

The Last Word™

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More money goes up Spectrum's rectum

We were jumping for joy once we didn't have to use Cincinnati Bell for *anything* anymore. ZoomTown blocking websites because of their content was the final assault.

We had Clearwire for a while, before Sprint took it over and shut it down. This forced us to pay slightly more to get Time Warner instead. Still, Time Warner—like Clearwire—had much more reliable service than the ridiculously slow and censorious ZoomTown ever did.

It all came crashing down when Time Warner was taken over by Charter Communications, which uses the brand name Spectrum—or as I call it, Rectum. (Charter and Spectrum are the same, much like how ULH&P and CG&E were the same. CG&E must have stood for Chewing Gum & Elmer's, because it seemed like that's what was holding together all their power lines.) Rectum vowed no rate increases. That was a lie. Shortly thereafter, my Internet rates went up.

Now it went up yet again—from \$55.58/month to a whopping \$75.58.

My face hit the ceiling when I got my bill. I went on the customer service chat on Rectum's website to ask if they had cheaper Internet plans. They said they didn't. That too turned out to be a lie. I then called Rectum and found out they did have a cheaper plan—for “only” \$69.99/month.

Here's what happened: Rectum got rid of their “cheap” plan I had been using—which was still mighty expensive—and signed me up for a plan that wasn't even their cheapest! They didn't even tell me they were changing my plan! They actually thought I was too dumb to check my bill. (I use autopay.) Now, their cheapest plan—at \$69.99—still costs way more than the national average. Plus—for some unknown reason—they had to ship me a new modem for this plan and have me send back the old one.

Don't be stupid, Rectum.

On the other hand, why shouldn't they be stupid? As with food and other retail goods, northern Kentucky is used to paying exorbitant costs for utilities. Rectum has a monopoly on cable TV in Lexington—just as it does here—but Lexington threatened to fine Rectum unless it settled the thousands of complaints they got from customers. The complaints include charging people for services they didn't request—kind of like how they “upgraded” my Internet without telling me. Northern Kentucky though is a bit different. Our public officials won't fight Rectum, because “something something free market.”

Shortly before the 1988 “election”, the far-right *Boston Herald* ran a headline declaring, “What a mess!” It was an attempt to blame Michael Dukakis for a fiscal shortfall caused by the Reagan recession. Serial groper George H.W. Bush accused the Massachusetts governor of issuing “hot checks” to cover the shortfall—even as Republicans were growing the national debt. But—aside from unchecked war spending—largesse for utility monopolies is one of the biggest drivers of public debt. Government's refusal to regulate the cost of utility service is forced charity supporting companies that don't need it.

No patching things up with these YouTube eye doctors

Think. Do. Be.

Maybe I'm wrong, but it seems like some people—even *professionals*—have truly strange medical theories. But I've come up with a good comeback for them, so listen like thieves (as INXS would say).

I've been barely alive for most of the past 30 years, yet some folks think my strabismus—the *cool* eye disorder—is the most horrible, grim thing that's ever befallen me. Some want this fun little oddity completely wiped out in anyone who gets to enjoy it—and will resort to extreme measures to accomplish this.

The big fad now to “treat” strabismus in young children is to make them wear a patch—like a pirate—over their “good” eye. According to this questionable theory, this strengthens their “bad” eye by forcing them to use it instead. I never had this “treatment.” That's good, because I like being allowed to see with both eyes, and I



like having depth perception and peripheral vision. If I'm only allowed to see with one eye, why should it be the worse eye? Maybe some patients think they benefited from this method, but if not using it works for me, so be it.

Sorry I don't follow medical protocols 100% of the time. Some peeps are shocked by that. They think I'm weird because I don't try to get treated for disorders that don't cause me any real harm. Believe it or not, there are Americans under 45 who aren't hermits but skip treatments favored by society. I'm a free-range adult.

Unfortunately, YouTube has videos from eye care professionals that endorse patching to "treat" strabismus or related conditions. On principle, I have to downvote these clips. The most grating of these videos—the one with 2 eye doctors grinning and smirking while lambasting "stubborn" and "willful" kids who refuse to use a patch—has its comment section disabled, so I can't use my comeback message for it. But for other videos by professionals that recommend patching, this is the comment I post...

"This video must assume I hate my life."

Gotcha on that!

If I wanted to shut out vision in one eye, instead of getting a patch, I'd blow a gigantic bubble with bubble gum that bursts and covers it.

Meanwhile, over on Wikipedia, I found the entry on "management of strabismus." Following the sections for each treatment option, such as medication and surgery, I added a new option: "Being cool." Under this section, I wrote...

"Many people with strabismus decide it's a cool thing to have, and thus are not candidates for treatment. These patients deal with their condition by being cool, perhaps even awesome."

But someone quickly deleted my addition because it was "original research."

Here's the most gnawing inconsistency about strabismus: The gluttonous poologs who act as America's economic masters disqualify people with strabismus from various careers. Yet strabismus isn't considered severe enough for someone to collect Social Security disability benefits. Under Social Security rules, the definition of disabling vision loss is based on your sight in your better eye—not the average of both eyes. In other words, strabismus is considered disabling enough that you're barred from certain jobs—but not disabling enough to collect disability for it. As with many other conditions, it's only considered a disability if it suits the situation at hand. (ADHD seems to be the best example.)

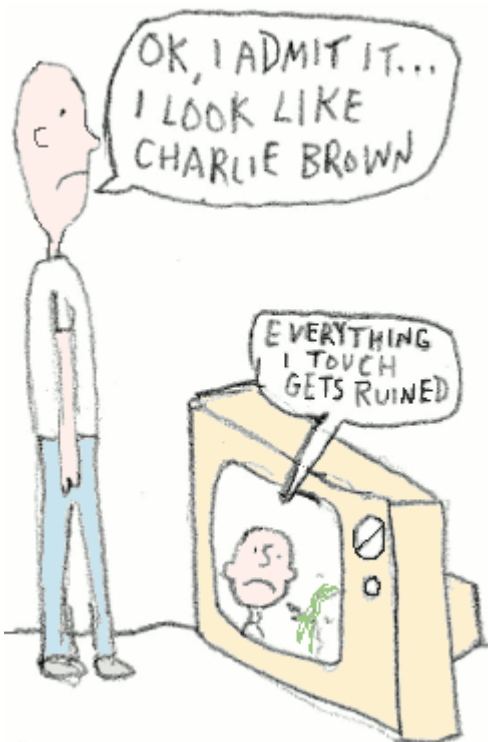
Vision loss is a serious topic. I've never suffered vision loss from strabismus. Surely, some may have. I haven't, so why should I allow someone to "treat" me for it without my consent? I feel a sense of dignity when I'm in control of my person. Strabismus is one of these things that symbolizes my dignity and individuality.

This is not a sponsored post.

Linus farted

Linus did indeed crack a bunker blast in the *Peanuts* strip from Sunday, January 19, 1975. I mentioned it once before and you didn't believe me, but there's proof—thus making this a Snuffleupagus moment!

I was too young to remember when this installment first ran, but *Peanuts* fan websites now bring the strip back to life! In the very first panel of the strip that day, Linus is standing alone, and a puff of flatulence appears to be emerging from his ass. The fact that Linus is



emitting a trouser sneeze is implied by the strip's punchline. "Rock snake" appears to be a euphemism for a backdoor breeze...

<https://vignette.wikia.nocookie.net/peanuts/images/4/4a/19750119.jpg>

Unfortunately, many newspapers lopped off the top row of *Peanuts* each Sunday, so many readers wouldn't get the joke. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* not only cut off the top row for years, but sometimes they ran a notice that an entire page of Sunday funnies was moved to a different section of the paper and appeared only in black-and-white. At least once, it was so they could run a full-page Frisch's Big Boy ad that had Big Boy's face filling the whole page. Often, the *Enquirer* would compress the comics to make room for ads. You could always tell because Charlie Brown's head was oval.

Charles Schulz carried around a lot of childhood angst, so I shouldn't be in the least bit surprised he included a subtle reference to passing gas in *Peanuts*. The soft-spoken Schulz once said, "I think my humor has dignity." That's why his reference to bunker blasts wasn't as obvious as it could have been.

I don't know of any other references to air biscuits in *Peanuts* during Schulz's lifetime. However, this apparently fart-themed drawing was generated years after Schulz's death to promote a *Peanuts* movie...

https://media2.fdncoms.com/sfweekly/imager/u/original/4239074/the-peanuts-movie-707_390_209_4k_universalcolor_wb_rgb.jpg

Bin Laden hoarded gum porn

It never fails. For years, a small crew of people has been starting Internet message boards about bubble gum—with the intent of being family-friendly—and the forums are always invaded by folks who have a sexual interest in bubble gum. Whatever floats your boat, I guess.

In our July 20, 2011, issue, we reported that Osama bin Laden—terrorist mastermind who was armed by Republican administrations—lived his final years being coddled in a 3-story palace in Pakistan that had high-speed Internet and other amenities. After bin Laden's fatal takedown, officials discovered that he stockpiled porn on 5 computers that he had—even though he had decried everyone else for sexual permissiveness.



Criticizing others' permissive attitudes when you've been far more decadent yourself had long been a familiar theme. America's religious hypocrites do it too. There's no major differences between them and bin Laden.

Authorities also found bin Laden's palace filled with snacks including "Pepsi and Coca Cola" (as Wikipedia eloquently put it).

Now a newly declassified CIA report details some of the porn that bin Laden stashed on his computers. Among other things, it included videos of "women blowing bubbles." Yes, with bubble gum. That's a confection people chew and blow big bubbles with. You chomp it daily.

News outlets raised the possibility that the videos weren't actually his. Then whose were they? Did Osama bin Laden's mansion have gum gremlins hiding inside the walls who had a gum fetish? I get the image of Not Me and Ida Know from *The Family Circus* rummaging around on FetLife for bubble gum porn.



A person farted at school in 1947

My generation used to think they *invented* flatulence. We thought of the generation before as being like *Leave It To Beaver*, and if some oldster said someone ripped a bunker blast any time before 1973, we'd be *shocked!*

YouTube sure sets us straight on that!

Someone uploaded a *hilarious* film from 1947 to YouTube! The film was designed to show teachers how to maintain discipline in class. You can't miss the loud-and-proud air biscuit...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTaOCFs8pPI>

Here's a synopsis of the film in case you're afraid a dragonfly will pop out of your computer screen and sew your nostrils shut. In the first half of the clip, a high school instructor can't keep order in his freshman math class. His students act like brats, throw things, and flunk an important test because of his angry, scolding demeanor. At least once, if you look closely enough, you can see a student bubbling.

The best part is at 3:27 when someone farts loudly and the class bursts into laughter. The teacher asks, "Who did that?" Like they're gonna admit it? When nobody answers, the teacher imposes a 45-minute detention on the whole class. The trouser sneeze is repeated at 6:34, and the film's narrator says it "summarizes the feelings of" the class. The balladeer even refers to the Farting Code—the rule that says you're never supposed to rat out anyone who cracks a backdoor breeze at school.

The second half of the film recommends that the teacher mellow out a bit. By showing a more relaxed, understanding side of his personality, he brings about better discipline and improved academics.

People knew this in 1947, but the schools I attended couldn't grasp it 40 years later? The "zero tolerance" politburo *still* doesn't.

I'm not lovin' it

Even Ronald McDonald has turned against the river cities' youth.

If you care about youth rights, it's no skin off my nose if you patronize any McDonald's you please—as long as you boycott the one in Bellevue. I've been informed that the Bellevue location is now requiring anyone under the age of 18 to be accompanied by an adult. The restaurant has posted signs on the doors declaring that if kids enter without an adult, police will be called on them.

What is it, a strip joint? Nice to know Par-King took over McDonald's.

No doubt I've lamented the declining quality of fast food. Most McDonald's locations smell of stale coffee now. But if you still think McDonald's is just the Bee Gees' knees, this is a sad day.

The war on youth being waged by our friendly neighborhood Ron McDon was reportedly prompted by "disrespectful kids destroying property." Teens threw food and broke a window, and those who are warned about their misbehavior "throw tantrums."

But I've got people, and they know the deal. It's not Bellevue, Newport, and Dayton kids tearing up the place. As is usually the case, it's suburban preps. So once again—just like it was in my day—innocent young people are being punished while kids who have more money are allowed to do whatever they want. Money and clout seem to confer special rights. It's just like how when the cemetery was vandalized, everybody got blamed except the real culprits.

This story gives me a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach. When I was a teenager, almost every time I visited a store or restaurant, I got run off by preps. They were never punished. You'd think that instead of a burger place, they'd go somewhere that serves filet mignon and escargot, but their goal in life seemed to be to maximize



the grief they could inflict on humanity.

Even adults are boycotting the Bellevue McDonald's because of the latest turn of events. They're angry because their teenage kids can no longer do something as innocent as take a date to get a burger and soda.

What triggers my feelings the most about this story is that it dredges up foul memories of *legally encouraged* economic discrimination when I was in high school. I learned that the rights and privileges legally accorded to my peers were not for me—just because I wasn't born into wealth.

Cue those who didn't know even though it's been taking place right in front of them for 30 years. It's a bit like how I had a school bus driver who banned me from his bus year after year—and people acted shocked when I exposed him for it years later. I would have raised hell about events like this earlier, except that the community was rallying around those who abused me. The system groomed the public to trust them so they could claim to be the good guys if their victims exposed them. When it's encouraged by the law or by businesses, it just twists the knife in further.

Turning the page on right-wing trolls

When the right-wing Internet brain trust—which is made up mostly of sockpuppets, but does have a few folks shameless enough to use their real name—comments on a website that somebody should “get a job”, I always reply, “So where's your book?”

If they were truly as cool as they think they are, they'd respond, “In the toilet.” That's how cool people would answer. But usually my reply silences them for the Time Being.

As part of their penchant for fake news, they urged their cult-like followers to fight against a nationwide wave of leftist rioting that they said would begin on Saturday, November 4. When nobody rioted—because our side isn't like the Tea Party, who loses their shit every time something doesn't go their way—they tried doubling down, but a cloud of sawdust appeared.

On Facebook's Greater Cincinnati Politics forum, I asked them where their book was. Not only did they fail to say it was in the toilet, but one of them—who has previously admitted monitoring my attendance at an anti-Trump rally—said I'm “way stranger than you can even imagine” and a “certifiable nut case.” He went on to say...



“I used to work with the mentally ill in halfway houses. In those few years I only met a few people that I would consider more unstable than this loon.”

Translation: I disagreed with a conservative.

These comments were actually a stale attempt at gaslighting. Instead of arguing against someone on the merits of their ideas, they portray the person as insane. It's like how George H.W. Bush's gulag wanted to cover up harassment carried out by Bishop Brossart High School, so they told me I was hallucinating. The difference is that Facepalm commenters can't intimidate me by boasting about how many local judges they own—even if it's true. What real power do they have?

My enemies certainly don't have any divine powers—despite how they claim to be such good Christians. Anything they've ever done that's harmed me has been of the earthly world—not from some godly force they summoned. They also have no magic powers, for they haven't cast spells against me. You never see them gesturing like they're casting a spell and wearing a wizard hat. (If right-wing activists are wearing pointy hats, it's probably one of their own rallies.)

The past year has been a smashing success for this zine, because now our humor aspects have become self-sustaining: Each comical vignette is fed by what we wrote before—defly weaving together various themes—enabling our humor to always float freely, not just in these pages, but in life. We'll never be an *economic* powerhouse, but we've hit our stride so well this year that it would be seen as justifying its own safety net.

I think we can also safely say large corporations represent an obsolete economy. That's cool because I had so much invested early on in fighting Big Business. You don't get to use corporate power as a cudgel against an innocent person and then blacklist him when he fights back. Throughout history, when people have been exploited for their labor, they fought back as long as it took. Apparently, however, there's a lot of people today who think they're getting something positive from their abusive corporate masters, so the abuse continues. Yet I've received more assurance lately that it's unhealthy for me to appease evil people who hate me. Plus, some insist on believing everything the system tells them and conforming to meet these expectations, so I have to pull society away from this groupthink.

I'm an author, and I still contribute a lot just by publishing this zine. I use my talents to earn my keep. I

shouldn't have to start over from scratch at 44 in the corporate world when it provides no gain. It wasn't my decision to kill manufacturing jobs and replace them with service jobs that pay much less.

Sorry, society, you're stuck with me. Stuck with a blue-collar contrarian who does everything within his power to break the putrid talons of capitalism. You're stuck with me until I die. I don't respond well to threats by people in high places. It only strengthens me.

A toast to success! Blublublublublub!

My dentist mentioned bubble gum

I'm not a professional. I'm just an average working-class guy. So nobody is surprised when I mention bubble gum. Amused, but not surprised. After all, bubble gum is the bubble gum of the masses.

But dentists are some of the most highly paid professionals in the country. So it's a national news story when a dentist mentions beegee. It doesn't count if they just call it gum. It only counts if they call it *bubble* gum.

Until recently, the only time I ever personally heard a dentist mention bubble gum was a few years ago when I heard one refer to a "bubble gum flavoring." But now we have another entry in this litany of laughs. A couple weeks ago, I went to the dentist for a checkup. It was the same dental practice as before, and it's joined with a general medical practice that I call the bubble gum doctor. I call it that because a registered nurse there suggested bubble gum for TMJ disorder. She called it gum, not *bubble* gum, but this point stands.

Anybip, my dentist recently—different dentist, same practice—said chewy viands such as beegee affect the jaw joints. Yes, he called it *bubble* gum. He didn't demonstrate by chomping on a huge wad of the stuff and blowing a huge bubble, but he knows of the existence of this zesty goo.

With this information in mind, I wouldn't be sure how to reignite the joy of last year's spectacular TMJ flare-up. Should you avoid bubble gum if you're in the mood for a good flare-up? Or should you masticate it 24/7? The latter would be funnier.

I'm also not sure whether to raise my tooth count to 28—as memorialized in my famous Highway To Not Having Your Teeth Fall Out that peoples a widely read forum about road transport. The dentist found that my hilarious flared lateral incisor has a "natural divot" on the back, which is like having a bonus tooth built into it. Without a doubt, this is another cool dental irregularity that improves bubbling capabilities.

Let's hear it once again for punk rocker teeth!

In the meantime, enjoy a rousing rendition of "The Bubble Gum Anthem"...



*There's this stuff called beegee
It's made for you and me
From Greenland down to Fiji
But it don't come for free*

*Your teacher may forbid it
And it's a crying shame
But you just can't quit it
Who are we to blame?*

*It comes in many flavors
And many different shapes
It's the stuff you savor
It even comes in grape*

*It's sold by many grocers
And many discount stores
Are we done yet? No, sir!
It won't cause canker sores*

*There's this stuff called beegee
It's made for you and me
Isn't that just peachy?
Now let's all shout with glee...*

Beegee!

People cheated at Monopoly and thought it was funny

All this talk about board games lately brings back a fond memory of when I was a junior in high school.

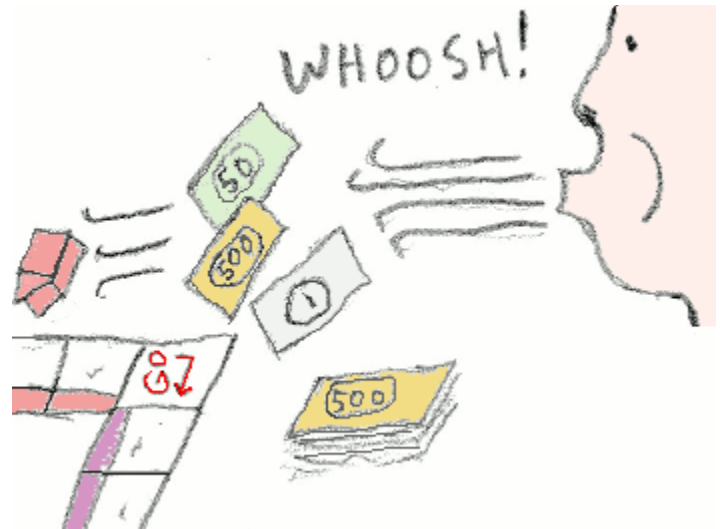
I went to what was sort of like an alternative class, because I was expelled from Brossart, and Campbell County High School wouldn't let me enroll. On a few occasions when I was a junior—maybe a senior too—we played Monopoly in the classroom.

I refreshed my memory by skimming our September 1994 issue, which included a retrospective of the hilarity of my junior year, which was 4 years earlier. The article started out with the day someone threw cigarette butts into a teacher's coffee, and it just got more uproarious from there. Our Monopoly sessions were legendary—but I didn't take the game seriously, because I'm sure the school's Monopoly set had half the cards missing. After all, this was the same class where a student threw handfuls of jigsaw puzzle pieces across the room and yelled, "It's raining puzzles!"

As we played Monopoly, we kept blowing on each other's money. We also kept wiping huge hunks of food on the game pieces. A student even cheated by colluding with another player by secretly wadding money under the laces of his shoes and passing it under the table to him. I remember a girl saying about a boy during one of these games, "Look at him spittin' all over the money." I think that was because he was chewing bubble gum and blowing saliva through the wad (a technique I also witnessed on our 1998 Pensacola trip).

More than once, when a player got fucked over by having to pay a confiscatory rent, I declared, "Capitalism strikes again!" We also argued the whole time. I had a blast!

This hilarious video on YouTube reminds me *so much* of our Monopoly sessions in high school...



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vr23C945nY&>

On at least one occasion, we argued so much that the teacher got mad, stomped over to our table, suddenly scooped up all our money, and made us put the game away.

We never played Monopoly at Brossart. If we did, this is how some kids would've acted if they lost, judging by what happened at the 1990 basketball homecoming...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eH3zQa39LAQ>

"Go directly to jail" is a command that should have been uttered more at Brossart. At the alternative class I attended later, I'm sure it was heard quite a bit, as the school kept calling the police more and more for minor (often made-up) disciplinary breaches.

Nothing like being in your late teens and school consisting of trying to play Monopoly with a half-eaten set.

No records in the '90s? Come again?

"Butbutbut it's the '90s! They don't make 45's anymore! Talk to the hand, grandpa! <g>"

I still bought new 7-inch singles well into the 1990s—possibly even into Bill Clinton's second term.

A couple weeks ago, a small record shop down the street had a little event where I stopped by and picked up a few old records that are hard to find. I almost never buy records, cassettes, or CD's anymore, but this place had a few that were cheap. This also debunks the oft-repeated mating call that 45's were obsolete in the '90s...



That's right! "I was a loner..."

Or—as everybody sang every time that song came on the radio—"I had a boner..." It obviously wasn't me who came up with that, because when the song was a hit, I was almost 18—not 13.

I got that record as really just a little novelty, because Ted Nugent's far-right politics have been a hindrance to his music still being taken seriously by most people. Sort of like the "Don't Blow Bubbles" band. I will give the Damn Yankees credit though for giving Shadoc Stevens and Barry Fox an excuse to use a swear word on the radio.

As difficult as it is, I'll even give Ted Nugent credit for a positive contribution to political discourse. Back in 1993, Cincinnati was so conservative that even the Nuge was too much for the city to handle. After a Damn Yankees concert at Cincinnati Gardens, ol' Ted was jailed because he shot flaming arrows across the stage as part of the show. After being released, he declared, "I'm going back to fucking America!" Cincinnati's stodgy atmosphere in much of the '80s and '90s meant most rock 'n' roll acts simply avoided Cincinnati. I had a ticket to see Men At Work in 1985, but that concert was canceled, and I can't imagine it was because of low ticket sales, because Men At Work were so popular then.

That's the legend of Ted Nugent, the man who walked around in pants caked with shit for a whole week to avoid being drafted—another example of Republican chickenhawk syndrome. Conservatives support wars that they refuse to fight in.

While right-wing politics hurts performers' real popularity, it boosts their clout with our media rulers. Tommy Shaw played at a Democratic event at least once, but—as far as I know—he hasn't been given his own TV shows like Ted Nugent has.

Sadly, records were no longer the dominant music medium by 2000. By then, the only records people got were police records.

A person got mad at Hasbro for ruining board games

A person got mad at Hasbro in America's lost decade! *Furious*, I tell you!

Topix isn't exactly the most respected or intellectual website around. Most of it consists of people feuding about who in their town is on drugs or has "gone goth." But most people don't know that in addition to message forums for even the smallest towns, Topix also has a board game forum.

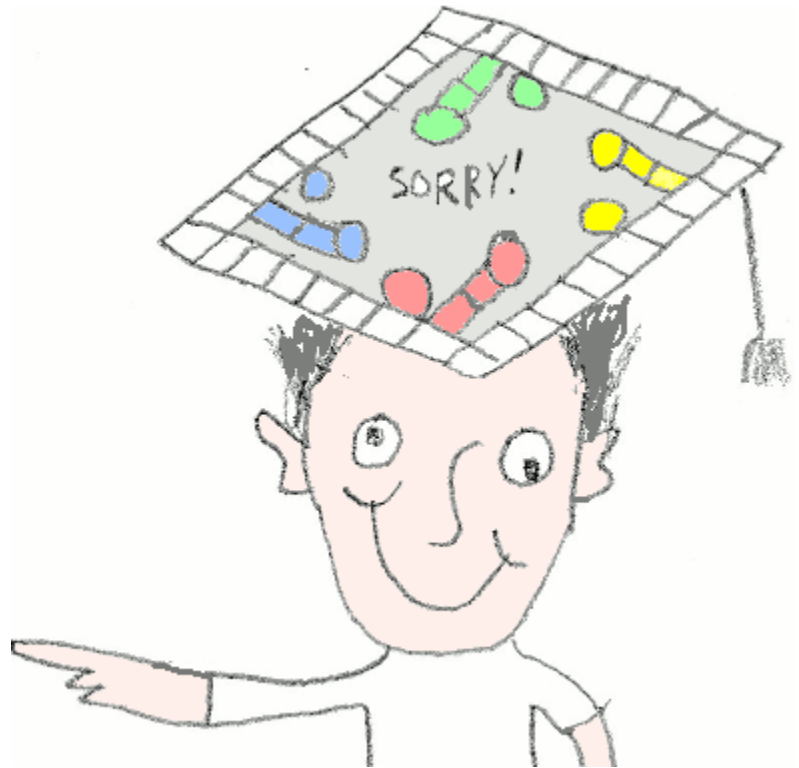
And someone there sure didn't like Hasbro...

<http://www.topix.com/forum/games/board-game/TVR3CRVM8N2S4UJ24>

Since you're afraid an exploding cigar will blow up in your face if you click on that link, here's a detailed play-by-play of that thread. Back in 2009, someone started a thread titled "Board Games That Hasbro Ruined." (The magic word!) The thread was still getting new posts as recently as *last year*.

The original poster had a hand-wringing, rambling, whiny, repetitive writing style. I'm seen other people on the Internet with this same literary style—most memorably someone on a website about radio who kept writing to radio stations hundreds of miles from home demanding they send him a t-shirt and threatening to sue for \$7 when they ignored him. One of the first posts in the thread reads...

"For me, it was Parker Brothers Scabble [sic]. Why Parker Brothers? Why do you make Scabble [sic] and not Milton Bradley nowadays? Bring back Milton Bradley Scrabble. Another game that is annoying is newer board games. Why couldn't Hasbro make new original Milton Bradley games nowadays? Nothing but character licences and board game sequels. What the? SpongeBob Connect 4? Twister Hopscotch? Guess Who Extra? What kind of games are you making Hasbro? Start making NEW original Milton Bradley games and no more character licenses and board game sequels. Man, Hasbro didn't make any new original Milton Bradley games since 2004. I wish Hasbro needs to start making new Milton Bradley games with new original ideas instead of repeat ideas. I hate repeat ideas version of new Milton Bradley games. Bring back new ideas version of new Milton Bradley games. And get rid of the MB Games logo. That should be Europe MB Games logo. Bring back old Milton Bradley



logo. And now I'm done. I hate MB Games version of Milton Bradley board games. Also, I hate Parker Brothers Yahtzee. Bring back Milton Bradley Yahtzee. Hello. Why couldn't they make new Milton Bradley games from scratch? That's why Hasbro is going downhill. Ah well. Let's say no to Parker Brothers version of Milton Bradley games. Old Milton Bradley FTW."

Huh???

The very next post is the same person continuing to make a spectacle of themselves...

"I'm back. Now, let's continue. First of all, they butchered Connect Four. Why did they now come with 3 different ways. Pop the piece? Why Hasbro? I hate New Connect Four. You're destroying the game, Hasbro. Why did the all color the board blue? And what happened to the checkers. Checkers are NOT supposed to be yellow. Checkers are supposed [sic] to be black, not yellow. Luckily, the red checkers are still there. Whew, but I hate 2009 Connect Four. The old one is way better than this. Unfortunately, they're making Connect 4X4. Connect 4X4? Why do they have to make a sequel to that game. It's the same thing except with 4 players instead of only 2. Grow up, Hasbro. Please fix Connect Four and NO 3 modes. Seriously, fix connect Four and bring back the black checkers and change the checkers holder back to yellow. I want you to fix the game Hasbro and start fixing/recoloring the box and bring back the old Milton Bradley logo. That's what you'll be working on, Hasbro. Start fixing that game. I'm begging you."

This lifeless idiot went on like that in 5 more posts before anyone replied. The posts included such keen observations as...

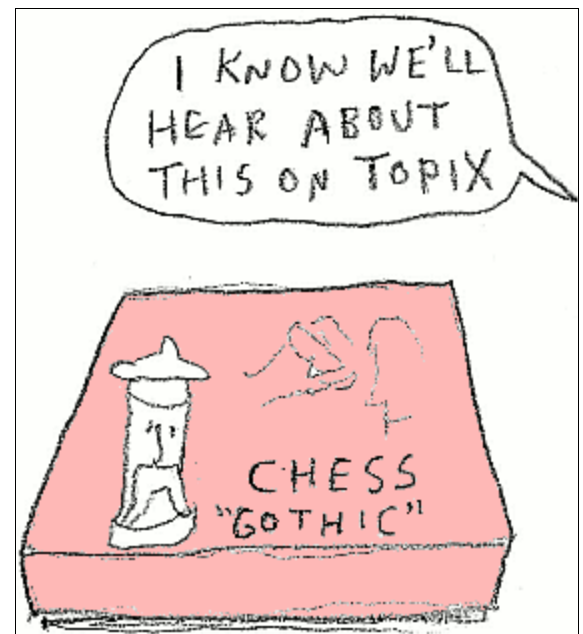
"Why did the new Connect 4 box has the Hasbro logo now? Now I'm really angry."

Yep, I know, it made me put my fist through the wall too. I still haven't recovered from the trauma of the kids colliding.

A few people replied, and the original poster posted rambling responses repeating the above complaints, and added an observation that Hasbro "ruined Boggle" and "ruined Trouble too as well as Yahtzee and Memory."

After an 8-month gap, they returned with this gem...

“I’m back. Sorry for the lack of my posts. ... Anyway, WHAT? Why did Hasbro take out the Milton Bradley/Parker Brothers logos in the front of the box and only put them in the back/bottom box? ARGH! I WANT TO DESTROY HASBRO FOR RUINING BOARD GAME CLASSICS! Hasbro ruined classic board games like Operation nowadays. Why Hasbro? Why are you only using your logo and wreck the logos for Milton Bradley and Parker Brothers? I really hate Hasbro nowadays. Hasbro butchered board game classics like Monopoly. They ruined Monopoly nowadays. Why did Hasbro destroyed Monopoly? Monopoly is the world’s most popular board game. But Hasbro ruined Monopoly by making a gajillion new Monopoly games. Stop wrecking Monopoly, Hasbro and bring back Milton Bradley and Parker Brothers logos in the front of the boxes. ... Milton Bradley and Parker Brothers are NOT gonna be happy because Hasbro wrecked classic board games like Battleship all the time. ...”



Most folks agreed that Hasbro is like a hobgoblin hiding around the corner just waiting to “ruin” every game it touches. Admittedly, it’s disappointing that onetime rivals Milton Bradley and Parker Brothers were both taken over by Hasbro—which unfairly quashes competition. If Milton Bradley and Parker Brothers aren’t gonna be happy, it’s because neither company still exists. But why make 100 posts about something that could be summed up in a few brief sentences?

The original poster hasn’t been heard from since 2010, but people were still replying 6 years later. The only thing missing is an “I’ve had my fill.”

My dog was afraid of bubble gum

Dogs are majestic beings. These amazing beasts are fearless. Well, most of the time.

The first dog I had growing up chewed a piece of bubble gum he found unchewed on my bedroom carpet. He didn’t bubble. But he chewed bubble gum!

He loved the stuff. After all, he ate everything—and yes, I mean *everything*. Chomp after hilarious chomp, he opened his mouth as wide as it would go, masticated the wad of gum for about 15 minutes, and spit it onto the rug.

So it was incomprehensible to me that a dog could actually be *afraid* of beegee. When I was going on 11, however, we took in another friendly canine. His behavior around gum torpedoed the notion that dogs were always brave in the face of adversity.

It turned out he was afraid of bubble gum. One afternoon—not long after the dog joined our household—a person blew a bubble and popped their gum loudly. Then the dog scurried away and hid! I wasn’t in the room when all of this went down, but it was discussed in detail a few minutes later.

That’s like being afraid of the toilet flushing!

Nobody can recall with perfect clarity everything that occurred 30 years ago, but we must have been bubble gum poppin’ people (as a certain now-defunct website would put it). That’s because I remember the dog skittering and hiding a lot. The dog probably would have had lots of bubbling talent himself, thanks to his unusual dentition, but he was terrified to go near this piquant goo. On the other hand, I recently asked a family member if they recall the dog being afraid of bubble gum, and they said they didn’t remember.

You just laughed because I wrote about bubble gum.

I listened to Casey Kasem and Brossart doesn’t think it’s funny

Casey Kasem, 1. Bishop Bro\$\$art High School, 0.

There was an era in my youth when I made heroic efforts to listen to *American Top 40*—hosted by the late Casey Kasem and later by Shadoe Stevens—each Sunday. It was the proper way to act. The family dogs celebrated too. Sunday mornings—before *AT40* gravitated to nights—were the only times I remember the dogs dragging out their blankets that they had gnawed holes in. It never failed.

My mom once lectured me that “you can’t let your life revolve around” *AT40*. Oh, but I can! It was a

family pastime, and we lived for it. Anything that had to do with it was met with awe. If a record made the top 40 in that era, I often memorized its chart stats—much like how sports fans always knew baseball players' batting averages. In fact, now that 1980s airings of this long-running radio countdown are being rebroadcast, I think the show was even better than I remembered! How can *anyone* not love *AT40* from that era?

Inevitably, however, there were occasional weekends when I didn't get to catch *American Top 40*. I put up with this if it was for something like a family vacation—though sometimes we heard it then too, and these out-of-town stations didn't butcher it like Q-102 sometimes did. One time, we missed it when Q-102 reran the previous week's episode instead—which was inexcusable. But it *really* gummed my gizzard when I missed it because of something idiotic my school did.

I won't go into detail about how they accomplished this, because it dredges up too many bad memories. I went to a whole *string* of terrible schools, and you gotta admit, some of the stuff they said and did was pretty fucking stupid. It wasn't only Brossart, for St. Joe's could seem just as bad. St. Joe's expected everyone to know what the hell they were always prattling about, and I didn't have the slightest clue. I looked at the school's website recently, and if I had to participate in some of the bizarre, creepy nonsense that's gone on there in recent months, I'd feel absolutely humiliated. I think some new lows may have been reached. That school is truly strange.

I just heard an *AT40* from 1987. By late 1987, I went to Brossart. That meant more *AT40* shows needlessly missed. I'm *pretty sure* this show was one Brossart caused me to miss when it first aired! I know this, because my interest in the show sustained itself so well at the time.

Who got the last laugh? For *30 years*, my high school probably thought they forever kept me from hearing an action-packed, enlightening installment of my favorite radio show. I fooled them! This is like how on *The Simpsons*, Homer won't let Bart see the *Itchy & Scratchy* movie, but Bart grows up to become a Supreme Court Justice and finally gets to see it. If my high school knew that *AT40* episode was airing again, the contents of their bowels would immediately fill their trousers.

It's amazing how much energy that week's show had. There weren't many wimpy ballads in the survey that week, but even at 55, Casey was full of pep! Like most other *AT40* shows in the '80s, that episode had such good delivery, production, and content that it stood on its own. Best all, I finally got to hear Casey imitate Sting reciting William Shakespeare!

Rest assured, the song "Little Lies" by Fleetwood Mac—which peopled the countdown that week—was not about Brossart. If it was, it would be called "Big Lies."



Voters reject Republican fascism

American voters are actually *rejecting* the fascism of the modern Republican Party in growing numbers.

The off-year elections in early November proved this, as the GOP not only failed to win back the governorship of Virginia, but also lost the throne in New Jersey. Neither state was even remotely close. Maine voters voted by an even wider margin to expand Medicaid. This also seems to be the first time in many years that Republicans didn't vastly outperform pre-election polling.

You might not realize that *last year* also saw shrinking Republican support. Donald Trump not only lost the popular vote by 3 million, but got a smaller percentage of the vote than Mitt Romney did in his laugh-inducing 2012 loss. The GOP even lost ground in both houses of Congress—an ominous defeat for the Far Right, which possesses such an irrational hero worship of the legislative branch that they think it should assume other branches' powers. The 2016 political cycle also proved Americans want socialism: Bernie Sanders—an independent and self-described democratic socialist—won the Democratic primary in many of that party's strongest states. Plus, Sanders won all 55 counties in *West Virginia*, of all places.

What does this mean for the foreseeable future? It doesn't help Republicans that they've rallied around sexual predators in recent weeks—though the modern GOP has a history of supporting child molestation and sexual harassment. A more important point is that Republican support appears to be continuing to slip. Most importantly of all, the Republicans still have the *least* support among America's most productive voters: The most Republican states get the most tax dollars back compared to what they pay in.

With progressives' right to rule firmly established, how do we assert this right? That question may be best left for a future issue or even The Online Lunchpail. We don't have forever, but we need time to formulate how this revolution should evolve. Obeying millionaire pedophiles, religious fanatics, and "free market" civic vandals is not part of our plan. At the same time, right-wing statism isn't a problem we can just bubble away—as tempting as it is for some. If it was, I'd try to be the Chad Fell of progressive populism.

We're fighting against bad people who gain joy from harming humanity.

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