cabinets but hired Andy to saw up sixty sheets of birch plywood to build them.



During his twenty-six years on Channel Avenue. John recovered from alcoholism, sold that hideous aluminum boat, built a lovely trellis on our property line, joined and was active in a happy Christian church, and became further involved with sobriety classes for fellow recovering souls. A sociable guy. John hosted "yard concerts." Built a stage platform for bands, so close to our lot line, I would invite a party of my own in my screen porch. We would take up a collection and one of my guests would run over

and give the cash to John in the midst of all the music and commotion.



*"Ya know,  
I grew up  
in this  
house."*



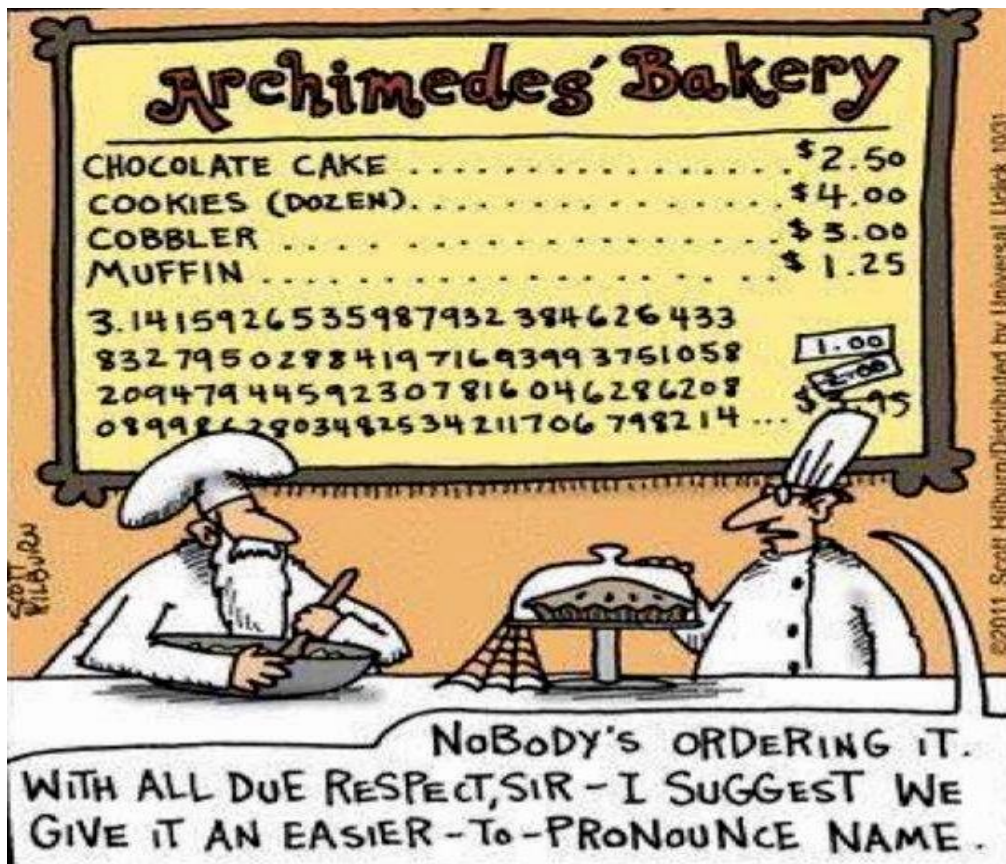
His "burning man" celebration consumed his entire yard with a tented cafe setting so that the actual eight-foot-tall effigy stood in my yard where it exploded via fireworks into raging flame. Consumed before any neighbors could become alarmed enough to call for emergency help. The satellite party on my porch was not dry. John's bartender dispensed soft drinks.

A magnificent oak shrouds John's front yard. Wondered when the next hundred miles-per-hour storm was going to knock it down. Love that tree.

Park my car beneath its outstretched eastern limbs. Worry it presents a mortal danger to the house and fear the new owner might see the same threat and remove the grandest tree on Channel Avenue.

Miss you, John.

bert



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**The Volatile Mermaid** @OhNoSheTwitnt 20h...

If kids can't go to school without fear of being killed & women can't go to Planned Parenthood without fear of being killed & Black people can't go anywhere without fear of being killed, at the very least Trump shouldn't get to leave the White House without fear of being booed.



# The Tellers of Time

By Betty Tewksbury

I can remember how special I felt, when Grampy Arthur took his big heavy Railroad Watch from his pocket, unclipped it from his watch fob and passed it to me to hold. It was gold in color with some scrolling on the back of the case and the case had to be opened to see the watch face. I think I was four at the time. He would then proceed to explain how the hands pointed to the time of day.



We had two other clocks in the house, one a nondescript wall clock that hung over the kitchen table. The other a Mantle type clock that sat on an end table in the living room. This time piece had a kind of large ornate gold metal horse that had the clock face within its body. I often imagined it to be a real horse and, in my daydreams, fantasized what it would be like to ride it.

Time did not seem to dictate my life as much as the daylight did. I woke up at daybreak and evenings twilight dictated bedtime. Other than mother's voice commands during daylight there were no time constraints.



Remembering back, not until I started school, did a timepiece emerge as important. Then there was the school bus, which I had to be on time for; that meant getting up before daylight, getting dressed, eating breakfast, bundling up for a half mile walk to the bus stop.



The first few days mother would accompany me, then it was an older next-door cousin and my dog Blacky. That dog was by my side every morning and would, on her own, be at the bus stop for the walk home, she must have her own innate way of telling time.



I think I was six or seven when, for a Christmas gift, Uncle Frank gave me a Davy Crockett watch; that was the start of my true time awareness. It was right there on my wrist, and being a huge Davy Crockett fan, I looked at my watch often. I can't remember, what watch replaced the original, I think it was a Disney watch, maybe a Cinderella, not sure though.

The next important upgrade came in the form of a grown-up Timex, which I purchased myself with money earned at Woolworth's Five and Dime.



By then, time ruled, I had school and work, which meant time really mattered. Would not let myself be late, I always thought and still do, that it is totally disrespectful to keep some one waiting.

There would be many more watches in my life from those early years up thru today. There have been just a few though that have stood out. The first being the Davy Crockett and the next being a real gold watch, a gift from Harold on our



twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. Those watches at whatever cost, all performed the mundane task of telling time.

Then fast forward to Christmas 2019 when my daughter and her husband presented me with an ankle bracelet style watch; I say that with “tongue in cheek”. She explained how this watch would help keep me safe, I would not have to hurry down the stairs, but could answer the incoming calls on my cell phone, via my watch, also she

explained it could be programmed to monitor my wellbeing and call “her”, the chosen responsible person, in the event of a heart or body malfunction. I have found it also reminds me to stand, exercise and even, yes breathe. It has Theater mode that darkens the screen and puts it in silent mode. It has apps, the weather, the date, can send and receive e-mails and yes, with all of that and more, it does tell time.



I have not dared to speak the words “Beam me up Scotty” in fear of what may happen.

Whatever happened to the good old days when a watches’ only function was to relay to its owner the correct time.

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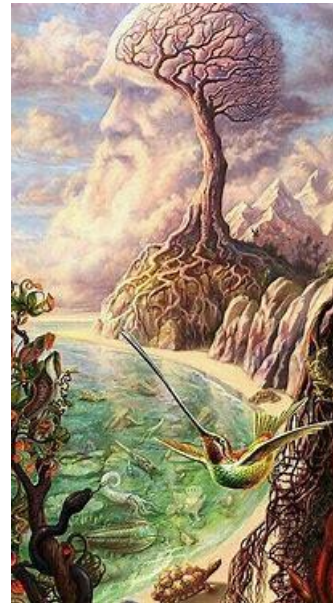
# ARTICLES

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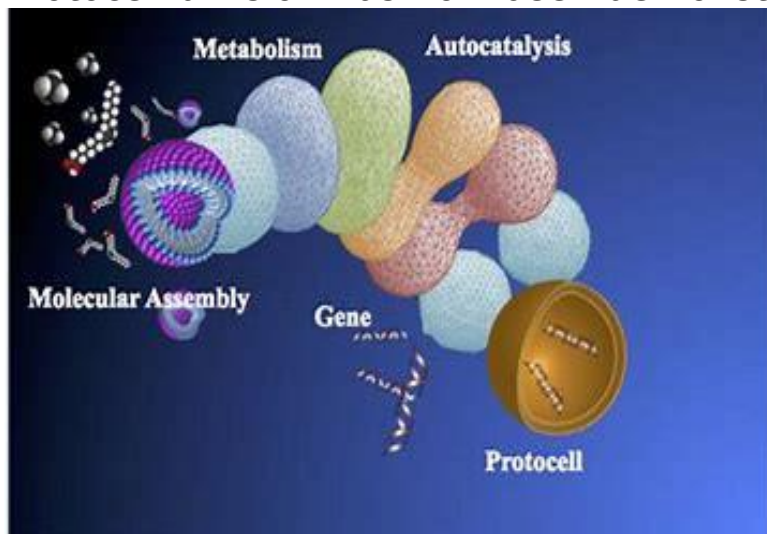
## The Many Paths to Creation

By Ed Zillioux

The explanation of Darwinian evolution has, in the past, gotten hung up on the question of what kick-started the whole process. That's no longer the case. The search for a self-replicating precursor of life on Earth, once thought to be an intractable problem, is now yielding to broader scientific enquiry. It turns out that there are many possible mechanisms that might have led to the self-sustaining replication of nucleic acids and the cellularization of genetic material that is the basis of life on Earth.

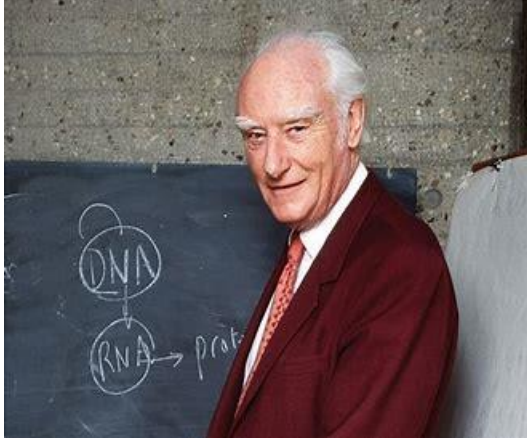


Protocell division has now been demonstrated based on simple



physical and chemical mechanisms. Simple organic replicators also can be generated, and chance trial and error in template-substrate pairings would have led to more robust replicators. Once an early replicator established itself, the feedback cycle leading

to the evolution of additional catalysts would have been difficult to derail. It all might have taken millions of years, but that's nothing but a blink in the geological time scale. Strong candidates for early replicators are RNA enzymes or ribozymes.



*Francis Crick, Nobel Prize winner*

**W**e carry RNA (ribonucleic acid, the single-strand cousin of the familiar double-strand DNA) in every cell in our bodies. Francis Crick and others have espoused the concept of RNA as a primordial molecule and its presence in modern cells has been referred to as fossils of nucleic acid enzymes. That is, our cellular RNA is likely an evolutionary remnant of an

RNA-based enzymatic system that preceded the protein-based one seen in all extant life, although it has taken on a number of essential tasks so it's still paying its own way. But there are so many plausible paths to prebiotic synthesis that we don't even need to evoke RNA enzymes for the Grand Initiation. It could have started with just a simple gas mix and an electric spark.

*As the temperature cooled, organic molecules formed under the blanket of hydrogen, and it is thought that these molecules linked up to form the first self-replicating RNA, thus triggering the Great Initiation of life on Planet Earth.*

Nevertheless, many, or most, researchers still agree that life as we know it likely emerged from an RNA world. It is now postulated that the formation of RNA may have occurred as early as 4.35 billion years ago – a mere 183 million years after the Earth was formed. It took another 920 million years (3.43 billion years ago) before the first fossils attributed to microorganisms were laid down and preserved in crystals of zircon. This scenario favors a much earlier emergence of life on Earth than previously imagined.

This series of events was precipitated when a moon-sized object sideswiped the Earth only 40 million years after our own Moon was formed. The resulting explosion left an orbiting cloud of molten iron and other debris. The metallic hailstorm that followed split oxygen atoms from water leaving hydrogen behind. The oxygen bonded readily with the iron forming the rust-colored iron



oxide deposits that encircle our planet in a uniformly dated geological stratum. As the temperature cooled, organic molecules formed under the blanket of hydrogen, and it is thought that these molecules linked up to form the first self-replicating RNA, thus

triggering the Great Initiation of life on Planet Earth.

Sources include:

Gollihar et al., "Many Paths to the Origin of Life," Science Vol 343:259-260, 17 Jan 2014

Encyclopaedia Britannica Blog on "The Origin of Life in an RNA World" (<http://www.britannica.com/blogs/2009/05/the-origin-of-life-in-an-rna-world/>).

Science vol. 363, 11 January 2019

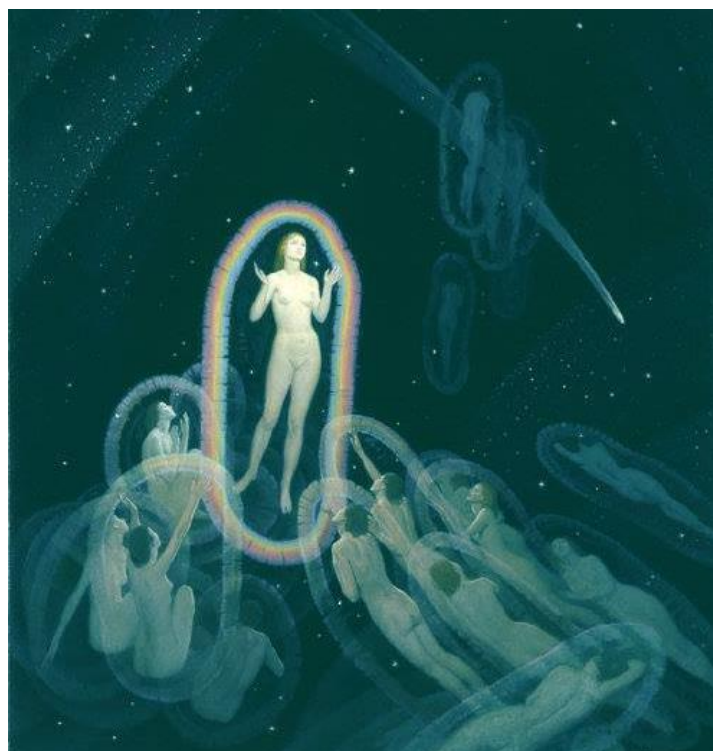
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# Building One's Own Heaven

By Yashi Nozawa

**No** person wants to talk about death, especially on his or her birthday. That day should be a happy and joyous occasion. However, once we become senior citizens, we cannot escape thinking about this subject because we know death is approaching and is inevitable. A famous Japanese Zen Buddhist, called **Ikkyuu**, being asked by his followers to make a birthday poem according to Japanese custom, recited the following:



*Everybody celebrates the birthday  
and congratulates each other.  
However, if you think deeply  
you will realize that the birthday  
is another way station  
toward the final goal  
of your continuous journey,  
namely death.*

He wrote this poem for a wealthy patron on New Year's Day, but at that time, every person became one year older in the old Japanese age counting system. So, I modified the poem to convey the original meaning correctly.

Many of us, like myself, who live in a retirement community in South Florida, often referred to as *retirees' paradises*, are senior citizens preparing for the final stage of our lives. Accountants and lawyers are constantly bombarding us with phrases like, "prepare for the sake of your loved ones."



Preparing for the survivors is a commendable action, and it should be done as soon as possible. However, are we ready for our inevitable death? Many people would probably say yes, they are. Nevertheless, talking about death seems not to be a pleasant subject. I want to change that attitude. This article is the beginning of the move.

We know there is no such thing as an after-death world. Our physical body will decompose to its original elements as time goes on. The soul, if it exists, resides in a brain, which will disappear when the person dies. Death means eternal peace for the person, when nothing will be there for him or her. This is the true picture of the after-death world. So, it seems there is nothing to think about. Some of our believer friends are constantly worrying about after-death because they wish to go to heaven rather than to hell.

Non-believers never worry about going to hell or to heaven, since no such world exists for them. That's the reason we don't worry about or talk about the issue of an after-death world. However, there is another way to think about an



after-death world. Even though there is no real heaven or hell we can't imagine them. The forefathers of Christianity and other religions invented such an imaginary world as a tool for proselytism of their religions. They also successfully convinced millions of people to believe in the existence of an after-death world for their souls and forced them to cling to their religions for their entire lifetime with the fear of going to hell for eternal damnation if they did not.

## *A woman worried about how to deal with her two former husbands in heaven*

We non-believers have been simply ignoring such nonsense. However, we could also create our own imaginary after death world for our entertainment. An advantage of the creation of our own imaginary after-death world is that we could make our own process of death more fun and enjoyable rather than solemn and serious occasions. This does not require that we believe in the existence of such an imaginary after-death world. We may not realize that we have been regularly getting pleasure out of the imaginary worlds of fiction, plays, movies, and television show dramas. Why don't we extend our imagination to the after-death world?

Once we decide to create our own imaginary heaven to which we are intending to go and live forever, the process of planning and designing that heaven will become entertaining and exciting. A simple thing like building a new house will involve lots of your thinking and decision making. Now you can build your own world without any constraint of budgets, materials, and even technology. How exciting will that be! It will be beyond your imagination! Every heaven is tailor made to your specifications. It

will be an imaginary world, but you can enjoy the process of design and construction.

Our own heaven will be the true ideal world, which you may call a utopia. I know we cannot build a true utopia on this earth, but we can build it in our heaven in the after-death world.

Existing religions often claim their versions of heaven and hell in the after-death world. Sometimes, they promise you heaven on earth in the unspecified future, when you will have been dead long before. Even in these heavens, their details are vague and non-concrete. For instance, in the Kingdom of God, or the world of the second coming, their details are not disclosed. They simply say that God will fit in the world for his way. Our heaven is different. We can specify every detail in whichever way we want.



*Photo by Albert Finch*

For instance, one elderly woman became a widow while she was young. She had a hard time to forget the first husband, but eventually she overcame her grief and married a second time. She also loved the second husband, who also died after only a few years. Because of her advanced age, she expected to die soon, she hoped and was convinced that she would go to the Christian heaven. However, she worried about how to deal with her two former husbands in heaven. She asked several priests how her two husbands would react when they'd see her in heaven. Their answers were all the



same. They said that she should not worry about that, because God will take care of it properly. She never obtained any satisfactory answer, just advice to pray more and have faith in God.

## *She asked a priest how her two husbands would react when they'd see her in heaven*

If she would be able to design and to build a heaven for herself, her problem would be solved easily. My proposed design for her heaven is as follows. Her heaven consists of two separate sub-worlds: one for her youthful world where her first husband lives. When she visits or lives in that first world, she will be young and never get old. In the second sub-world, her second elderly husband lives. When she stays or goes there, she will be elderly, too. She can live in either world whenever she chooses. As to who else lives in these sub-worlds, she can decide on whoever she wants. The environments of these worlds she can set up in the way she likes. If she wants, she can have another sub-world in her heaven, which can be the world of her own without her husband. A good thing in the designer's heaven is that nobody will be bored in heaven. There is always something going on or nothing goes on if a person wants eternal peace and calm oblivion.

We might have a hard time to convince her to accept this version of heaven, because her belief in Christianity would prevent her from accepting such an idea. If she is a nonbeliever like me, then there will be no problem to convince her. There is no Christian heaven or hell – in reality. In the same



*Muslim heaven*

token, our own ideal heaven does not exist – in reality. All heavens, Christians, Muslims, or ours, exists in the make believe, imaginary world. The only difference between our heaven and others is that our heavens are open to everyone who would like to have their own heavens. Anybody can build his or her own heaven in the imaginary after-death world.

*She never obtained  
any satisfactory answer,*



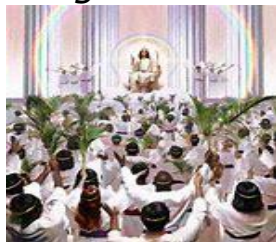
*just advice to pray*

The following are some examples of simple designer Heavens.

*Eternal peace model:* there is nothing in the heaven, even you do not exist there. Absolute peace and quiet occupies this world. This is a default model for the person who does not want any designer's heaven. This is the real after-death world.



*Religious model:* this model dominates with the religious theme of choice. God of the selected religion presides at this heaven. Everyone does limited activities such as constant prayers, hymn singing, and music playing. These events continue forever. Most believers will go there as a default. It is a very



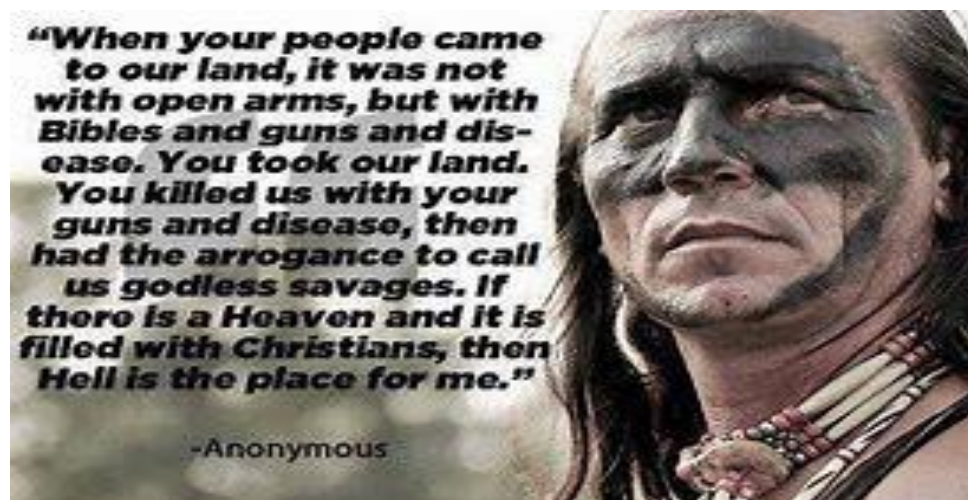
boring place, and average persons probably feel like living in a hell.

*Hobby orientated model:* this is the most popular model and suited to a person who has one or more specific interest in particular activities, such as reading books, attending plays, playing golf, and watching television. You can enjoy your hobby anytime with anyone at any place. If you have more than one interest, you can switch your activities from time to time. A good thing in participating in activities in your heaven is that you will be an expert and are never injured or tired.

*Mass assembly model:* this is a model for politicians, military leaders, coaches, teachers and others who like to deal with many people together. In this heaven you can exercise your power over selected groups of people in any place, anytime and on any occasion.

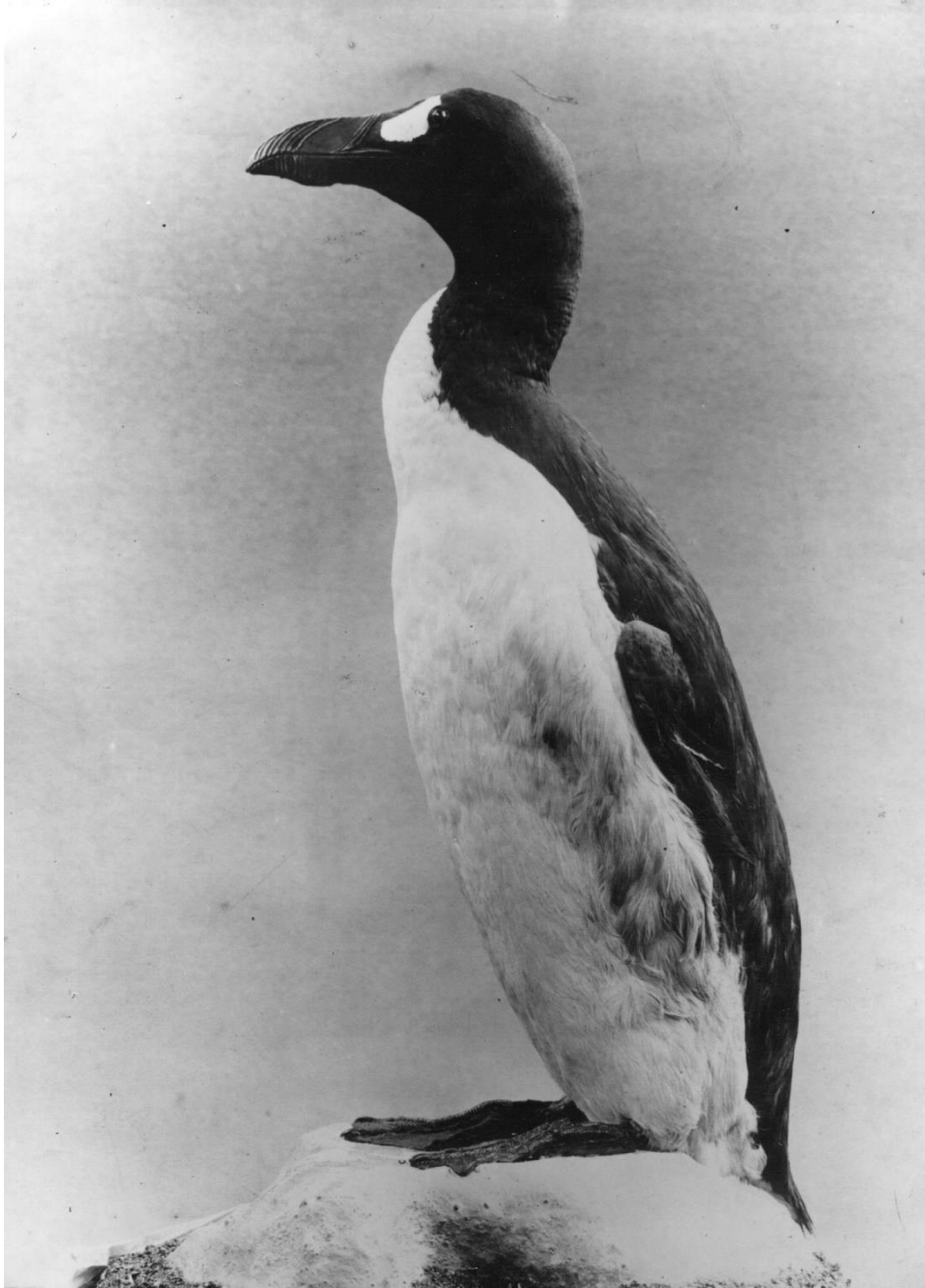
These are simple versions of basic models. As in a real world, your design heaven can have many different variations. If you do not want to design heaven by yourself, you can obtain predesigned models from someone. Nowadays, computer simulation and graphic design capability is so advanced, you can build a realistic heaven in the virtual world of the computer. So, if you want to think about the after-death world, why don't you try to design

your  
heaven?  
You will  
spend your  
remaining  
time joyfully  
and  
usefully,  
because  
other



people may learn from your heavenly design.

# Who Killed the Great Auk?



by Jeremy  
Gaskell,  
Oxford  
University  
Press, 2000

Adapted by  
Ken Teixeira

For centuries,  
great auks  
(*Pinguinus  
impennis*)  
occupied the  
chilly islands  
near Iceland,  
Greenland,  
and northern  
Scotland. The  
penguin-like  
creature was  
clumsy on  
land but a  
torpedo in the  
sea. It wasn't  
a gull or a  
puffin. Plump  
and  
tuxedoed, it  
stood 3 feet

tall and had comedically short 6-inch wings. It feasted on fish and



had a low, croaking scream. It was flightless, monogamous, and nested in some of the world's iciest, and most rugged, territory.

An auk was a very valuable commodity. Locals valued its meat, which fishermen used as food and bait, Sailors coveted the oil rendered from the bird's fat, and pillow-makers prized the auk's feathers. So, when a Scottish fisherman saw an auk around July 1840, it's likely he and his two companions saw dollar signs. For an unknown reason, however, they made the unusual decision to take the bird alive. One of the men, Malcolm MacDonald, approached the snoozing bird, snagged it by the neck, and lassoed its legs together. Unsurprisingly, the auk woke and began to wail and, as the bird screamed, rain began to fall.

The men decided to wait out the storm in a small hut, and they took the bird inside with them. One day passed, then a second. Rain and wind continued to roar, and the swelling waves prevented the men from returning to their boats and heading home. The bird kept screaming whenever anybody approached and by day three, everyone (the bird included) was at wit's end. The fishermen concluded that there was only one cause for their bad luck: the bird was no bird at all. It was a storm-conjuring witch.

And there was only one way to deal with a weather-controlling witch: it had to be killed. The men proceeded to beat the auk with large stones and sticks until it was lifeless. Decades later, historians learned that this bird was likely the last great auk in Great Britain.



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# Virgin Lutheran Girls

By Virgil Thorp

*"Don't you want to  
marry a virgin?"*



The question was asked by a very earnest stepmother. Her concern stemmed from an observation that the young man she was talking to, recently discharged from the military, only seemed to enjoy the company of what, in her opinion, were shallow, fashion-model type women – fast-living, wayward trollops in her estimation – no one she or his father, would prefer. They were all statuesquely beautiful and exotic, but they looked to her like they were also dangerously self-indulgent and decadent. She was certain they would not only break her stepson's impressionable heart but would also lead him into infinite sin.

It amused the stepson because she had asked the same question five years earlier. Back then he had pretty much agreed with her since he was at a virginal stage in his development himself and the majority of his modest sexual experience had been personal masturbation. Kind of like; *What do I have in my hand? And, why does it feel so good!?! In the past five years he had taken the opportunity to add a lot of experiences and absorb an encyclopedia's worth of knowledge.*

His Stepmother continued in a totally guileless manner, almost like she was selling an insurance policy. "Someone you could be certain was pure and innocent?"



Or was she discussing a warrantee? *True Love Waits purity ceremony* "Only a virgin could be a guarantee of loyalty and devotion," – *sign here for marital bliss and punch her hymen with your penis like a gift card. After ten punches you get a free blowjob!*

*Fuck no*, he thought but instead of replying with a profanity that would be nothing else but an insult, the young man simply smiled and took on a meditative look, masking his disinterest. He furrowed his forehead like he had been deeply touched by her fastidious concern.

"Would finding a virgin – to marry – to have a family with – would that make me happy, you think?" he asked as if he were entreating her for a blessing, his face radiating pensive sincerity and then having to bite his lips together to keep from laughing; an act which only made his face speak an even more eloquent soliloquy of candor. A cloak for his sarcasm.

She was beaming because she thought he was at last listening to her wisdom. "Oh yes, you know your father and me only want the best for you."

He nodded and blinked his eyes, one long one and a series of shorts hoping he wasn't telegraphing a message. Her grammar was no better than her insight, he reflected with sardonic amusement.

"Like Mary Brockman?" he asked with a toothy *voila* type smile and a slight cocking of his head, something he had seen Michael Caine do in *Alfie*. He felt he was becoming a pretty good actor.



"Maybe. If you like her. I know she likes you. But yes, Mary would be perfect. She plays the organ in church. She's a – good – Lutheran – girl."

A *GOOD Lutheran girl* flashed on the screen of his inner monologue like a horror movie whose crimson title logo bristled with sharp hungry teeth. He wondered if she was going to add "pretty" or "cute" to finish her sentence as an extra two bits to give her offer some blue sky, but she didn't.

A good – *boring* – Lutheran girl. That would give a person a perpetual frown, or a dull ache. It took a great deal of inner gumption to keep from yawning. Now, a bad girl, Lutheran or not, would be more his speed. He knew that somewhere they had to exist. A Lutheran girl? A bad Lutheran girl? Why not compromise with a *bad-good* Lutheran girl if that were possible. Maybe that would make his parents happy, he mused.

She took his nodding head as a sign that her sales pitch had legs. If they had been on the same wavelength, she would have known that the legs would have to include a fine ass and a great set of tits topped off with an adventurous personality and an agile brain.

His thoughts were decidedly different from his stepmother's. Anything but a good – *boring* – Lutheran girl and of course, that kind of Lutheran girl would mean that she would have bought into that nonsense about saving her virginal body for her husband. The veiled dominating message was clear; "you can only taste the delights of my temple if you prostrate yourself before my alter. Submit."



No ding-ding without the ring-ring! How could that be fair? There was something inherently uncomfortable and disconcerting hidden in the conventional, but it did have an aroma; like a trap or a hidden pool of festering quicksand.

## *Lover? Sure...*

That's all he knew in his initial clumsy juvenile explorations. Rejection. That tentative investigation for the answer to what all the giggling was about behind closed and locked bedroom doors. Education was what he wanted but all he got from good Lutheran girls was, "Don't touch that, don't stroke me there, don't unzip me, don't! Leave those alone! You are all hands! No; no, no, NO!"

## *Playmate? Certainly...*

"Alright, whatever you say." And then he'd sit back in his seat, fixing his hands on the steering wheel so they wouldn't stray, even for just a friendly tickle. He wasn't going to force anyone to play. Julie, Karen, Mary Brockman? *Boring*. He wouldn't like that and there would be no second date. He wasn't interested in being anybody's husband. Lover? Sure. Playmate? Certainly. Husband? Naaah.

He had attempted to find out who had wanted to play and some of his dates were ushered a few steps further as he kissed their breaths away with a wicked tongue and mischievous brushing lips that many gasping women had declared to be a prodigy. A Mozart of make-out at the 63<sup>rd</sup> Street drive-in theater passion pit.

## *Husband? Naaah...*

Make out but that was all, maybe a pet over the blouse and the Kleenex tissue stuffed bra, but not one digit was allowed to stray underneath the shirt and certainly not down the belly to the steamy "Y" between the legs; even if she was squirming and

moist, panting with desire. Good girls – especially good Lutheran girls – don't mess around that way and he had been unable to persuade them no matter how extraordinary his oral talents were.

But, if she would be a *really* good-bad, bad-good Lutheran girl, one he'd consider for matrimony, she'd be using her time differently. She wouldn't keep her charms to herself. She would be out preparing. She'd be studying. She'd be learning how to deep throat. She'd hopefully get some gay male porn to learn how to suck that chrome off his trailer hitch. She'd be adventurous and not afraid to get a little sweaty, salty and sprawled.

She'd experiment with chemicals that altered her reality and challenged her perceptions. She'd kick open that door to Huxley's visions and discover her own universe. She would find the melding ying and yang between her mind and her body accepting that she was a warm-blooded creature with a vagina, an organ of tissues and folds as necessary to life as petals are important to flowers.

She'd like to screw. Places to screw would be explored, defined and categorized ... and she'd like to screw in the outdoors at a



campout. She'd be vocal and if there were any other campers in their vicinity, those campers would be moving their tents to another location early the following morning.

And if she was a Lutheran, she'd like to screw in the little nook



where the Mary and Martha Alter Guild stashed the communion wine, bracing herself against the sink and joyfully sharing shots of Mogen David Concord while taking his fiery thrusts from behind. Funny, the pastor's daughter, of all people, once attempted a pitiful seduction with him in that nook, but he had been a virgin himself and neither of them knew what to do, so it went nowhere. Her chance to be a good-bad Lutheran girl had been a dismal fumble. That experience would have been the proverbial ball for them both a few years later, but that was then, and this was now.

No, the girl he'd want would be an experienced, worldly woman. She'd know what she wanted. She'd also know what she did not.

Whoever suggested something kinky, be it whips, chains or ostrich feathers, would only have to wait a required moment's consensual consideration before the activity would probably be enthusiastically welcomed. It would be a relationship of harmonic equations, a balance of give and take, pleasure and fulfillment.

She'd grasp him by the crotch and pull him into a theater's restroom and straddle him as he sat on the toilet and they would not care if anyone else came in to piss and ended up peeking under the stall to see what all the commotion was about. To see someone actually fucking.

She'd like reading porn to each other in bed on cold nights, taking turns reading salacious passages aloud while the other orally teased and taunted, making a game of seeing who could finish a chapter and who would cum and/or make a demand for climactic satisfaction. To throw the book down and mount him like a cowgirl would her stallion.

*She'd command him to  
"red-dog me like a porn star"*

She'd be a girl who – deep down – would be diametrically opposite to his stepmother's virginal, sweetness and light, pretentious paradigm. The paradigm that was not really a charlatan, but an imposter just the same.

His stepmother really did have motherly feelings for him even if she was who she was; a middle-class, middle-American, middle-aged housewife very content to be bourgeoisie. She was convinced the best way a person could be was republican and she honestly felt that with a little religion, her rebellious stepson would find contentment and goodness in his life.

No offense to her good will intended, but he did not agree.



He was certain that fundamentally, his stepmother felt that it was a bad thing to be too educated, to search for and study heretical science, to accept secular philosophies. He was only a tad sorry he had to reject his worthy stepmother's advice and knew she'd have no choice but to accept it – if and when – he would choose an individual to cohabit with who was the direct opposite of who she was promoting. He had no other regrets as to how he had gotten here and to what his future held.



A good Lutheran girl would not do. A *bad-good* Lutheran girl perhaps would, however. That *bad-good* Lutheran girl would have to be an individualist who would surprise him every day. She would have renounced that conformist Lutheran-Christianity dogma like he had. She'd feel no false discomfort while in a passionate embrace to verbally command him to "red-dog me like a porn star, you fucker!"

Nope, that girl was not the staid, virginal organist, Mary Brockman surreptitiously hiding her true sadistic mistress-slave nature behind that pious facade. Nope, not a chance in hell!

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# POETRY, PROSE N' FICTION

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## Langston Hughes' *Mother to Son*

Well, son, I'll tell you:  
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.  
It's had tacks in it,  
And splinters,  
And boards torn up,  
And places with no carpet on the floor --  
Bare.  
But all the time  
I've been a-climbin' on,  
And reachin' landin's,  
And turnin' corners,  
And sometimes goin' in the dark  
Where there ain't been no light.  
So boy, don't you turn back.  
Don't you set down on the steps  
'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.  
Don't you fall now --  
For I've still goin', honey,  
I've still climbin',  
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.



Pastel drawing of Hughes  
by Winold Reiss

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# The Holy Peaceful Agnostic Church

By Jim Longo

"Let's give a warm welcome to the big *No Sabe* himself, head of the Holy Peaceful Agnostic Church, Bob Pope," Wilhelmina Williams, the big black, daytime icon whose features were just too big to belong to a woman, and most people thought was just a man dressed up as a woman even

though there was no proof to say so.

Onto the sound stage walked a shaved headed, average height, average weight, middle aged white guy, wearing a light blue dress shirt and beige khaki pants, looking more like Jeff Bezos than Pope Frances. Willy got up from her desk and met him half way to the desk giving him a hug and a fake peck on the cheek, (that she gave all her guests) and led him over to the obligatory desk on audiences right and the comfortable chair on the left. They sat down as the applause died away.

Willi said, "Welcome, good to have you here."

Thank you for having me," Bob said with intense eyes and a little smirk.

"Well let's get right into it. What does the Holy, *Peaceful Agnostic* Church believe in?" Willy said with a sly smile.

"We believe that any belief is a best guess no matter the evidence. That any belief can and should be able to be changed if more and or better evidence is presented."

"But are you a religion?"

"I have a 501C from the IRS that says that I am."

"But do you have all the things that normal religions have," Willy said, with two fingers to insinuate quotes when saying 'normal religion'.

Bob, raising hands to mimic her air quotes (was he mocking her?), said, "Like normal religions we have a code of conduct, we believe that you should do no harm to yourself or others."

"But your beliefs can change if more and better evidence comes along?"





"True but isn't that better than saying thou shall not kill and then go to war for three thousand years, killing and damaging so many millions of people."

"Who determines what better evidence is?"

"Each individual member. I'm sure if someone attacks one of our members, I am sure if the conclusion is, that doing harm to others will keep them safe, the evidence will determine the belief and the action."

"Do you have a deity?"

Bob laughed, "Our deity is knowledge, that ever changing beast, that comes to light one morsel at a time."

"Do you have faith?"

"We have faith that we will never know enough to come to a final conclusion."

"How about other's faith?" Willi asked



*"Do  
You  
Have  
A  
deity?"*



"We believe a conclusion that is not congruent with the evidence requires faith. Once a belief is established no matter the means,

the human psyche will protect that conclusion up to and including inhumanity to his fellow humans.”

“Can you say it more simply?”

“Strongly held beliefs without reason, makes people do bad things to each other.”

“Is that why the word peace is so prominent in your organization’s name?” Willy asked.

“It’s hard to take offence with the statement, *I don’t know*. In a world where every person has their own unique perspective and comes to conclusions based on that perspective – add to that the willingness to protect those conclusions no matter how thin the information – the only peaceful conclusion is; I’m sure what *you* believe may be true, but *I* just don’t know.”

“Isn’t that sort of a cop out?”

## *“Strongly held beliefs without reason ...”*

“What do you mean?”

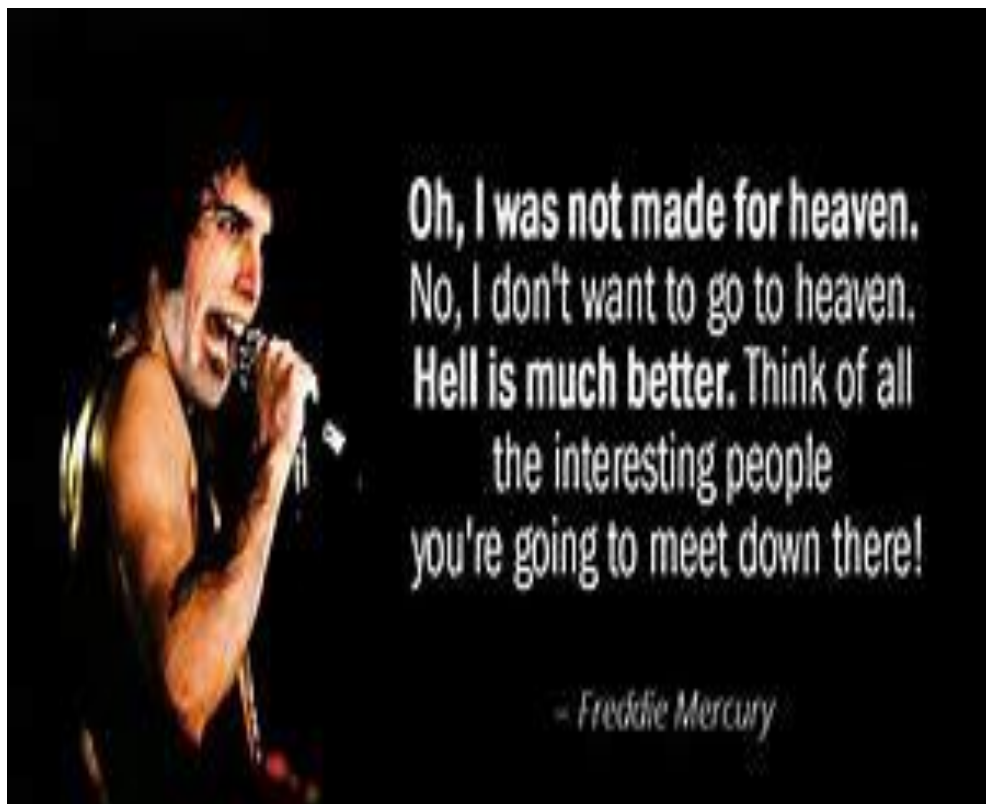
“Your unwillingness to discuss the reasons why people believe what they do,” Willy said.

“We are willing to discuss, learn, debate, and even willing to change our beliefs, but going to war over an idea that a person won’t change, or give up is tantamount to banging one’s head against a wall.”

Willi Williams, turned to the camera and said, “And there you have it. Thank you, *No Sabe* for coming on my program and now a word from our sponsor.”

*... makes people  
do bad things  
to each other.”*

And the screen faded out to a soap commercial



# LETTERS N' EMAILS

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*Here is the latest stable genius list.*

*Provided by Gale Baker*

List for Dems commercials

Quotes subtitles included  
[translations]

"I am a stable genius"

*followed by:*

"I know words. I have the  
best words."

"Nazzees" – *Nazis*

"Nevahhda" – *Nevada* [and  
he criticized those who  
pronounced it correctly]

"Tanzaynea" – *Tanzania*

"Premedication" –

*Premeditation* [perhaps he  
should have had his pre-  
medication before the  
speech]

"Oar ian" – *Orion* [in front of  
a group of astronauts]

"In DUH stry" – *Industry*  
[Isn't building an Industry?]

"I know things. I went to the best schools." [Andrew Jackson and the Civil War???

"I was first in my class at the Wharton School of Finance." [his name is not among the first 56].

"took over the airports" [George Washington during the Revolutionary War?]

"the oranges" – *the origins*

"southern half of this peninshula" – *peninsula*

"Jerusham" – *Jerusalem*

"Nipple" – *Nepal*

"Button" – *Bhutan*

"Tolerided" – *Tolerated*

"Acompellments" – *Accomplishments*

Every time Trump tweets "  
AMERICA FIRST" just remember  
where he got that slogan from.





"pro-ess" – *prowess*  
"replace chassms of  
distrust" – *chasms*  
"and the internate" –  
*internet*

'The diversary" – *diversity*  
[and he's reading that one]

"This Rusher thing" –  
*Russia*

"Mambia" – *Namibia*

"Great to be back in

"Missuria" – *Missouri* [not  
to be confused with  
Kansas]

"Utuars gleaming rivers" –  
*Utah's*

"Obamakeh" – *Obamacare*

"Hurricane Ermer" – *Irma*

"U-lishous S. Grant" –  
*Ulysses*

"Cassandra Prorrhhyah" – *Cassandra Porlier*

"Unites Shates" – *United States*

"Pinn-No Che-o" – *Pennaccio* [Trump  
Campaign Manager NJ]

"Came down on the elevator" – [it was an  
escalator]

"Stanktuary Cities" – *Sanctuary* [in State of  
the Union address]

And his favorite, "Chee eye na" – *China*  
[and he says, "There's no better word than  
stupid."]

Is he crazy as a loon? Is he not so smart? Is  
he losing it? Does he have dementia?

He's been called "a paranoid, psychopathic  
narcissist" by 35 respected psychoanalysts.

He wanted to buy Greenland.....

Mobster Tony Salerno controlled all concrete  
in NY and provided Trump with all the  
concrete for his buildings.

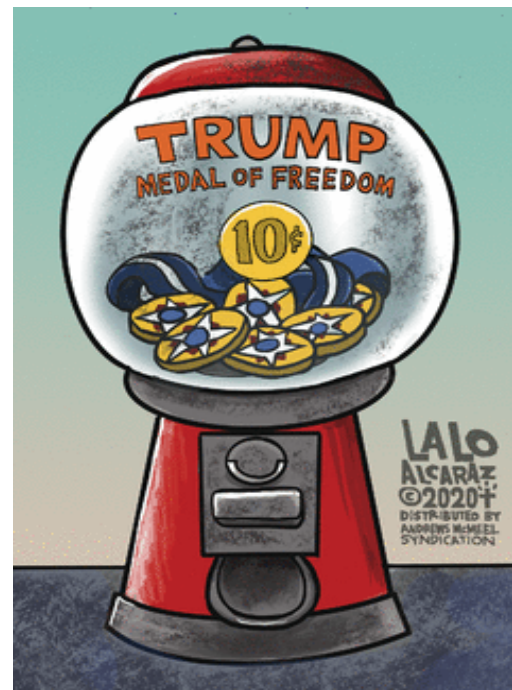
Trump's casinos all went bust



Nancy Pelosi ✓  
@TeamPelosi

Two days ago: "We will not be  
touching your Social Security or  
Medicare in Fiscal Year 2021  
Budget." -Trump

Today: [#TrumpBudget](#) proposes  
\$800 billion in cuts to Social  
Security, Medicare and Medicaid.  
Pass it on.



He was almost a billion dollars in debt.  
Then he met Phillip Sater and was the bait for Sater's deals in early 2000's.  
The Profanity President says our country is going to hell – but his language may send him there first.

He's like a teenager who can't stay off the phone, so he doesn't use secured phone and is getting hacked by Russia and China.

How many statutes of limitations for crimes committed before he came to office can he run out if he is elected?

And the beat goes on. [lol]



.....

*Letter to editor of TCPalm, St. Lucie News Tribune, February 18, 2020*

## **Why Evangelicals support Trump**

How can evangelicals support Donald Trump when the president so viciously attacks others, including those politicians who attack him and who, by the way, are often viciously critical of the evangelicals who support Trump?

What those critical of evangelicals forget are the words of Jesus cited in



Matthew 23:13:33 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! ... You snakes! You brood of Vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?" This is the same Jesus whom Nancy Pelosi correctly cites who says, "pray for your enemies," but then she tears up Trump's state of the union speech before 37 million television viewers.



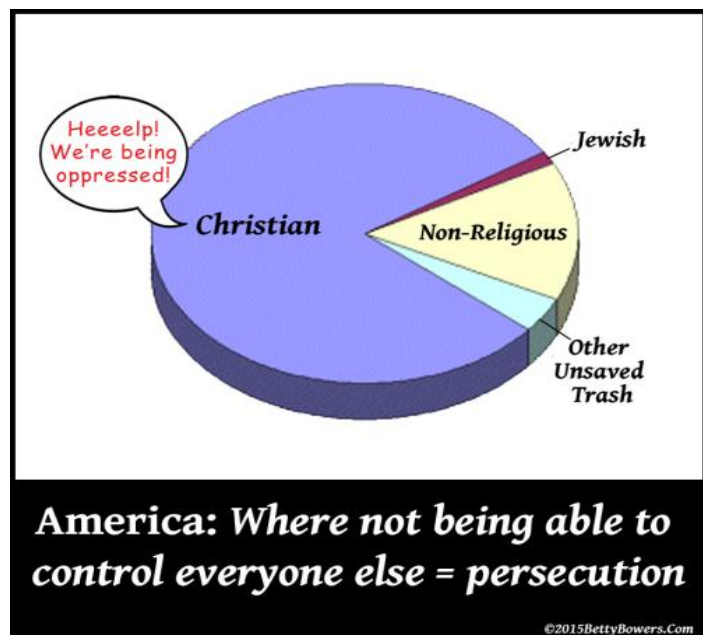
Jesus often made a distinction between those who were quote politically correct unquote in their religious observation observances and utterances and how they actually acted.

Many evangelicals, of which I am one, have been disturbed by the hypocrisy of many leaders of the Democratic Party, especially during the 8 years of the Obama administration. In the name of justice in fairness, they supported the abortion of thousands of children and today often support late term abortions. They fight to keep silent prayer out of schools, all kinds of prayers, whatever their religion.

Today with President Trump, evangelicals have a reason to be less bitter and maybe even joyful.

I personally support a woman's choice, but hope that her choice is to keep the baby. I also support greater restriction on semi-automatic assault weapons. But I also support most of president trump's national and international policies. And I am hopeful that the president prays for his enemies.

*Stanford Erickson, Vero beach*





## *An Atheist responds*

### **Evangelicals, Trump is merely using you**

Stanford Erickson's letter explaining "Why evangelicals support Trump" fascinated me. I really wanted to know why, and the reason was simple; Stan's desire to be deceived screams

persecution complex from every sentence. Oh, you poor dear, you obviously care for humanity, but someone has poisoned your mind to reality ... and they don't deserve you.

**Three people never to trust:  
a religious leader who tells you  
how to vote,  
a politician who tells you  
how to pray, and  
a draft dodger who tells you  
how to be patriotic.**

The list Stan gave about prayer and abortion is so disingenuous that I felt real pity for him, here are some facts. No one in the secular community wants anyone's right to pray to their god prohibited and that right to pray in schools has never been taken away. Every student who has, or has not studied, can pray before every test for divine guidance. They are not permitted to disrupt



a class with loud prayers or sacrifices (chicken, goat or even an iguana). Certainly, any organized religious activity should be carefully considered for possible offences to other beliefs but often are



not. Best to keep that in each autonomous church and not imposed in government supported schools or activities.

It is sadly funny the writer says he believes in a woman's right to choose, yet still opposes a medical procedure that may be necessary to save the woman's life. To imply 'late-term' abortions happen every day on what they feel is a frivolous whim is more than insincere and the writer should be ashamed. The procedures are as necessary as blood transfusions are to a person who medically needs it although there is indeed a religious sect who disagrees.

But that is fine. They should be able to disagree and the people who need such services should be able to ignore their ignorance.

As for Stan's animosity towards President Obama and Speaker Pelosi as hypocrites, please consider this fact; in eight years Obama had zero members of his administration accused of criminal activities; while in less than four, Trump has set a dubious record with 89 indictments and 24 convictions. I am certain this number will increase.

I do not doubt Stan is a good upstanding American but honey, Trump is merely using you.

*Virgil Thorp, Ft. Pierce*

*Author's note: I sent this to TCPalm letters to the editor the day Stanford Erickson's letter was published. I received no response from TCPalm, no rejection, no acknowledgement and they have yet to publish any response from any atheist.*



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# **WHY I LOVE DONNY?**

## **CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**

☐ HE IS HANDSOME WITH BEAUTIFUL BLONDE HAIR [Have you had your eyes checked?]

☐ HE NEVER LIES [i.e. every word that comes out of his mouth]

## **THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A QUID PRO QUO**

☐ NO QUID PRO FOR SAUDI'S MURDER OF KHASHOGGI [i.e. Hotels and arms sales]

☐ NO QUID PRO QUO FOR RUSSIAN INTERFERENCE [i.e. revoking sanctions, and desire for Moscow Hotel]

☐ NO QUID PRO QUO FOR UKRAINE [i.e. solicitation of fake investigation]

☐ NO MISUSE OF PUBLIC FUNDS [i.e. Military air stops near his hotels, sending Pence round trip across a country for a meeting, golf trips galore, etc. weekends at Mar-a-Lago]

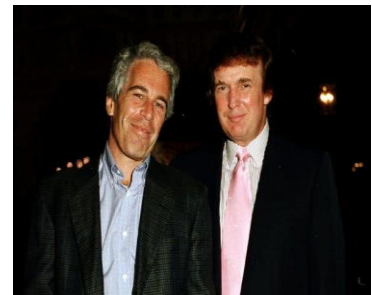
## **GENERAL ATTITUDE AND QUALITIES**

☐ HE LOVES & RESPECTS WOMEN [Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha.]

☐ HE IS NOT A MISOGENIST [Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha.]



trump could shoot someone in the senate and still get acquitted 53-47. unless he shot a republican, then it would be 52-47.



[ ] HE LOVES ALL PEOPLE [Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha.  
Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha.]

[ ] HE IS NOT A RACIST [Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha.  
Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. i.e. shithole countries]

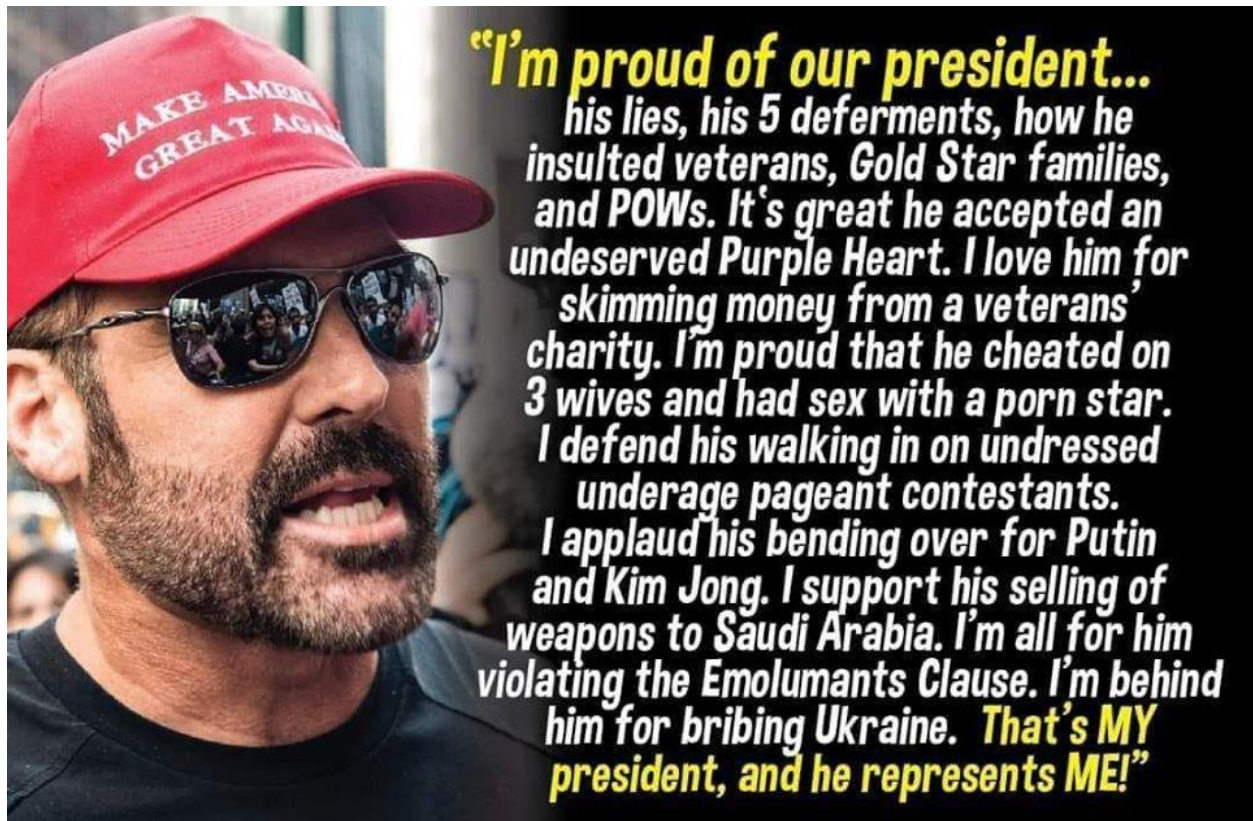
[ ] HE IS A SPIRITUAL RIGHTEOUS MAN [Ha.  
Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. [ETC.]

[ ] HE IS THE LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD [Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha.  
ETC, ETC. ETC.]

[ ] HE IS THE CHIEF OF A TRIBE [Notice, there are no Ha-Ha's  
here]

If you checked at least one of the above as your reason for loving  
Donald.

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!! YOU ARE NOW A MEMBER OF THE TRIBE!**



"Why I Love Donny?" Provided by Gale Baker

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## COMEDY CORNER

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# Virgin Birth

By Ed Zillioux

Belief in the myth of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or BVM, is entrenched in most Christian sects and is virtually (or actually) demanded as a profession of faith by most Christian prelates. Even Islam teaches that Mary was a virgin when she conceived the (Hebrew) Messiah. For centuries, it has been so rigidly accepted by the “faithful” that adherents are collectively branded in some non-Christian literature as the “Cult of the BVM.”

*(Everything that follows can be referenced but I will refrain from including citations for this writing.)*

As old as the myth of the BVM is, it is surpassed in antiquity by numerous earlier accounts of the myth of virgin birth, usually associated with the birth of a god or an otherwise divine being. *(I should note that virgin birth is biologically possible for some higher vertebrate and elasmobranch organisms, such as some reptiles and some sharks, but not for mammals. Thus, if Mary had been a lizard, she might have been able to pull this off.)*



The myth of virgin birth in humans preceding the BVM extends all the way back into prehistory. The oldest example that I've been able to find is among the earliest North American Indians. Evidence suggests that somewhere between 13,000 and 10,000 years ago migrants crossing from eastern Asia carried this myth with them either by land bridge or the coastal route. Tales survive about American Indian women who became pregnant by being struck by the rays of the sun as they laid upon their beds.

*Huitzilopotchli*, the god of war and chief deity of the ancient Mexicans, was said to have been miraculously conceived by a virgin. Her name was *Coaticue*, who was said to have placed a ball of bright-colored feathers floating in the air into her bosom, and by its touch found herself pregnant. She gave birth to the god, who entered the world fully armed. (That must have been a difficult birth, but the Aztec source gives no details on this aspect.)



*Huitzilopotchli*

In addition, the North American Indians have numerous traditions of a disobedient virgin who gives birth by magical impregnation, with the conceived child developing the characteristics of a miracle worker at an early age.

A great many more examples of pre-Christian virgin birth myths are found among the European and Asian continents. To make the point, I will cite just a few. Before the days of Greek



civilization, the chief goddess of the very ancient Cretan religion had as a youthful companion, a young god who was said to be her immaculately conceived son. She, of course, was spoken of

as a virgin. By the time that Greek mythology had reached its earliest stage, there was already a bewildering array of virgin goddesses. About 2000 years before the Christian era, *Mut-em-ua*, the virgin Queen of Egypt was said to have given birth to the Pharaoh Amenophis III, who built the temple of Luxor on the walls of which were represented, the Annunciation, the Immaculate Conception, the birth of the Man-god, and the Adoration. The latter included three kings who are offering him gifts. Quite obviously, all of these records were borrowed and incorporated virtually unchanged into the annals of the Christian religion some 2000 years later. Other Egyptian examples include the god *Ra* (the sun) who was said to have been born of a virgin mother. In addition, *Horus* was said to be the parthenogenetic child of the virgin mother, *Isis*.

In Asia, around 563 to 400 BCE the primary Buddha, *Siddhārtha Gautama*, did not escape being branded with the myth. Although it is generally accepted that the Buddha was the son of *Suddhodana*, an elected chief of the Shakya clan, and of his mother *Maya*, a Kolyan princess, in the writings of the *Mahavastu*, he was said to have developed from a painless birth without intercourse.



Among the Taoist in China and Japan, the virgin Isis is alternatively represented as the virgin Mary, as *Hariti*, as *Kuan-Yin*, as *Kwannon*, and as other virgin mothers of gods.

Even animals didn't escape the myth. In Egypt, *Apis*, the sacred bull of Memphis and a god of the ancient Egyptian Pantheon, was believed to have been begotten by a deity descending as an array of moonlight and impregnating the cow which was to become the mother of the sacred beast.

Most educated modern theologians have generally rejected the virgin birth. Nevertheless, the *Hope of the Israel Ministries* cite

remarkably that “various polls have found that about 80 percent of American adults believe in the virgin birth of the Messiah. This exceeds the total number of American adults who identify themselves as Christian or Muslim. In fact, 47 percent of non-Christian adults also believe in the virgin birth.” Whether or not these polls are up to date or even factual, I do not know, but there must be some level of truth to them.

Given the historic background and, indeed, prehistoric origins, of virgin birth myths, how is it that they have coalesced into the Cult of the BVM and persisted in that guise through the past 2000 years despite the obvious and documented pre-Christian pagan origins which Christianity totally rejects? The answer appears to

have been the existential need to compete with the multitude of pagan religions that, at the time of the supposed birth of Jesus and formation of Christianity, were virtually all founded upon, or at least incorporated with, virgin birth stories. Since it has been suggested that Christianity itself likely would not have survived without the doctrine of virgin birth, it is the single most important cornerstone that supports this religion. Indeed, Jesus could not have claimed divinity, nor to have been considered to be the Son of God without it.





# Being Affirmative in Action

By Dan Vignau

*In a giant university, where students are mostly anonymous, some truly strange goings on occur:*

It was the very first meeting of my *Marriage and the Family* class, which focused on cultural differences around the world. A redheaded, female sophomore decided that she could seduce me, or at least cause me some grief, by standing up in my face and trying to kiss me.



Dressed in some really old, mismatched, Sunday-go-to-meetin' mountain attire, she repeatedly got up and walked up and puckered her lips. I kept walking away from her, but she was relentless. I did not want to totally humiliate her, so I asked if she was ready for a pop quiz. A moan arose from the other students, so she sat down.

The next time the class met, she started again. I asked her to take a seat, but she kept after me, puckered lips and all. I walked around my desk and told the class to take out their pens and paper. It was time to actually do a pop quiz.

From the back, a frat boy yelled, "Sit the fuck down, you crazy bitch", which led to a discussion of sexual harassment. This was before all the news of choir boy molestations, and way before the *Me-Too* movement, so it was a new topic for my students. I



persisted with the pop quiz, taking the papers home to grade.

The next time we met, all the boys sat in the front row and blocked her. Somehow, she was the only student who had made a zero on the quiz, and I pointedly announced the names and grades as I returned the quiz answers. Since no one actually passed – I even graded on the curve – I promised that this would not happen again.

An uneventful few weeks went by, and she had me called before the department head to explain why I was picking on her in class, going so far to suggest that I was coming on to her. Since I had founded the school's Gay Liberation Front as an undergrad, the complaint was considered to be quite amusing.

*1/25th life size?*

I had the class write about their best friends. One wrote about a dog:

*A dog have two ears. A dog have nose. A dog have four legs. A dog have tail. A dog 1/25<sup>th</sup> life size.*

I had the class read their papers to us. When she read this, everyone was flabbergasted. When asked to explain what she meant by 1/25<sup>th</sup> life size, she could not explain, repeating, "You Know. You know."

We kept reading papers until a bright student jumped up, saying, "I know. I know!"

He showed the class his dictionary. Right there next to the definition was a drawing of a dog. Underneath, it said, "A dog,



1/25<sup>th</sup> life size." I was glad there was an easy answer. Yes, it was the same red-haired, female student.

Thank God, so to speak, for affirmative action.

Another time, I had the local minister for the Metropolitan Community Church speak to the class. This is a gay Christian Church ... go figure ... founded in 1966 as a proponent of civil rights, especially gay rights,

After the minister and his cohort spoke, they took questions. Guess who asked the first one? Yep, the redheaded seductress:



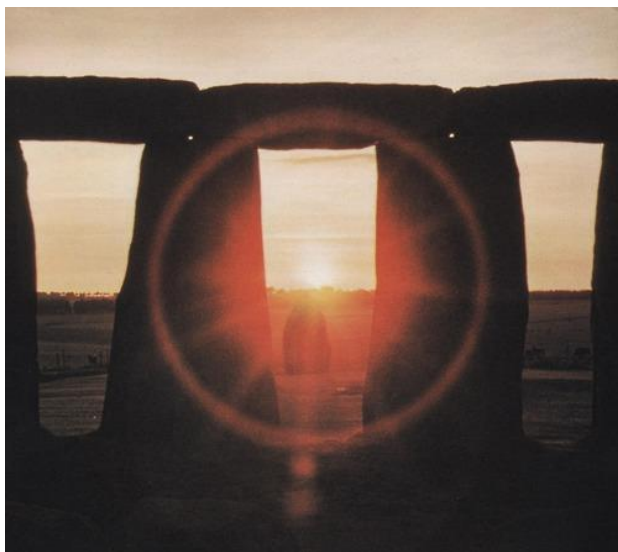
"Are you two preachers a sayin' the only difference between you and us is who you sleep with at night?"

"Yes, what did you expect, the Devil with horns and a tail?"

"Well, I reckon I did!"

The class deemed her an idiot, but from then on, she became quite interested in sociology. She even earned a C, but I gave her a B for actually paying attention. I called it affirmative action!

.....



# Déjà vu XXX Porn

By Virgil Thorp



I had to chuckle at myself last Wednesday. I had a task to fulfill and was suddenly overwhelmed with a sense of déjà vu. I had performed this task before! Not once, not twice, but many times before, only it was during my adolescence and that was, a long, long time ago.

It was amusing at the similarities of what my apprehensions were those times long past and what my gut was feeling right then and now. Sort of a covert fluttering, the kind of nervousness of 'doing something that I really did not wish to have detected' type of activity. The only difference was the feeling of monumental guilt I had been indoctrinated with when I was young. Now, it was just a feeling of what the hell am I going to do with this stuff?

*As a child I begged God and Jesus to  
forgive me for falling into the  
temptations of the flesh*

I refer to a life that alternately enjoyed and then felt guilty of the habit of reading, viewing and enjoying pornography (and sometimes, making it). At one point in my career, I edited several adult publications and everyday was porno day. The tapes and



DVD's poured in for us to review and rate for our magazines. Authors sent me short stories that covered an entire range of depravity and degenerate activities. It was porn-overkill and I was jaded because that was my job. I admit, I loved it!

That was then, this is now. I have all the pornography a pervert like myself can view and I have too much. Well, too much of some really grotesque and bad pornography. I had so much that I had forgotten to check a closet that we had stashed the odds and ends one collects over time. But there it was, four large boxes full of smut that I would never want to see again. The eroticism, the good stuff, I keep.

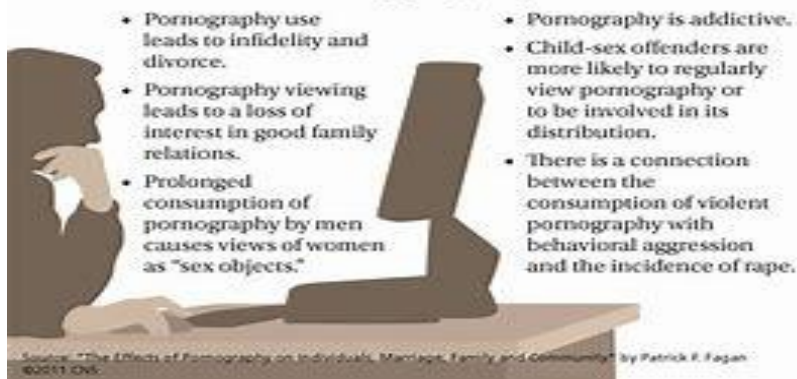
As a child I begged God and Jesus to forgive me for falling into the temptations of the flesh. I swore to the heavens that I'd never ever again let the flesh win in the struggle for my eternal soul. That urge to purge the sinful desires. Probably the same sinful desires and urges that caused Martin Luther of the 95-theses fame to self-flagellate himself while he was still a priest in the Catholic church. Such is the result of self-inflicted abstinence.

*It was porn-overkill and I was jaded  
because that was my job*



Instead of the scourge that could leave marks – a dead give-away – I'd resolve to divest myself from the deliciously sinful stories and photo magazines that I would use to defile myself. I couldn't burn them in the fireplace, at that age I wasn't allowed to even burn logs without permission and a chaperone. I knew if I had it, I would use it so I desperately needed to get it away from my being before I would succumb to the enticements of erotic self-manipulation again.

### Effects of Pornography



### *Anti-porn propaganda from anti-porn propagandists.*

up my bed although the act was only to avoid discovery of the slick, professionally produced magazines like Dude and Gent and sometimes the topless "fuzzy-wuzzy" New Guinea chicks depicted in the World War II issues of National Geographic. Damn, they were brown and black all over! Why hadn't anyone told them to cover up?!?

One afternoon I high school to find my and my mother room in the chair next had a momentary my wicked transgressions were discovered. I couldn't bring myself to check under the mattress to see if they had been



Like an addict or an alcoholic, I had to come up with ingenious places to hide the mind-warping booty. Ironically, since most of it went between the mattress and box springs of my bed, I found I was praised for always making

returned from junior bed stripped of sheets sobbing in the living to the telephone. I paroxysm of fear that

detected. She was so sad, and it must have been my sin that caused her emotional upheaval.

My heart stopping fear was unfounded, the news which caused her grief was that my grandfather had suffered an accident on his farm (his tractor had slipped into low gear while he was opening a door and as it rolled forward it pinned him against the side of the barn. He had to grasp the front wheels, bend the axel until the tires were firmly touching and then push it back and off him. He was a tough old dutchman). She had just begun to change the sheets when the phone had rung and she got the news about her father. In a strange, paradoxical way, as I hugged my mother, I felt remorse that Bobo had been hurt but I also felt relief as his accident got me off the hook for my pornography addiction.

And addiction was what it was! Every time I assuaged my sin at my monastic pleasure and contritely jettisoned my collection of smut, it wouldn't take long for me to fall back into depravity and start a new collection again. Each time with better quality and oh so exquisite explicit pictures and literary depictions. No more "Rabbi on a Rampage" or "The Babysitter's Wicked Passion". I wanted things Like "The Tropic of Cancer" and why was I kidding myself, I'd take whatever I could get and occasionally, I'd stumble upon something that was worth keeping.

*... oh no, oh Jesus there goes Mrs.  
Smith out to tend her flowers with  
just that little tube top over her  
boobies and her tight camel-toe  
revealing shorts on*

But oh, how I prayed to be set free from those carnal compulsions. "Please God. Don't let me fall again. Please take these nasty thoughts from my brain. Dear God don't let me, ... oh no, oh Jesus there goes Mrs. Smith out to tend her flowers with just that little tube top over her boobies and her tight camel-toe revealing shorts on. Please bend over Mrs. Smith. Please show me your cleavage, oh yes, oh yes, how pretty you are. Why do they excite me so? Why do I long to touch them? If only I could see them unfettered, swaying naturally in the golden light!" The thought emerged that what I saw was actually artistic and not smutty. What sophistry! What blasphemy!

And then I'd have to go inside and find the Vaseline once more, go to the bathroom and lock the door for privacy. Not only was I a sinner, but I was a habitual sinner. My mind was my own penitentiary.

It became a dismal routine in a war of good versus sinful; get some porn, acquire some guilt, then throw it away and always, always back to the porn. I wasn't growing out of it. If anything, it was getting more pronounced as I got older. Being a tall lad, the

"Time to Read" bookstore downtown would sell me practically anything if I had the money. Playboy, Henry Miller, Marco Vassi; those are just some of the titles and authors I would appreciate and devour. I knew I was losing to the carnal and I'd never get the call to become a minister, a preacher of the gospel, which



would have made my mother so happy. Instead I was a chronic masturbator with a glut of pornography, and it was all my fault.

It was also my fault that my mother was weeping and I couldn't bear the idea of how it would affect her if she stumbled upon my porno stash. Her darling little boy now a drooling, oafish pervert stumbling around the house and humping anything that appeared to be bent over at the waist. She'd blame herself of course.

"Where did I go wrong?" she'd lament. "What are you doing under the blanket? Pull it back. Let me see."

"No. I won't pull it back! Please, go away. Please, leave me alone. Please."

Time stood still, what would she do? And then, with great disappointment in her eyes, highlighting the disillusionment she felt for her son. She turned her face away as she switched off the bedroom light and shut the door.

The next few hours of that night were agonizing. She knew I was doing something I shouldn't have. Tomorrow I'd throw all the smut away and never look at anything like that again. "God, I won't, I promise." I prayed. I'd have had better luck praying for a hurricane to turn away.

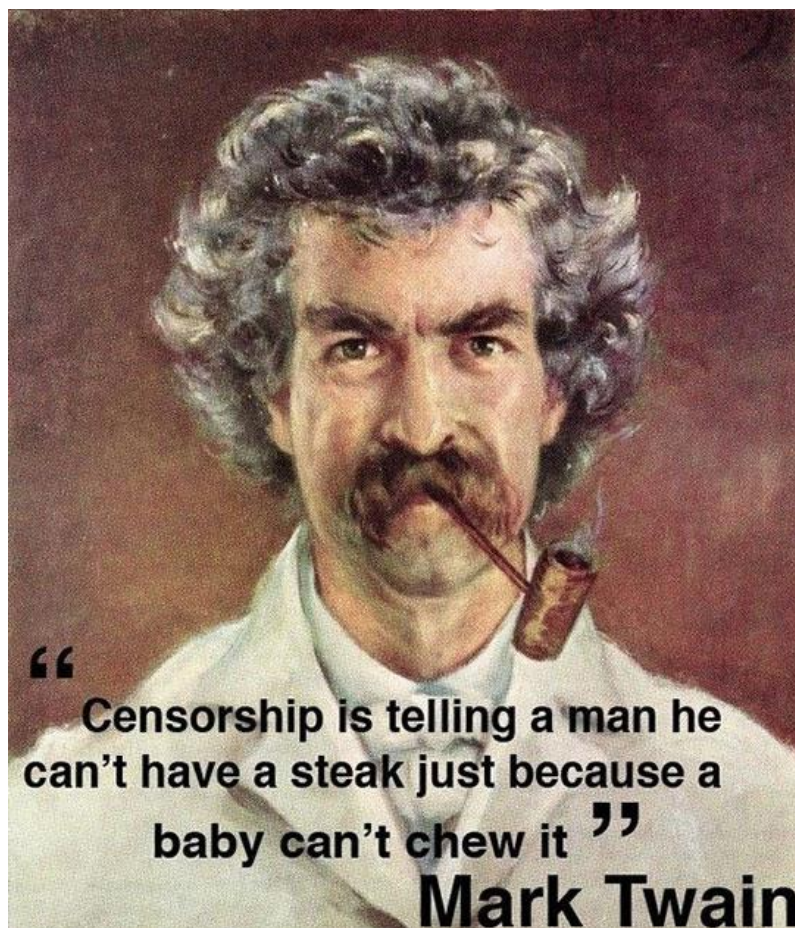
In the early morning I took my dirty magazines out of my room, out of the house and searched for someplace to flush away my filthy habit. Even if I disposed of it wouldn't she ask me about it again? What if my dad wants to talk to me? Uncomfortable but maybe I wouldn't throw it all away.

I giggled at the recollection and the monumental feeling of shame my younger self had endured. Why, why couldn't my folks have been more forthright about sex with me? At least they weren't psychotic about it like some other parents were. Oh well, I'm over it now I thought as I drove behind the Winn Dixie and stopped at a line of garbage dumpsters.



I investigated an open one and saw it had a lot of pasteboard boxes. Perfect. I opened the trunk and started pitching boxes in. One box was in bad shape and broke open spilling VHS tapes and DVD's on the ground. Oh great. One of the DVD titles was "*Hip-hop Sex Party at Snoop Dog's House*". I remembered it. Boy, that was a yawner and pitched it in. I covered it all over with the cardboard, much like my cats cover their poop with the litter, and satisfied that no one except dumpster divers would find it, shut the lid and returned to the car.

As I drove away, I felt a familiar sense of relief, as if a burden had been lifted from my shoulders. Déjà vu, indeed. Cleansed again? Nahhh. Because, as in my youth, the good stuff remained at home.



# Modern Medicine

By Bert Mautz

“Will you be able to provide a urine specimen this morning?”  
The phlebotomist asked with exaggerated civility.

“Um, I don’t know.....fasting.....no morning coffee.”

“You can take the container home with you, fill it later, and bring it back.”

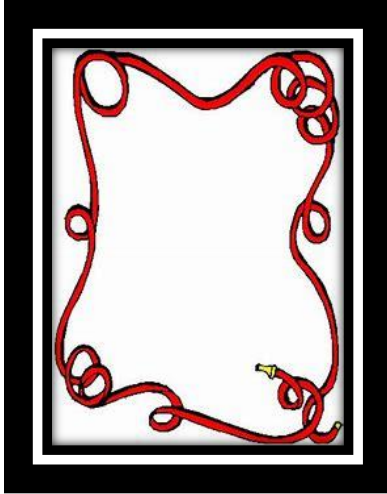
“Well, let me try. Does the toilet have grab bars?”



“Yes, certainly, it is right over there. Here is a towelette. Wipe the tip of your penis before urinating.”

Roll into the bathroom, close the door, scope out my situation. A wheeled cart is in front of the toilet, where a wheelchair bound patient would approach from, placing me, as heaving to *humanis erectus*, at right angles from standing over the toilet bowl. All my





standing requires at least one hand grasping something sturdy to be able to stand. Here I have the packet to open and unfold the towelette. But not over the toilet bowl. While clutching the container and unfolded towelette, now must wrestle myself through a ninety degree swivel, activated by the left hand clutching the grab bar as if my life depended on it, still holding the container and towelette, feet entangled with the toilet unnecessarily

close to the wall. Return receptacle and towelette to left hand on the bar for next step in this awkward, some might say clown show process. Next unzip the jeans and extract Mr. Happy from his warm, comfortable hideaway while holding the towelette and wipe down the old guy, followed by releasing the sphincter and *eureka*, finally producing my sample. But then? Put down the container, somewhere? Take back control, strangling Mr. Happy momentarily, complete the bladder purge, shake, and tuck the Big Guy away.



**N**ext reverse the ninety-degree

pirouette and drop onto my hot wheels seat. Retrieve the warm sample off the back of the toilet and the lid off the cart. The sink controls are reachable, the soap is plentiful, but the paper towels are metered at a miserly rate. Place sample in the stainless-steel pass through. Heave the excessively heavy door open and roll the hell out of there.

\*\*\*\*

# SMOKE AT YOUR PERIL

By Bert Mautz

For a contemplative moment a small ascot cigar is nearly perfect. Double timing with the morning *Times* it can be a soothing few minutes under the umbrella on my water side patio. Other occasions call for watering the ornamental palms; a hose nozzle in one hand and a cigar in the other.



## *One of those curse or cry moments.*

This particular hand wrapped cigar was packed tighter than usual requiring harder pulls(inhalations). I was reading the *Times* Wednesday food section, absorbed in a restaurant review by Frank Bruni. A particularly strong pull and the short stub slid between my index and middle fingers. The fire hot ash seared the delicate inner finger skin. Reflexively letting go entirely of the



stub while gasping in pain I inhaled further, taking the entire remains full into my mouth. Now choking on the ash and burning my tongue I had the self-preservation instincts to spit or cough it back out, setting the restaurant review aflame. Spitting and screaming not under complete control, I extinguished the blazing paper showering my clean t-shirt with more ashes. One of those curse or cry moments.

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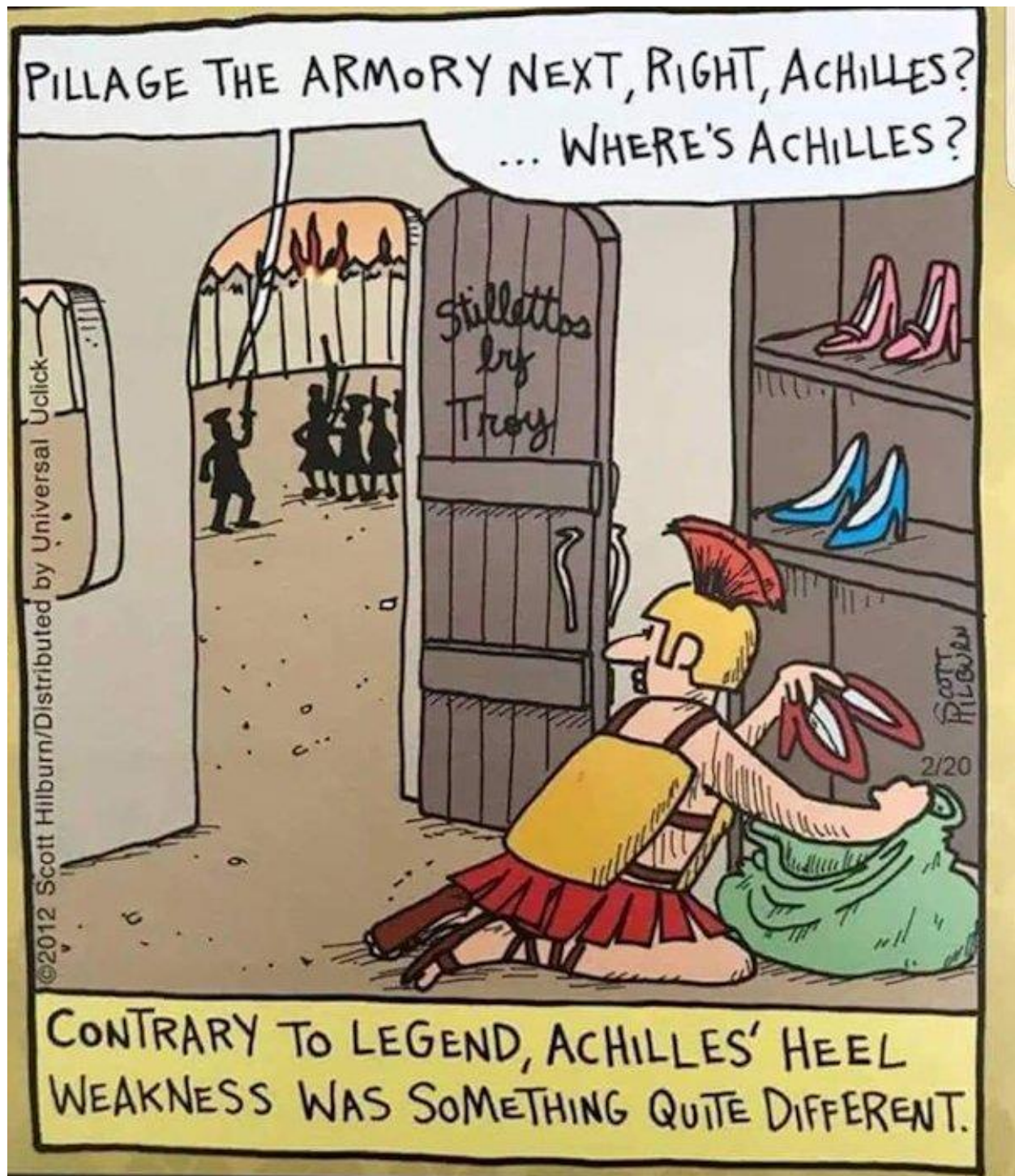


beyer

WHAT CAME FIRST, YOU OR THE EGG?  
WHY DID YOU CROSS THE ROAD? HOW  
IS IT THAT EVERYTHING TASTES LIKE  
YOU? I WANT ANSWERS!



*Grilled Chicken*



"Will you marry me?" Is a marriage proposal.  
"Will, You, Mary, Me", is a foursome proposal.



# HOW TO REMOVE STAINS

If you have one of  
these Stains

Remove with this



Grass



Vinegar



Grease



Soda



Coffee



Baking Soda



Blood



Hydrogen  
Peroxide



Shit



Vote



Ink



Milk

MSpaintJerk

**Republican Jim Jordan is great at interrupting.**

TEANDERTHAL PARTY

**Why didn't he interrupt the wrestling doctor?**







Once I was a male trapped in a female body.  
Then I was born.

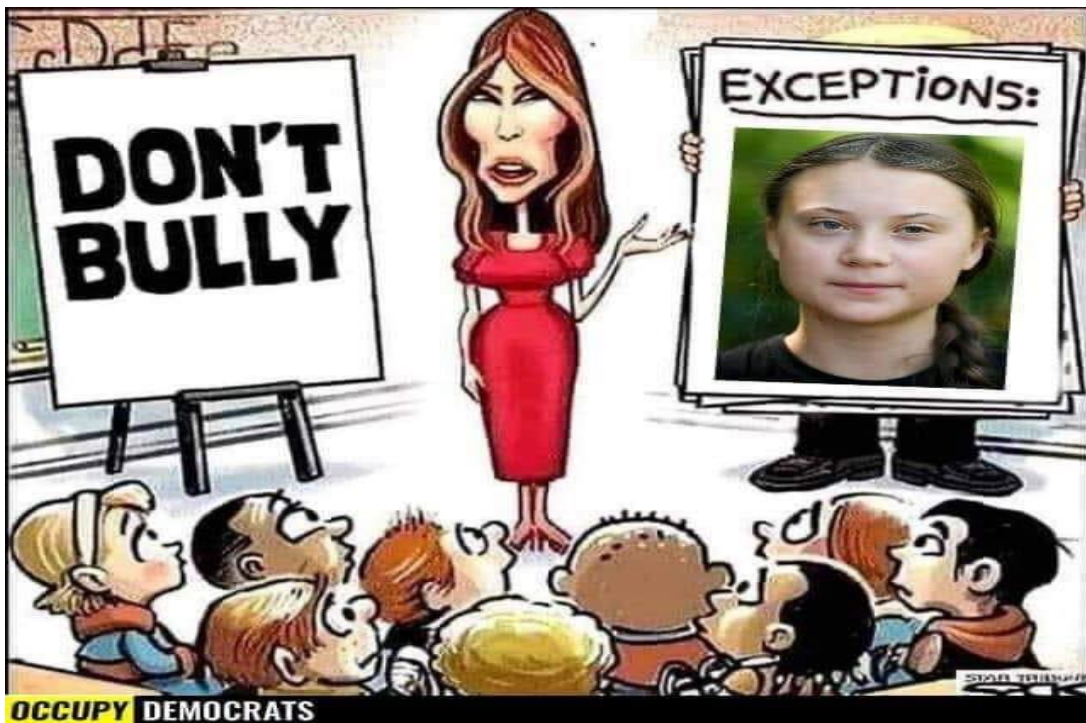
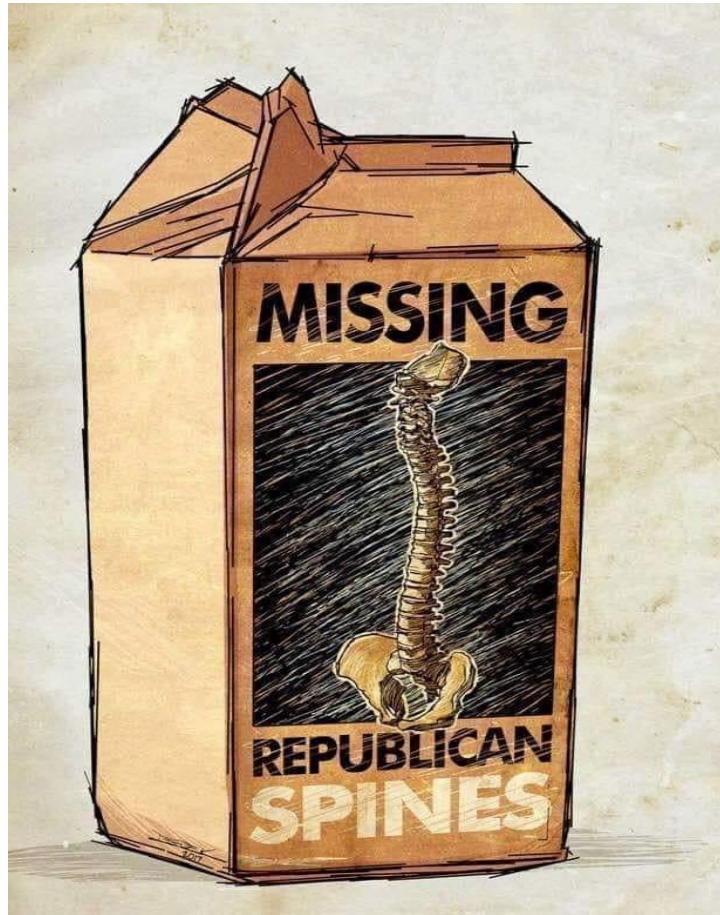






## Right-Wing Weird-World

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## A Christian's Guide to Explaining the Bible to an Atheist



If it's scientifically impossible, it's a **metaphor**.

If it's embarrassing in its violence or overt deviant sexuality, then he's taking it **out of context**.

Or the atheist **doesn't understand the culture**, or he's **misreading the passage**, or he just **hates god**...

Or just make up anything, anything at all, no matter how farfetched, improbable or intellectually dishonest.

Anything except simply admitting that the book can be and is, **WRONG!**



**Don't use a big word  
when a singularly  
unloquacious and  
diminutive linguistic  
expression will  
satisfactorily  
accomplish the  
contemporary  
necessity.**

2008



“

1. Write 50 words. That's a paragraph.
2. Write 400 words. That's a page.
3. Write 300 pages. That's a manuscript.
4. Write every day. That's a habit.
5. Edit and rewrite. That's how you get better.
6. Spread your writing for people to comment. That's called feedback.
7. Don't worry about rejection or publication. That's a writer.
8. When not writing, read. Read from writers better than you. Read and Perceive.

ajay ohri



BE SEEING YOU