

The Last Word™

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Far Right must change the channel on big-screen TV canard



Now the Far Right can shut their shit-caked little pieholes when they claim anyone less opulent than them “ruins crazy money” by buying a big-screen TV.

I recently ordered a new TV, because the old one died with a whimper after 10 years of mediocre service. (That’s the one I got at the same time I returned a brand new TV to Sears after the store’s greed and stupidity caused it to fall out of the box onto a concrete sidewalk.) Like the old one, this is a 22-inch.

That’s right. Only 22. In a bottle of poo!

It’s so small, in fact, that it’s well within the smallest of 6 size categories on Amazon—which is 32 inches or less. I actually looked for one even smaller, but the only smaller ones they had were either “refurbished” (i.e., used and possibly returned for a good reason) or the brand was on my blacklist because of a bad TV set I had before. (As you’ll recall, I purchased one around 2005 from a store that a family member *insisted* on taking me to, because they refused to go anywhere else. When this set didn’t work worth a damn, my family member kept buying expensive add-ons for it in a futile attempt to “prove” what a great set it was, and refused to take me to return the set.)

This is my fourth purchase of a new TV in only about 21 years (not counting the one that went back to Sears). So the one that just broke actually outlived its life expectancy. I still have a divine right to expect it to last longer, considering how long TV sets used to last. (In those days, TV sets usually died young only if CG&E sent out a power surge that shorted them out, like what happened with one we had once.) Here’s a safe bet: Your Speak & Spell from 1979 works better than your TV from 2008.

A postscript: I believe I figured out what was wrong with the set that just broke, and I was able to rig up a temporary fix—so I canceled the order for a new TV. Of course, I can’t fix the discoloration on the edges of the screen, which I’ve accepted as the new normal for any TV more than 6 months old. As for the set I was going to order, someone gave it a bad review because the TV “thinks people still use antennas for some reason.” Uh, we still use antennas, genius.

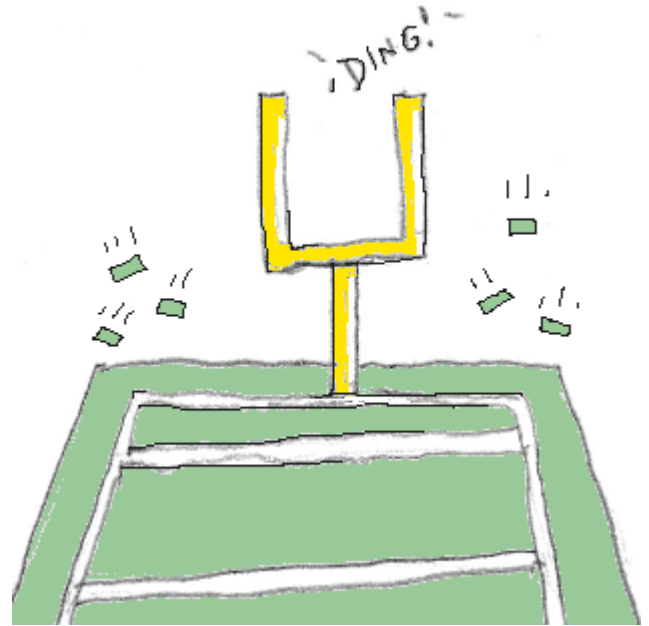
Right-wing high school wastes over \$5M on sports complex

This is the latest chapter in the sordid saga of a certain far-right Catholic school I was forced to attend. This school shall remain nameless. Here's a hint: It's Bishop Brossart High School in Alexandria.

A few months ago, I briefly alluded to the fact that Brossart was building a new stadium. Nobody—least of all me—gave a shit about it. But now I've learned that it's not just a simple field with bleachers. It's a 27-acre multisport athletic complex that will also be able to host concerts, receptions, and retreats. The price tag: \$5.2 million.

With this Donald Trump-like show of extravagance, I don't ever want to hear another word about how short on money Bro\$\$art is—or how they need county taxpayers to fund student transportation (which is unconstitutional for a couple reasons). It's weird how I just reported on the lunatic Right complaining about people spending \$150 on a TV, when they're completely silent about Brossart spending over \$5 million on a stadium—even though Brossart receives transportation handouts from the county.

Also, since the parcel is officially owned by the diocese, the school doesn't have to pay taxes on it. Bet that makes your day, doesn't it?



Can you tell me how to get away from Sesame Place?

It's always a whole tanker full of guffaws when people give amusement parks bad reviews—but I can't find any that have received as many negative reviews as Sesame Place.

Sesame Place—located just outside Philadelphia—is a theme park based on *Sesame Street*. The park is operated by SeaWorld Entertainment, which licenses the *Sesame Street* kick-ass crew from Sesame Workshop, the show's producer. I never heard of Sesame Place until I saw a small newspaper article about the park's operators prohibiting employees from chewing gum. (Another Rulebreakers moment!) The park is supposed to be designed for very young children—the show's fan base—and the rides have had names like Oscar's Wacky Taxi and Ernie's Bed Bounce (seriously). There used to be Sesame Place parks in Dallas and Tokyo too.

Despite this ostensibly being a park for little kids, many of the rides have height requirements that exclude a vast majority of *Sesame Street*'s young viewers.

And when I say Sesame Place gets bad reviews, I mean it. Mean it like a dictionary, I do.

Reviewers describe Sesame Place as “terrible”, “disgraceful”, “Hell on Earth”, and ridiculously overpriced. They say “trashy people” and teenage gangsters maraud through the park. Guests say they couldn't get into live shows because they were too full. The restrooms had “crap smeared on the walls” and the toilets were overflowing—which reportedly stunk up the whole park. A Cookie Monster ride smelled of pee. One reviewer said, “I don't think I've ever been so angry for paying for something and being cheated.”

One visitor reported being escorted out of the park by security for complaining about food served on dirty dishes. Another said that—during a Halloween event—their children's trick-or-treat bags were stolen. Another said that the napkin dispenser at the eatery “looked like they just used the tissue all crumpled up and put it back in there.” A water ride had used Band-Aids floating in it and “3 turds” on the ledge. One guest reported that their family was called “assholes” by the manager of a food place there.



Police logs on newspaper websites are also a source of Sesame Place absurdity. There are constant reports of arrests for retail theft there—and a man was cited for disorderly conduct in the parking lot. Sesame Place is easily the site of more police calls than any other establishment in that jurisdiction. It's the new Chuck E. Cheese's.

These woes wouldn't seem so preposterous except that they reportedly occurred at a theme park based on something as innocent as *Sesame Street*! Sesame Place sounds like a park only Oscar the Grouch could love!

You'd think Sesame Workshop would yank SeaWorld Entertainment's license to use the show's adorable Muppet characters, because the park isn't being run in accordance with the principles the ol' Ses was founded upon. Then again, the Workshop violated these very principles by allowing new episodes to be released to HBO months before being picked up by PBS—forcing cash-strapped families to subscribe to a premium cable channel to catch fresh episodes.

People argued about bubble gum and I thought it was funny

It's no secret that the Internet has hosted numerous message boards over the years about bubble gum—and that the *exact same people* have been arguing about the *exact same things* on these boards for the past 20 years. The reason it's not a secret is because I stumbled upon one of these boards years ago and instantly became hooked on seeing them argue about *bubble gum*, of all things.

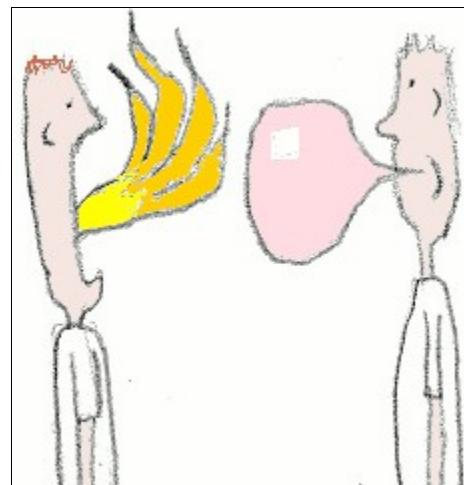
They're still at it, and someone made a funny.

One gum chewer who frequents a message forum was threatened with being banned. So he called his foe "bubble boy" and continued...

"You're the worst bubble forum Nazi I've ever seen. If you think my life is gonna shut down because you ban me from this shit forum I'll just find something else to do like fuck your mom. ..."

Given the *Seinfeld* reference—"bubble boy"—"bubble forum Nazi" is evocative of the show's beloved "soup Nazi" character. Now that I think about it, doesn't a person blowing bubbles with gum that burst and stick to their face sound like a *Seinfeld* episode? It's exactly the sort of thing they'd do an episode about. Wikipedia says "many of its episodes are about the minutiae of daily life", and I think that qualifies.

"No gum for you!"



The houses get smaller, the prices get bigger!

I was 22 once. But now I'm older and past my stage of left-wing radic—wait, I'm not. Stories like this only highlight the stinking rot of capitalist excess.

Most would agree that the tiny house movement would be a good thing—if people weren't forced to pay more for less. The infallible Wikipedia says the average size of new houses in the U.S. ballooned from 1,780 square feet in 1978 to 2,662 square feet in 2013—because of "increased material wealth and prestige." Needless to say, this "increased material wealth" didn't go to you. Honestly, is your family richer in real dollars now than in 1978? Plus—in a deliberate attempt to exclude people of normal means—many communities and the homebuilding industry itself have adopted a minimum size for new houses. Where permitted, however, you'd think smaller homes would be cheaper and more affordable to working people.

But not so fast!

Developers of tiny homes seem to be trying to sell them for more than what they had been asking for larger houses—and nobody has the guts to rein in this swindle. Locally, Channel 9—those in the know call it WCPO-TV—reports that the tiny house movement is coming to Newport. You'd think this would be a godsend. The article on the station's website says of the homes, "Keeping them affordable is part of the goal."

But the very next sentence undercuts this by saying that "list prices were in the low \$100,000s."

That's Channel 9's idea of "affordable"? I guess they're not teeth punkers like we are.

Everybody I know who has bought an average-sized house or condo in recent years has paid less than that—and they're not even teeth punkers!

The local media has always been out of touch on matters economic, and this proves it. Who's gonna pay over \$100,000 for only 200 square feet of living space? Somebody is, because there's a sucker born every minute, but why should we pretend this isn't a ripoff? Land used to be free: When members of early civilizations needed space for living or farming, they didn't go down to the bank and grovel for a loan so they could pay some

politically connected developer who was artificially jacking up land prices. That only started under feudalism. Humans have got to be the only species that has to worry about this. Wild animals don't hoard land and sell it to other wild animals at a confiscatory price. It's almost like having to pay for air.

How do we fight this greed? I'm not one to advocate regulating the market except when the market fails—as it always does, every single time. Nobody is more full of shit than the loudmouths who are always yelling out, **“LET THE MARKET DECIDE!!!”** If the market worked, we wouldn't have so many homeless. We'll start with this truism: Our public officials and media should stop acting like this price-gouging is such a great thing.

A person had a funny body art question in 1996

The year was 1996. The Cranberries and Celine Dion ruled the music radio airwaves. *Twister* dominated at the box office. The Democrats did their damndest to grab defeat from the snout of victory. A man spit a cigar into a creek during my Columbus trip and a turtle ate it. I hit my head on the corner of a kitchen cabinet at my mom's house.

And—although helmet hair and bad polos remained part of our local uniform—folks everywhere else were more likely to rock innovative body art.

The year 1996 was also when someone posed a hilarious question in a body art newsgroup on Usenet. It had to do with tongue piercing.

Ahem.

You can already see where this is going.

I know Google has shamelessly neglected the Usenet archive, and that it isn't completely reliable after the courthouse gang and its international crime racket got through with it. But I trust this post was real, because why would anyone forge it? It was from a young woman, and it reads (replete with typos)...

“Here is my tongue piercing question and you have to promise not to laugh. Does a tongue pierce in away interfere with gum chewing or huge-ass-bazooka-gum-bubble-blowing? These aforementioned actuvutes are two of my favorite passtimes. I would not be able ot live if I couldn't blow huge pink bubbles. ... I must know this before I run out and do my tongue. Thanks!”

“Promise not to laugh”? *“Promise not to laugh”*????? Yeah, I heard ya.

Responses were mixed. One person said of their piercing, “I tried to blow a bubble and couldn't!” But another said, “If you have a tallented [sic] tongue ... you'll have no problem learning to blow humungus [sic] bubbles in no time..!!!!” Still another declared that she “just tried to blow a bubble yesterday” but the main problem was that you can't stretch the gum back as far on your tongue—thus limiting the bubble's size. Another suggested joining the approximately 3 people in the world to chew Freedent, lest the beegie stick to the jewelry.

A few years after that was posted, I overheard a man tell some folks that his tongue piercing had put the kibosh on bubbling.

There seem to be a couple reasons why the prevalence of tongue piercing has declined since then. One is that stuff like tongue piercing that used to be considered cool was co-opted by the Establishment around the time of all that **“TO THE EXTREME!!!”** business—sort of like the “alt” label. I bet another reason though is that tongue piercings interfered with the always hip, never boring pastime of beegie busting.



The super is a pooper

Something utterly pooppy happened at a New Jersey high school.

Every day, track coaches there kept finding human feces strewn about the football field and track. The bowel movements towered so spectacularly that school officials opted to set up surveillance to catch the culprit.

Finally—at 5:50 AM one day—the offender was caught in the act. It turns out he was the superintendent of a neighboring school district and a part-time college instructor. He was arrested that morning as he was running on the track there.

The super was charged with the crimes of lewdness and littering. He also had to take a leave of absence as superintendent.

A person didn't know the difference between ink stamps and postage stamps

Remember this one? "Poochie...Poochie is here!"

If you want my awe-inspiring business partner to regale you with a mildly funny story, sing that jingle. Better yet, leave her a voicemail in which you sing it. Poochie was an animated dog in the '80s with a line of toys. I'd forgotten about this toy for years until my bizbud briefly mentioned it on the People's Forum in response to a "shit stinks" joke. Then I forgot about it again for just as long, until recently when I suddenly remembered.

She says she had a neighborhood friend growing up who had Poochie ink stamps. One day, she went to her friend's home, and her friend showed her the stamps. But her friend confused ink stamps with postage stamps. She kept licking the stamps—which were covered with ink—and sticking them on things. She stuck them on the walls. She stuck them on furniture. She even stuck them on envelopes.

My bizbud had to explain to her—although she was the same age—that this wasn't what the stamps were for.

Now that my business partner's pal knew that ink stamps weren't for sending mail or licking, she used the Poochie stamps to stamp some library books her family had borrowed—thereby ruining them.



Pac-Man cereal tasted like Clorox

Pac-Man cereal was the worst cereal in the history of cereal—maybe even in the history of Pac-Man.

Introduced in 1983 by General Mills, this cereal cashed in on the smashing success of the arcade game. It was sold in blue boxes that showed ol' Packy chomping away. The product contained small marshmallows, not unlike Count Chocula or Lucky Charms.

And it tasted like shit.

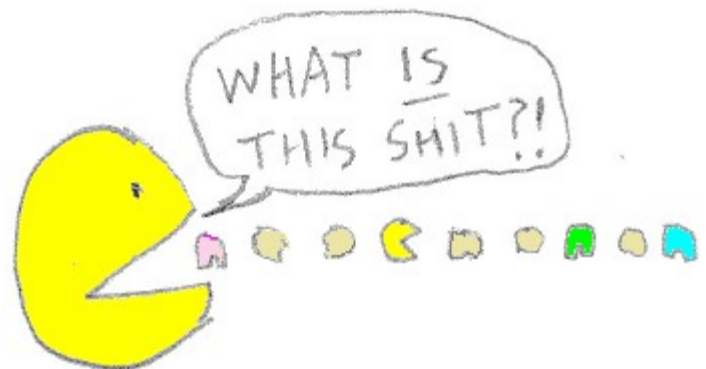
We bought a box of it once in my youth. It tasted of bleach and was thoroughly revolting. By that, I don't mean the good kind of revolting. The good kind is when you revolt against something unjust and say, "I'm revolting!" This cereal was the bad kind.

Unfortunately, this cereal must have been around for quite a few years thereafter, since the Internet reveals several variations of the box. One of these boxes touted that this specially marked package included a pack of Color Bubbles bubble gum. However, I don't remember ever seeing this brand of beegee except once in 1994 when a college classmate masticated a morsel of it. She proceeded to bubble with unparalleled fluency.

The Internet also reports that a 1984 episode of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* features host Fred Rogers strolling through the cereal aisle of a grocery store as boxes of Pac-Man loom.

Despite the cereal's disgusting flavor, commenters on a cereal website give the product an average of 5 out of 5 stars. People can be strange.

There were people out there turning Pac-Man into gold.



Pee exploded in a 7-Eleven microwave

Something funny happened recently at a 7-Eleven convenience store in Aurora, Colorado. A celebrity look-alike wearing a helicopter hat and a *Sesame Street* t-shirt bubbled and loudly passed gas. Just joking!

But seriously now. Something funny really did happen there.

A woman allegedly used the microwave oven at this 7-Eleven to heat a urine sample. This caused the sample to explode inside the oven—which ruined the oven beyond redemption.

The woman was then cited by police as she waited for drug test results at a nearby health clinic.

The 7-Eleven cashier said the woman darted out of the store after the oven made a loud bang, which resulted in “yellow liquid dripping from the microwave.” The clerk tried making her clean up the mess, but all she did was dump the urine onto the floor.

When the culprit was confronted by police, she simply stated it was not real urine.

There was a similar incident last year in Oregon. Cool also.

Tribune stovepipes gentrification propaganda

When the Northern Kentucky Tribune news website started, I had high hopes for it. But it looks like most of its content is intended for leaders of right-wing Big Business groups that are always inserting themselves into local public affairs.

Now—much like how the *Cincinnati Enquirer* has run Tea Party press releases as “news” stories—the Tribune recently ran a press release put out by the city of Covington as “news.” This release consisted of the city gloating about gentrification efforts. It almost makes me wish for the days when the *Kentucky Post* ran right-wing editorials on the front page supporting school uniforms. Almost.

Even worse, the headline is misleading. The headline says the “influx” of new dwellings “expand Covington housing options”—even though if you read the press release, you’ll learn that housing options are actually being vastly narrowed, since the new construction consists entirely of luxury housing.

I know it sounds absurd.

The piece says that “eye-popping housing options are being added at a dizzying rate.” Um, no. Gentrification is reducing housing choices and artificially driving up housing costs. Each of the examples cited in the article involves strictly luxury housing. It even says houses on Scott Boulevard are selling for as much \$530,000 apiece.

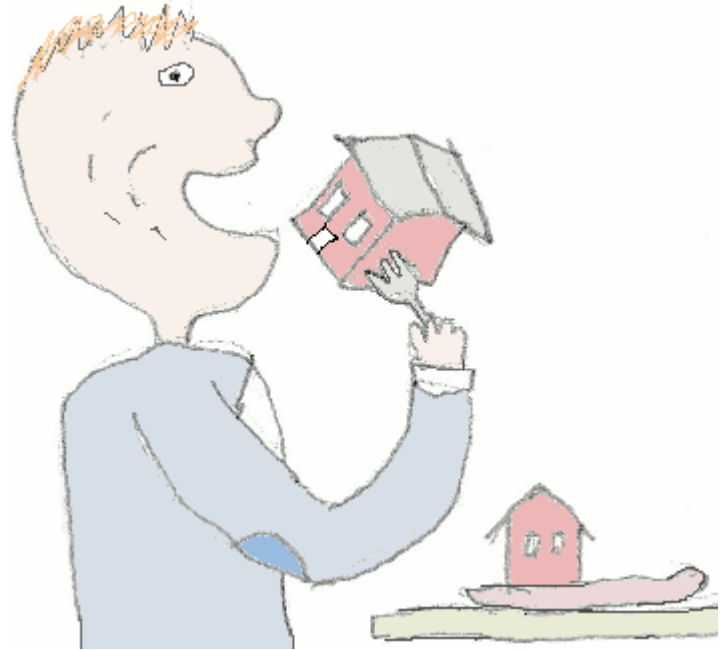
Let that sink in for a moment. They’re selling houses on Scott Boulevard for \$530,000.

The screed goes on to state that studio apartments are now being rented for \$1,090/month. For a studio—not a 3-bedroom palace. A studio. That’s nothing short of an outrage.

Where does this end? How does this end? The negative results of this land grab aren’t just economic and environmental—but political too. Rich right-wingers have already outvoted us in our once-pristine rural areas. Now urban areas are at risk too as these counterrevolutionaries literally *invade* our cities. We’re not going to have affordable, safe, livable cities anymore if we don’t fight this—because we’ll be outvoted. In fact, it’s already happening in some cities. Take Dayton, Kentucky, for instance. Its political makeup is being impacted by the gargantuan but hugely unpopular Manhattan Harbour project that has drawn the very rich. And don’t expect the suburbs to improve as the cities falter, because right-wing millionaires often illegally vote at both their old and new addresses. There seems to be a secret campaign of launching undemocratic political takeovers.

In another strategy to impose gentrification, wealthy developers often buy a property in a poor or working-class neighborhood and intentionally create nuisances such as noise pollution or foul odors—which are so bad that residents leave and existing property owners are forced to sell cheaply. Then the developer tones down the noise, buys up those properties cheap, and resells them or rents them out at inflated prices.

We must learn to fight this pillage before we wake up in a city we don’t recognize. The good news is that, because those behind gentrification are so petrified of us that they want to force us out, it might not take much to scare them away. After we helped shut down Pathway Family Center, the kleptocrats should know this isn’t a fight they’ll win.



A person pooped on the floor at Tim Hortons

It’s not just the good ol’ U.S. and A. nation where people poop on stuff. Our friends north of the border

get to enjoy it too.

It all went down at a Tim Hortons donut shop in Langley, British Columbia. One evening recently, security footage revealed a woman arguing with employees of this shop. Apparently it was because they refused to let her use the restroom. When they asked her to leave, the magic began. The woman proceeded to defecate on the floor.

She then picked the Big Log up off the floor with her bare hands and threw it behind the counter. The Mounties arrested her in the parking lot.

John Franco bubbled during a near-forfeit

Nothing is funnier than a forfeited game in Major League Baseball.

And nothing is baseballier than blowing bubbles with bubble gum.

So what's the only thing *almost* as funny as a forfeited game? When a game *almost* gets forfeited!

And what's the only thing *almost* as baseballsy as bubbling? Nothing! When it comes to baseballsiness, bubbling has no competition.

Let's travel back in time to April 30, 1988—30 years ago! Whitney Houston, Terence Trent D'Arby, and Aerosmith had the top 3 songs in the land, according to *Billboard's* Hot 100, the most authoritative chart in the beeswax. You could still find a Rax. And the Cincinnati Reds hosted the New York Mets at the now-defunct Riverfront Stadium.

I truly wish I'd attended the game—but this was in the era when I got assaulted every time I stepped out the front door. This game basked in infamy because of a confrontation between Reds manager Pete Rose and umpire Dave Pallone.

Fans became so angry that they threw batteries and assorted garbage onto the field. They even went into the restrooms, pried the toilet paper dispensers off the walls, and threw rolls of toilet paper on the field.

And John Franco bubbled...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IScx2xAgV4g>

As you know, about a year earlier, the Reds pitcher had blown a pink bubble the size of his head in a newspaper photo—causing someone in my 8th grade class to draw a smiley face on the bubble on a stack of newspapers that was sitting there in English class. That video shows he did so again on April 30, 1988. The clip is posted on Dave Pallone's very YouTube page. It shows the televised coverage of that day's game going awry. Fast-forward to about 2:22. You can see a player who appears to be Franco emerging from the right-hand side of the video and bubbling a biggie.

The umps were gumming as well—but they didn't bubble.

And the game came *this close* to being forfeited! It seems like sacrilege to more serious sports fans, but come on! Let's live a little! The game was *so close* to being forfeited that a message appeared on the scoreboard urging spectators to stop throwing items onto the field. Unfortunately for local baseball fans, however, a forfeit would have counted as a Reds loss, because they were the home team. Then again, the Mets went on to win the game anyway.

Later, the baseball commissioner called the legendary Reds radio broadcasting team of Marty Brennaman and Joe Nuxhall into his office to bawl them out because they failed to stop fans from trashing the field. Was the baseball commissioner supposed to be the FCC or something?

Wow! Thirty years! Where has the time gone? The toilet. That's where.



Tea Party crime wave cuts like a knife

Someone on Facebook observed that Donald Trump's base of support is made up of people who repeated multiple grades at Cline Middle School. I tested this theory by looking at old schoolmates' Facebook profiles—and, man, he wasn't kidding! (Those who flunked at Brossart, however, have turned out to be fine progressive populists.)

The Republican Right has been overtaken by an element with a pathological record of bad achievements.

These folks also have thick histories of criminal run-ins and irresponsible choices.

That must be why the Tea Party—even before it *was* the Tea Party—is so soft on crime. They’re just protecting their fans.

The Far Right claims to be tough on crime. They lie. It’s one of the biggest lies in their teeming hemorrhoid of lies. It’s like how they accuse everyone else of being on drugs when they’ve been pushing dope themselves. This is underscored by a new development in a case that fell right into authorities’ laps—but was not properly investigated, because of Tea Party pressure.

As you know, I’ve been a victim of break-ins—here, at my previous place, and when I lived at home. (Some people forgot about every break-in that was more than 5 minutes ago, because they possess conveniently short memories.) It was still going on 3 years ago. I had a potential suspect in at least one burglary of that era, but nothing solid.

I had a steak knife that mysteriously vanished around that time. I didn’t know whether it was stolen or misplaced. Now I know. Just a few weeks ago—3 years after the knife misappeared—I went down to the basement of my apartment building to do the laundry. I was looking for my detergent next to the coin-operated washing machine, and guess what I found glistening on the floor?

I sure as shit had never brung my steak knife down to the basement. Why would I eat steak in the basement? I don’t eat it much *anywhere*. Do I look like I’m made of money?

The tip of the knife was slightly bent, and there were tiny flecks of a black, tar-like substance stuck to the blade...



Right away, I figured out what probably happened. The person who I suspected all along of a break-in 3 years ago probably broke into my apartment, stole the knife, and used it to try to steal quarters out of the tills of the washer and dryer. The tip must have gotten bent from trying to pry open the tills. The mystery is how they got into my apartment. I already knew *somebody* did. I have no idea how they accomplished this feat, because I got a better lock after the 2009-10 home invasions.

(Cue the denialist babblings of those who claim I must have accidentally mixed my knife in with my laundry—which doesn’t explain how the knife ended up on the floor or how the tip got bent.)

Local authorities have a history of being obsessed with “decency” and raiding bookstores, video stores, museums, and computer bulletin board systems for writings, movies, and artworks that are constitutionally protected. (Repeat after me: An officer involved in raiding a BBS had his own BBS that offered premium services that competed with it. That’s something else people forgot because of their microscopic attention spans. But *I’m* the one with ADHD?) Yet—for 30 years—when I’ve reported being the victim of actual *crimes*, nothing ever happens. Who got punished instead? Remember those 4 months when I was 17 when I was locked up and called “crazy” to my face because I reported what had occurred (because the community rallied around the abusers)? (Why do you think I got involved with HEAL? Or do you still think I made up HEAL because someone else involved with it mentioned Men At Work once?)

What about the time when I was stopped by Highland Heights Police because of “break-ins” when I was walking home from Thriftway—when nothing has ever been done about the burglaries I’ve experienced? What about the bogus “trespassing” arrest when I tried using the library at NKU?

I actually had some respect for the person who I suspected of the break-in of 3 years ago. Sadly, I felt this respect evaporating when I found my steak knife, which made it appear all the more likely that they *had* broken in. I’m still not 100% sure they did it, because my first impulse upon finding my knife was to wash it instead of having it checked for fingerprints. But who else would have taken it? Ronald Reagan?

If we had a media that was anything more than a mound of petrified peat, I could expect to turn on the TV to see serious investigative reporting on the alt-right covering up crimes to protect its own leaders. Instead, I switched on the TV only to see another cosmetic dentistry ad. (Imagine that!) That’s like if you complain to your parents about being repeatedly harassed at school, but instead, they ignore your complaint and stare at your face because your eye is crossing.

The “law and order” Far Right now runs candidates who not only commit serious crimes but use their

own pathological criminality as a selling point. Joe Arpaio and Don Blankenship are perfect examples. They think committing police misconduct or mine safety violations makes them freedom fighters. They portray themselves as political prisoners. Who sounds more like a real political prisoner to you? Me or them?

America is supposed to have rule of law, but conservatives keep undermining it.

I get it now. Police protection against serious crime is considered a privilege given only to the financially secure—and my constitutional remedy is to move to a rich neighborhood I can't afford, instead of expecting laws to be enforced equally. If I don't relocate, I'm expected to stop complaining.

That's America under the hard freeze of Tea Party extremism, bigotry, and thuggery.

A person ate gum

Some people don't just *chew* bubble gum. They *eat* bubble gum!

I know I'm scraping the bottom of the barrel for this story, but I'm not being paid nearly enough for better gum stories—since my failed paywall experiment of 2013 proved this zine appeals only to people of limited economic assets. But I do have a PayPal account. Hint, hint, hint.

When I started high school, classmates began gumming much more often than before—despite Brossart's strictly enforced prohibition. One day in science class, one of my pals informed me that he wasn't really violating school rules, because he wasn't actually *chewing* his gum. He said his gum was merely “resting inside my mouth.” The teacher—an elderly nun—didn't buy that argument though.

Gum could be *eaten* too. One day in study hall, some girl walked past a boy's desk and noticed he was enjoying a plug of beegee. So—in a disgusted tone—the girl said, “Ew! Are you eatin' gum?”

I snickered because of the very concept of gum being eaten instead of merely chewed. It was as if the gum was being swallowed like any other foodstuff—rather than being spit out.

I don't know what brand or flavor of gum it was. For all I know, the boy may have cobbled it together from various used wads he pried from under the desks or found on the floor of a TANK bus—because why not?

The teacher in this class didn't seem to notice this conversation. People talked all the time in study hall, and he always said, “Stop the talking.” Famously, he once launched an angry tirade because 2 students sitting behind me kept loudly passing gas. In fact, this instructor got angry *a lot*. People who were in his class in earlier years told me he *never* got mad—but that sure changed that year!

This was also the same classroom and teacher we had for history that year. It was in that room that a student once found a dirty stick of Extra—labeled as the bubble variety—behind a radiator and chewed it. However, it's unknown whether he bubbled. (Bet you never heard that story before!)

A person got mad because their ‘Sesame Street’ books were ripped to shreds

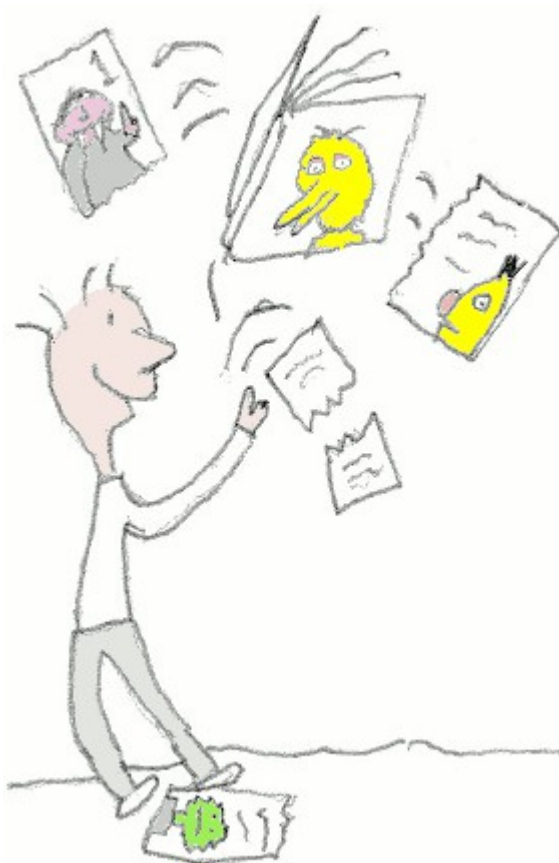
Would you get angry if your collection of *Sesame Street* books was utterly ripped to pieces? I would!

I have a fuzzy memory of a cousin who was my age having a *boxed set* of *Sesame Street* books growing up. It was something to see! This collection was titled *The Sesame Street Library*. I thought this was funny because it wasn't actually a building like most libraries were. It was just a set of books of the same size and shape that featured the *Sesame Street* kick-ass crew and were conveniently grouped together.

For years, I've been wanting to ask my impressive business partner if she ever had this set growing up, but I've always been afraid to ask. It's like asking the sheriff if he ever farted. But what parent wouldn't want their kid to own such a useful series of educational books?

Nowadays, people are selling old copies of this 15-volume extravaganza on Amazon. You'd think each copy would still be in pristine condition after 40 years, because Sesamoids have respect for personal property. But nooooo! A Sesamoid who ordered a set off Amazon had this to say about the copy they received...

“Only 12 books instead of 15. One of them very badly damaged. The rest of them are not in very good condition at all.”



In other words, they were (keek!) ruined.

The real question is: What sort of sicko did this to a perfectly good set of *Sesame Street* books? It's not as if the sun expanded to engulf the earth, which nobody would have any control over.

I carried a faint memory of *The Sesame Street Library* around for years. In high school, I even threw a random reference to it into a report for art class. The teacher was not pleased.

There's people out there recycling gum

Among some of my schoolmates at Brossart, recycling gum usually meant chewing a wad of the stuff that someone else had discarded. They weren't into populist environmentalism.

But recently, a British designer came up with a keen way to turn your gum into something other than somebody else's gum. It's called Gumdrop. The streets of jolly old Britain are now dotted with Gumdrop bins for chewers to deposit their used gum to be recycled. When you discard your gum into these pink bins, the piquant goo is recycled into other products.

That's because gum contains a recyclable polymer. This is the ingredient that lets you puff out those mean bubbles like you always do. It's also used in other inflatables, like basketballs and bike tires. The polymer can be recycled into items ranging from shoe soles to coffee mugs. Next time you get a sip of coffee, it may be in a cup made from someone's old gum! Even the Gumdrop bins are made from recycled gum!

Gum deposited in the Gumdrop bins is taken to a recycling plant that sifts out wastage such as paper wrappers and grinds the gum into new goodies.

This technology hasn't hit American shores yet, but even the Wrigley Company has backed it.

All together now: The bin! The bin! The biscuit bin! The coffee bin! The Gumdrop bin!

