

The Last Word™

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When my wallet grew legs and walked away

In my America, we don't keep other people's lost money that we find—as long as its rightful owner can be identified.

A couple weekends ago, I found \$26 in cash laying on the sidewalk on Walnut Street in Dayton, Kentucky. Its owner was tracked down, and the money was returned. But my wallet full of money that vanished when I was a college freshman is still floating around in the ozone.

To hear skeptics tell it, you'd think the billfold grew legs, jumped out of my pants pocket, and walked away so it could get some gum. It was the 1992 equivalent of "Their poo also voted." What actually happened is that the wallet was pickpocketed. The world isn't always the benign place that some folks think it is. There actually is evil out there.

Anyone who enrolled at NKU back then—and probably still today—quickly discovered that one of the university's highest priorities was fraternities and sororities. NKU charged all students mandatory activity fees that went to these elite organizations. Even students who were not members of these groups had to pay it. The school published a big, slick, fancy booklet about these groups, and each new student received a copy. I promptly defaced my booklet. I remember holding a cigarette lighter under a photo of some fratboy in the booklet until it burned his face off, but I don't remember what I did with the booklet after that. I think I either left it laying around the school or burned the rest of it at one of my bonfires.

Needless to say, I didn't try to join any fraternity. I didn't want to *buy* friends, and I don't think they would've accepted anyone who didn't go around wearing a polo shirt with the collar turned up. These organizations also threw destructive parties and got away with it—yet if I did half the stuff they did, I wouldn't have lasted long.

To celebrate these exclusive clubs, NKU often conducted something called Greek Week—so named because these organizations are named after Greek letters. This was one of these events schools had that had nothing to do with academics but which I was supposed to care about—but didn't. NKU always made a big deal about Greek Week. One day during Greek Week, I was running to one of my classes and had to walk through the University Center building (probably because the walkway outside the building was closed again). I had to squeeze through a bunch of fraternity guys who were blocking the lobby and the hallway.

Afterward, I dug my hand into my pocket and noticed my wallet was missing. It seemed to have disappeared into thin air.

You guessed it, comrades! It had been pickpocketed by some fratboys when I was walking through their gauntlet. Another smoking gun that it was stolen instead of simply lost is that it was never returned. If it was accidentally lost, whoever found it would have returned it—because it had my beer ID with my address in it. That's how my America works.

The \$26 I found recently went back, because I'm like a quality control inspector for socialism—a great American and worldwide tradition. Sure, there are some business leaders in the capitalist system who make occasional forays into ethical conduct—just like how there are some who do nothing but sadistically exploit and abuse everyone else. But keeping money you find when the real owner can be located is the capitalist credo at its purest. I'm not a capitalist, so I don't adhere to capitalist rules.



People used 8-tracks for dental floss and ruined them

Recently, it was yet another dreary day with the permacloud, and as I was walking down the street, a certain boyhood memory struck me for the first time in 40 years.

Back when I was about 6, we went to an important family gathering at the home of an aunt or uncle. I don't remember what the occasion was, but there was always cool stuff like this happening in those days, and potato chips with dip still evoke fond memories of the snacks that were always spread out on the table. But this event went awry as the evening wore on.

I remember two younger children—probably little cousins—playing in a back room. When the adults had their backs turned, the kids began grabbing 8-track tapes off the shelf. They promptly inserted the 8-tracks into their mouths and began tearing the tape out of them with their front teeth.

Faster and farther they pulled, and I could hear the reel inside the 8-tracks spinning freely. As they stretched each 8-track away from their teeth, it was as if they were imitating the \$100,000 Bar commercial! The result was a huge pile of tape in the middle of the floor.

Because I was the oldest child in the room, I tried in vain to stop this ghastly endeavor. But the damage was done, and we all skedaddled out of the room. I never did find out what happened afterward. Who found the dismantled 8-tracks? And when? Could any suspects be indicted for this crime against humanity? Did anyone attempt to wind the tape back inside the 8-tracks, or did they write off the 8-tracks as irretrievably ru?

I didn't see what the 8-tracks were of. I'm guessing they were favorite 8-tracks, as they were on the top of the stack and easily accessible. You have to remember that this was circa 1979, and people took music more seriously back then—perhaps because music was *better* back then. Given the era, it's likely the 8-tracks featured either disco, punk rock, outlaw country, or the singer-songwriter folk rock that was big in the '70s. Might it have been...Stephen Bishop?

I recently found a website that still sells an 8-track repair kit—for \$49. For an additional \$21.95, you can get cassette splicing tape with it. The website says, "Got a crate full of 8-Tracks, but too scared to actually play them?" Boo! This paralyzing fear can be eliminated all for just a whole day's pay! Or you can buy a good used vinyl copy of the same thing for \$1.

I'm sure that on the way home from this gathering, I lamented the wastage bastage of those priceless 8-tracks. Our blue Plymouth Horizon tooted up the road in the ghostly darkness, as the faint glow from the headlights bounced off faded traffic signs.

Vancouver launches anti-plopping campaign

Plopping isn't just an American tradition. Our friends north of the border also enjoy the time-honored pastime of putting things in toilet bowls.

But the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reports that officials in Vancouver have had their fill of this hobby. Baby wipes, condoms, and other items have been repeatedly flushed down toilets there, which has pulverized the sewer system. To combat all this fun, officials have hired mascots named Pee and Poo to teach folks about proper toilet usage.

Most items other than urine, feces, and toilet paper don't break down easily and can clog a whole city's sewers. That's what prompted the regional government to hire these costumed mascots. The mascot Poo is a giant mound of shit, while Pee is a huge drop of urine. They warn against the dangers of plopping dental floss, hair, and other artifacts. Mayor Richard Stewart of nearby Coquitlam said, "We want people only to flush the pee and the poo, because there's a whole bunch of stuff that gets flushed down the toilet that doesn't belong there."

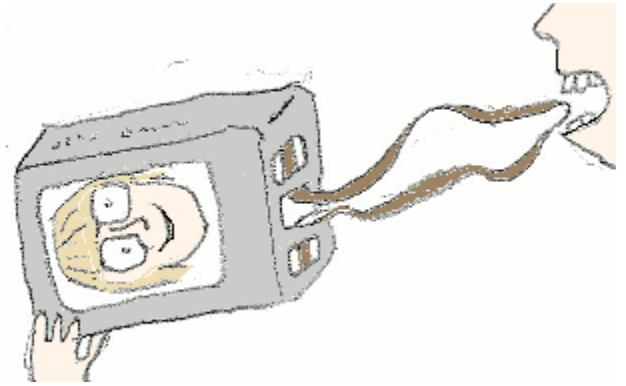
Over in the city of Victoria, a similar mascot was used to raise awareness of improper waste dumping. That campaign featured Mr. Floatie, who protested local authorities' dumping of raw sewage into waterways.

This story is funny because it involves toilets.

Kmart sold baseball cards nobody wanted

Now that you know that the most valuable baseball card in the world is your 1981 Larry Littleton, what are the *least* valuable baseball cards?

A bit of research gives us a likely answer. Back in 1982, "discount" retail chain Kmart celebrated its 20th



anniversary. I was never too pleased with Kmart. There was one right up the street from me in my youth, and mostly I just remember its shoddy merchandise and its discontinuing of 45 RPM single records when they were still the leading music medium. To mark 20 years in business, the chain teamed up with Topps—the bubble gum poppin’ people—to sell a special commemorative pack of “limited edition” baseball cards.

This set included 44 cards and a big chew of bubble gum to blow some mean bubs with. Most of the cards were just reprints of Topps MVP cards going back to the 1960s. The wrapper was graced with the Kmart logo smiling its ass off.

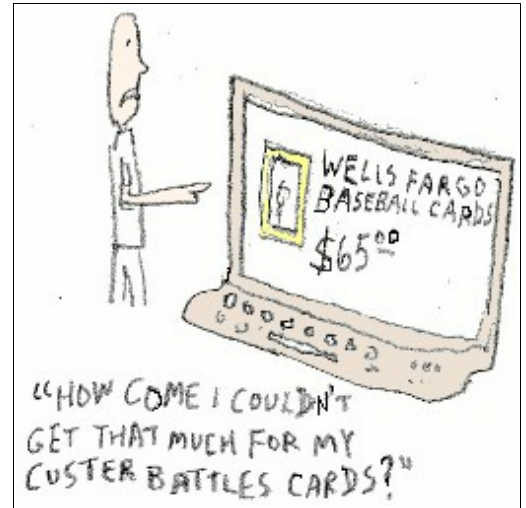
This “limited edition” collection really wasn’t so limited. Kmart produced many more of this set than they could ever hope to sell. By 1982, Kmart may have been seen as such a symbol of despair that people avoided it when they could. I’m sure many customers only shopped there when they had no other choice, and they were unlikely to buy any collectibles that prominently displayed the Kmart logo. Does the *Mona Lisa* have a Kmart sign stamped on her forehead?

The set originally sold for \$1.97. But Kmart couldn’t give them away, so the price gradually went down to just a dime. Even then, they couldn’t get rid of them.

Reportedly, you can now find this set on eBay for less than its original cost of \$1.97! This collection was so unpopular that even in perfect condition, it has depreciated in value! And those numbers aren’t even adjusted for the skyrocketing inflation plaguing many of the 37 years since.

Kmart wasn’t the only chain to sell its own baseball cards. Woolworth’s, Toys “R” Us, and Denny’s restaurants did too. Even Fruit of the Loom sold baseball cards!

What’s next? Facebook baseball cards? Airbnb baseball cards?



You can’t blow bubbles with paper

Some people seem to have a hard time distinguishing between bubble gum and paper.

They share many characteristics. For example, you can chew both. At the dreaded Bishop Brossart High School—which strictly forbade bubble gum busting—a student once hid his gum by partially swallowing it so it became lodged halfway down his throat. When the coast was clear, he released a “blecccchhh!” sound as he dislodged the beegie and began chomping it again. I have a family member who said they had a classmate who did the exact same thing—only with paper.

But one thing you can’t do with paper is bubble with it.

One afternoon when I was in 6th grade at Cline Middle School, we had a substitute teacher for English class. We were working on some busywork when the teacher asked a student behind me what he was chewing. Cline also had a rule against gumming—though not nearly as strictly enforced as at Brossart. The student answered that it was paper. While there was a rule against gumming, there was no rule against papering—so the instructor let it go.

A few minutes later, the teacher said to this student, “You can’t blow bubbles with paper.” Apparently, the student had bubbled—revealing that he was not chewing paper, but gum. He was required to discard the beegie into the wastebasket.

I remember one other time—I don’t even remember what school—we had a substitute teacher who also admonished us not to masticate gee. She said students were not allowed to chew gum in class because “they blow bubbles.”

Not every teacher frowns upon classroom gumming. A 2nd grade teacher posted on her blog that she allows students who are on their best behavior to chew gum on Friday afternoons—and she even brings in a big bucket of Dubble Bubble for the occasion. But she says alternate rewards may be provided for kids who are prohibited by their parents from chomping this zesty goo—as if they’re microchipped so their parents would find out.

But—for the strict school environments we’re used to—WikiHow has a page providing detailed instructions on how to chew gum in class without being caught violating this Allowed Cloud. However, it advises against bubbling. “Remember, you don’t have to blow bubbles in order to enjoy gum,” the website says. What’s the point of chewing gum if you don’t blow bubbles that burst and stick to your face?

I want my MTV, but I don’t want an MTV license

Aw, how cute! MTV thought you needed a license to view their channel!

People used to *watch* MTV—because it used to air, you know, music videos. Today’s kids are probably

surprised that MTV ever was anything other than something you just skip over while channel surfing. But MTV was so popular in the mid-'80s that it thought it could cash in on scaring viewers into thinking they needed a license just to watch.

That was when MTV began running a promo that sold licenses to fans who had outdoor satellite dishes. I first saw this promo when I was watching MTV with my family one day. We all burst out laughing! Requiring a license to watch MTV was about the stupidest thing we'd ever heard of. And that says a lot, because that was in the Cline Middle School era.

When we were finished with our uncontrollable laughter, I was overcome with a deep feeling of anger. I knew the Reagan regime had been cracking down on reception of satellite broadcast signals. Before Reagan, it was recognized that the airwaves belonged to the people, and folks were allowed to receive broadcast signals as they wished, because the signals traveled through the air. But that was changing, as the government was now siding with those who would *sell* the airwaves and require viewers to buy special equipment from approved sources. The right-wing gentry was labeling people as pirates for engaging in what would be considered lawful activity under any legal theory.

This was around the time Cincinnati Bell wanted to charge people an exorbitant fee to use a modem. If this authoritarian policy had been enacted, it would have eventually stymied the rise of the Internet.

If I had a satellite dish instead of cable, I *damn sure* wasn't going to buy a license just to watch MTV. I know there were a lot of zealous officials around here who would have loved to break down the door to arrest me for watching MTV—with or without a license—but I couldn't be pushed around as easily back then as I was later.

Others apparently felt the same way. Did MTV sell a single damn license?

Years later, in college, one of the things we learned in broadcasting class was that the airwaves are indeed public. So I asked the professor why MTV had tried to sell licenses, and he said it sounded like it was just a vanity thing. People could order a license just so they could show it off to their friends and act like they're cool. It was like how a local computer bulletin board system sold plaques to its users to hang on their wall. Ironically, that BBS was one that liked to accuse everyone else of being pirates even as it knowingly distributed pirated software. But I still think MTV was serious about scaring people into buying a license. Wasn't MTV violating Federal Trade Commission rules by scaring fans into thinking they might be prosecuted when there was no law they could be prosecuted under?

Later still, I saw a small editorial in the *Cincinnati Post* saying Ohio had just passed a law criminalizing satellite dishes because they could receive unauthorized signals. This Republican law was considered overreach even by the standards of the "let's ban everything" *Post*.

The only proof I can find today of MTV's license campaign is a clip that someone uploaded to YouTube of items they taped off MTV in 1985. This clip includes the aforementioned promo. For \$19.95, you could get a license that was valid for less than a year. This offer came with a t-shirt. Twenty bucks was a mighty steep price for a t-shirt back then.

Hey! Private satellite dish owners! Are you intercepting MTV with your backyard satellite dish? If you act right now, you can move past 1985 by watching YouTube instead!



A person got expelled from college for trying to burn down dorms after their beer got dumped

As you know, NKU expelled me because I had the "wrong" political views. But I've found a few stories about people getting expelled from other colleges for—well, just about everything. Sometimes wrongly—but other times deservedly.

One feller was expelled in a confrontation over beer that led to arson. Campus security dumped out all his beer—thereby wasting it. This made him so angry that he tried to burn down 2 dorm buildings by setting garbage on fire.

Another student was expelled for installing bitcoin miners on all the computers in the video editing lab.

One idiot was kicked out for throwing a beer can out the window of their car as they were driving to class and accidentally hitting the dean with it as she was riding her bicycle. Another student was expelled for shooting fireworks out of their own ass.

One young man was expelled because he vomited in the staircase of a dorm building, causing a resident assistant to slip, and because he broke into a dorm and shit all over the bed. Another was expelled on his very first day in college for having beer, illegal drugs, and weapons in his dorm. Another student was kicked out because he shit in a bag and threw the bag into a resident assistant's room. It just so happened that the fan in the room was on, and the feces hit the fan and was sprayed all over the room.

Another was kicked out for stealing sodium from a chemistry lab and using it to blow up a toilet. One was expelled for sending an e-mail to the college president trying to sell him heroin. One who had an \$80,000 ROTC scholarship and was in his final year of college got expelled because he organized a Facebook campaign to defend a fired professor. This not only ruined his scholarship, but he also had to repay the whole thing. One student got expelled for going to a soccer game at another school and urinating all over the scoreboard.

A student was kicked out of a university for throwing a keg of beer out of a fourth floor dorm and onto the pavement below. One student was expelled from every public college in her state before she even attended her first class, because she got drunk during an orientation and ran off into the woods. Another was thrown out of his school because he stored cups of his own urine under his bed in his dorm. One was expelled because he defecated in a Subway bag and hid it above the ceiling panels of a dorm. Still another broke into a sorority house and shit in a vase. The student who did this was also known for shitting on restroom floors next to the toilet (like what someone did at Brossart once).

Some folks at Brigham Young University—known as a strict Mormon institution—were expelled because they ran a prostitution ring from their apartment complex. A freshman at one school was expelled for ripping a stop sign out of the ground and using it to smash a window of a police car. At another school, a student got expelled because he shit in a plastic cup and heated it in a microwave oven in a dorm building. He also stole furniture from campus. A student was kicked out of a community college because he protested bad cafeteria food by stealing spoons from the cafeteria and hoarding them over time. He amassed *thousands* of spoons!

There's also gobs of stories of students being expelled after being falsely accused of plagiarism or drugs.

Sesame Street it is not.

Wasted people wasted beer

People got wasted—causing them to waste precious beer.

I've been informed that there was a small local festival recently where some woman got drunk and spilled a whole beer. The festival sold beer for \$5, and after the woman bought a beer, she dropped the whole thing before she took a single sip—thereby wasting an entire \$5 beer.

This mimics a similar incident I saw at a festival in downtown Cincinnati perhaps a decade ago. It may have been Oktoberfest—back before the city reduced the space for it to appease the streetcar, which seems to exist primarily as a yuppie tourist attraction. A guy bought a cup of beer, and as he carried it across Fountain Square, he accidentally dropped it on the ground. Beer splattered everywhere. He hadn't imbibed a single drop of it, and now it was ruined.

"WASTED!" he yelled at the top of his lungs.

It's the time of the season...When smashing records runs high...

More stuff got ru! It never ends!

Someone on the Internet who grew up in the '60s says mayhem erupted when they tried buying a Zombies record at a Montreal mall.



Upon discovering they had only enough money to buy one record, they bought the *Zombies* but also stole a different record. Somehow, they were caught by a store detective—who then called the teen’s parents. The detective allowed the teenager to keep the *Zombies* disc because it was purchased legit—but took the other record.

When the teen got home, their mom promptly grabbed the *Zombies* record and smashed it into a gabillion pieces.

Later, the teenager’s little sister heard about what had happened and thought it was hilarious. So she went out and purchased this same *Zombies* record and played it constantly—just to rub it in.

Another person said they shoplifted a record once and accidentally broke it on the way home.

A person bubbled on ‘Fish’

I’m digging up the memories for this one, huh?

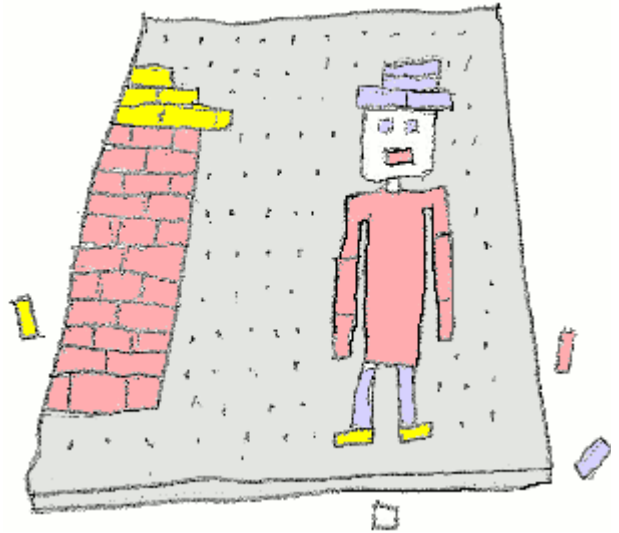
Remember the late ‘70s sitcom *Fish*? It was a spin-off of *Barney Miller*. And I will swear up and down that a character on *Fish* once bubbled.

I had a toy at the time that included small, flat, Lego-like tiles that would be placed on a little plastic pegboard to make cool pictures. I didn’t have it long because prying hands kept purloining the tiles. I tried to take good care of toys because we had such humble means, but this wasn’t always possible. One day, I decided to use these tiles to make a picture that represented the character on *Fish* bubbling.

I still remember what this mosaic looked like—and it did not depict bubble gum or anything from *Fish*. The character on *Fish* who bubbled was a teenage girl, but the person in the picture was an adult man. And he wasn’t blowing a bubble. He was a clown-like figure wearing a fedora and long jacket and standing outside a building. I recall producing this work in the living room.

When I was finished with it, a family member asked me who the man was. I replied that he was “a person from Channel 12”, because I mistakenly thought ABC and Channel 12 were one and the same. But he wasn’t actually intended to *portray* anyone from that station or network. He was merely intended to *represent* them. It’s kind of like how our senators and congresscritters are supposed to *represent* us, but they don’t have to *be* us. They just have to live in our state or district. You’d rather bubble than write laws, so you elect others to *represent* you to write laws.

In short, a person bubbled on *Fish*, so I made a picture that did not feature bubble gum or anyone from *Fish*. I know this sounds like it doesn’t make a shred of sense, but I thought it did. I figured out when I was about 7 that a lot of things I did were just like this in that they did not make sense. It was all free association. When I saw something, I’d often think of something that had absolutely nothing to do with what I saw.



More people got expelled from college! Imagine that!

On an Internet where it’s shockingly rare to find stories of people intentionally breaking their own eyeglasses or passing gas in libraries, it’s surprising to find a bonanza of college expulsion narratives. Misbehavior is considered art if it’s committed by someone with the means to go to college and goof off instead of study.

A student at a private college worked in the school’s IT department and was expelled for stealing \$40,000 worth of computers and selling some of them on eBay. A university expelled most members of its rugby team because they ransacked a hotel and ate all the food that other guests had set out for a wedding.

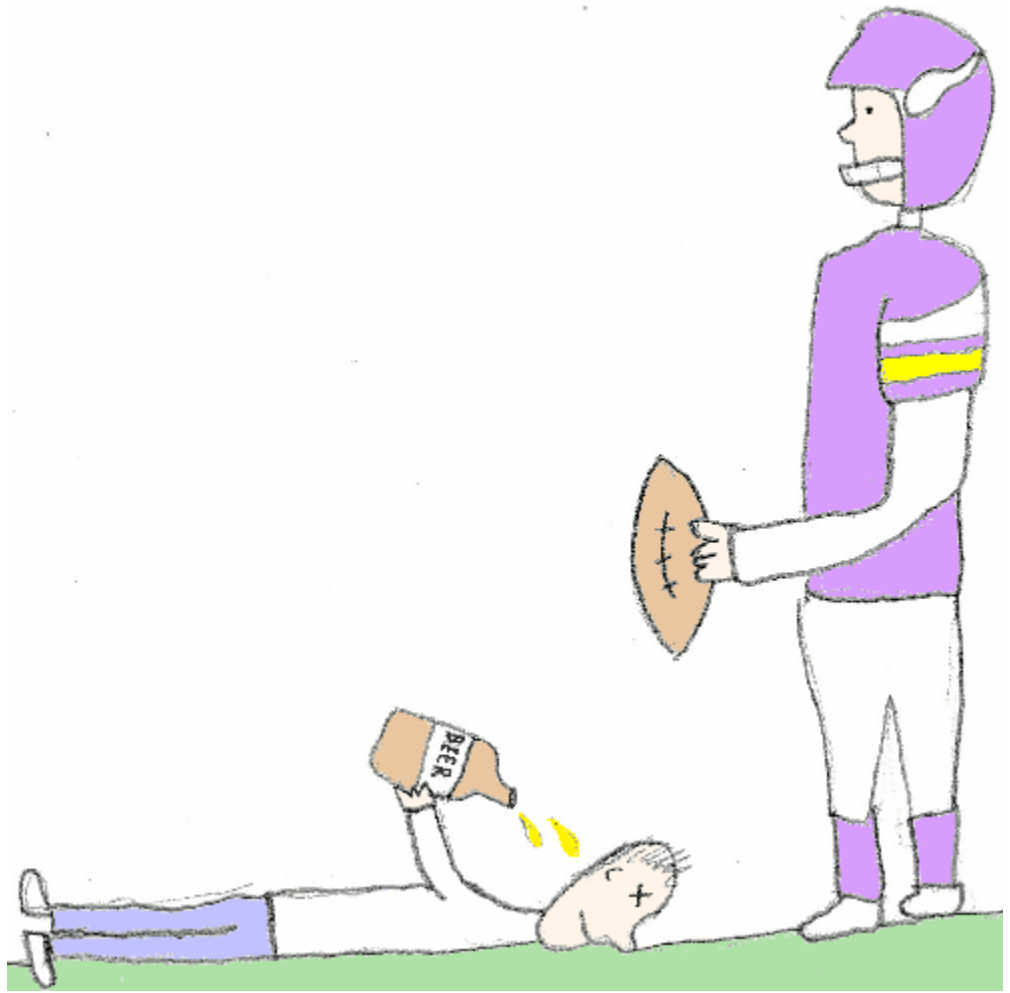
One student was expelled from a university they never even attended! They had been offered a scholarship there, but declined it, because it appeared as if this school sucked. Six months later, this student received an e-mail stating they were expelled for missing all their classes and all the assignments.

A student was expelled for a series of incidents including breaking a urinal by jumping on it and smashing a window by playing hockey with a bagel as a puck. Another was expelled from a religious university because he drew a gigantic penis on the lawn with weed killer. Another received a permanent vacation for breaking into the cafeteria and stealing a box of cereal.

Another student stole microscopes from school and pawned them to fund her drug habit. Another broke into a professor's office and shit all over her chair and desk. The offender was caught because the professor forced the entire class to submit a DNA sample. Another was expelled for getting drunk and passing out on the football field on the morning the NFL's Minnesota Vikings were supposed to start training camp there.

One student flooded a dorm because he was an idiot, and he was sued by the school for damages. Then he countersued—and was expelled for that. One young man paid parking fines using only nickels and dimes in a pizza box. Not only was he expelled but also *arrested*. Because freedom and all.

Some say our institutions of higher bubble bustin' are bloated police states, but others say they're simply guardians of good order. You decide!



Oklahoma was never like this...

Did Covington practice gentrification over 100 years ago? Or did the city simply rescue a neighborhood that was a hopeless ruin? If the city did indeed carry out a gross land grab, did the sensationalist press of the era cheer it on?

The answer to all of the above questions is the same: If poo.

Gentrification is not new. It predates the unchecked squatting by the modern short-term rental industry that depletes the supply of affordable housing, and it even predates Mussolini's gentrification land grab that satisfied only wealthy tourists by demolishing a row of houses. Yellow journalism isn't new either. Today we have right-wing propaganda outlets like Fox News, but many news outlets of old were also known for their lack of journalistic standards.

In the first decade of the 20th century, there was a neighborhood at what was then the southeast corner of Covington called Oklahoma. It was said to have been bounded by 19th, Clay, Denver, and Eastern. Although it was called Oklahoma, it was not in the state of Oklahoma but rather in Kentucky. I can find almost no information about it. But an unspecified newspaper at the time lamented its very existence.

This periodical said the neighborhood consisted of ramshackle dwellings made of sticks and scrap metal. It also said residents were serial criminals who "eat horse flesh." It said the people there "never appear to come in contact with water and a cake of soap put to use would cause terrible consternation." You know the article wanted to be taken seriously, because it called a bar of soap a "cake." You get the image of an old movie with a spinning newspaper with a headline saying, "Cake of soap put to use!"

How much of that information was accurate? Buildings made of scraps are not uncommon in the Tri-State. But I have a hard time believing that residents sat around eating horses, committing crimes, and being terrified of soap. The newspaper's attacks on inhabitants' industriousness sound like the bogus canards that The Media spreads today about America's poor. I'm guessing the neighborhood of Oklahoma was actually peopled by folks who did much of the area's real work—which local elites refused to do. The rate of horse consumption and violent crime was probably no higher there than anywhere else. At worst, Oklahoma was probably like the Honeycomb Hideout without the free bubble gum.

If you believe everything the press says, you must also be one of the very few who believes their

laughable claim that we have the best economy in 50 years.

Whatever the weather, the city soon opted to redevelop that part of town. The residents were pushed out. Where did they go? Away. That's what always happens when gentrification land pirates maraud into our cities. If this was a case of gentrification—as it *appears* to be—the city's elites probably found themselves with nobody around to do all the tough work for them. But I guess they didn't learn their lesson, for so many cities today keep doing it. Either that or they're so disdainful of people with less money than them that they just don't care.

Singing a tune about 6...

In my day, some things were normal for *other people*. They weren't normal for me. For instance, other kids went on vacation to places like Disney World—but we went to Iowa. This suited me niftily, because Iowa was a birthplace of innovation. Another example: Other kids went to their high school prom—but I never had any interest in mine.

But there's one thing that binds us all together: *Sesame Street*. The ol' Ses was a common experience we all shared.

This got me thinking what the average age was that we stopped watching *Sesame Street*. I don't mean after we gained an interest in the show at a later age because of nostalgia or shock value. I mean watching it at a very young age as part of its target audience.

With almost everyone I ask, the answer is the same: 6. That's a consensus. I'm no exception. I tried to watch every episode from start to finish until I simply outgrew it. I would get mighty close to soiling my pants because I'd wait a whole hour to use the bathroom just so I could watch *Sesame Street*. I swear there was one time when a log was already starting to slither out and I was hoping nobody was hogging the bathroom. This ended when I just quit watching when I got too old for the show.

I knew all my letters and numbers by then. The reason I kept watching until then is that there were a few really cool recurring segments that I liked. I thought the "5 pounds of bubble gum please" animated sketch was comedy gold! I stopped watching when I just couldn't keep up with the show's dramatic story lines anymore because I often missed it because we did things like go to the library instead.

Other folks tell similar stories. Some stopped watching because a family member wanted to watch something else.

My mom thought I was weird because I still watched *Sesame Street* when I was 6. Why wouldn't I? It's a show for small children. It wasn't until later that its target audience became slightly younger. Someone observed in a 2003 Internet post: "I agree that SS is getting babyish and I dislike this." This suggests that the show was quite mature before then. *Sesame Street* today is a skeleton of what it once was, but it used to be a creative dynamo.

After I stopped regularly watching, I was sad to see a print ad that showed the *Sesame Street* kick-ass crew climbing out of a TV set, because I thought it meant the show was being canceled. As the show today bears little resemblance to that of 40 years ago, it's almost as if it has been canceled.

The governor of New Jersey mentioned bubble gum

It's always a barrel of guffaws when an elected public official mentions bubble gum. It brings an air of frivolity to their serious office. They can't just call it *chewing* gum. It's gotta be *bubble* gum!

Recently, New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy made a reference to the acclaimed goo. Calling for a replacement for the monorail at Newark's airport, the Democratic governor said the airport's passengers "deserve more than a bubble gum and duct tape approach for meeting their flights."

The monorail opened in 1996, so it's hardly an antique. My stereo, microwave oven, and Speak & Spell are older than the monorail is. But apparently the airport has dealt the monorail so much abuse that it's near the end of its useful life. In fact, Murphy's news conference was late because the monorail is in such disrepair.

But he didn't bubble.



People wore “dirty” t-shirts at amusement parks

It was always a guffaw-o-rama when people wore t-shirts featuring profane language to places like amusement parks or school. These days, that’s considered by amusement parks to be one of the most serious taboos—and they’ll kick you out of the park for it. But in my America, these shirts were pure comedy!

Once when I was about 10, we visited a local park like Kings Island or Americana. This was before you had to be a zillionaire to go to Kings Island, but this would have been around the time the park’s habit of removing its best rides got going. Anyway, while I was at one of the aforementioned parks, a family strolled along one of the paths there. Among them was a boy who was about my age. He was wearing a t-shirt that said something like, “I’m a cowboy, so I do cowboy shit.”

I snickered. My parents didn’t notice, but I think they found out about it later and said the shirt was “ignorant.”

When I was about 13, we went to a water park. Water parks were nice, except the water was always freezing cold the few times we went to one. While I was at this park, I noticed that a young man getting onto a water slide was wearing a t-shirt that read, “Don’t drink water. Fish fuck in it.”

Try wearing a shirt like that to an amusement park now. Go ahead. See what happens.



GoFundMe scams safe space donors

Now I know why the safe space campaign wasn’t getting many donors. It’s because GoFundMe deactivated it without telling me.

In a 2016 issue, I described how I was launching a GoFundMe campaign to build a much-needed progressive safe space in northern Kentucky. There were a few very small donations made to this campaign early on—totaling only \$5—but they quickly dried up. I just thought it was because the right-wing fucks in The Media bashed safe spaces so much that everyone lost interest in them.

A few days ago, I logged on to GoFuckMe to see what the logjam was. On the “My Campaigns” page, this campaign was listed as “inactive.” I don’t know how that can be, because I never deactivated it. The public page for this campaign said, “Campaign is complete and no longer active.” How can it be complete? Five bucks won’t buy a safe space! The “My Donations” page listed no donations—not even the \$5 seen on the public page.

I contacted GoFundMe about refunding the donations, but they never got back to me. I can’t collect the money from the donations either, because that option is missing from their website. In other words, GoFuckMe has pocketed all the money I raised.

They’re making me look like the bad guy. Who’s going to get blamed if donors don’t get their money back?

Did GoFundMe yank my campaign because they didn’t like its political stance? After the Google AdSense fiasco, it’s tempting to say it did. Let’s look at the evidence. Another user said their campaign for cannabis legalization was pulled. Meanwhile, GoFundMe allows a racist crowdfunding campaign for Donald Trump’s border wall. Although it had been reported that GoFundMe was shuttering that fundraiser because the campaign’s founder realized the government can’t accept donations and was starting a private organization instead, it’s still up in its new form.

On the other hand, GoFuckMe has also been accused of withholding funds from campaigns that weren’t politically charged or controversial. Folks have complained to the Better Business Bureau that this crowdfunding platform has refused to release funds raised by campaigns for victims of fires, illnesses, and deaths. Also, after GoFundMe took over YouCaring, it lost all the messages posted on that site—some of which were from people who are now deceased.

I’m sure this news will glide off GoFundMe like water off a duck’s back, because when is there ever any news coverage of stories like this? AdSense was never exposed in The Media, so why would GoFundMe?

Chuck E. Cheese’s got bad reviews

I should probably stop poking fun at businesses that get bad reviews, because “don’t expect them to do anything for you.” Guess what, world? It’s a little late for that!

Chuck E. Cheese’s—the prekindergarten pizza restaurant with robot animals and games—has been

getting some comically bad reviews for its Florence location. A woman who took her daughter there for a birthday party found that some of the games did not emit tickets like they were supposed to. She was left with about 200 game tokens that will be “wasted.” Another customer said the trash cans were overflowing.

Another patron said, “Pizzas came out wrong.” Another said his family spent \$300 on a birthday party package for his granddaughter, and one of the pizzas never even arrived. Another said it took almost 2 hours to receive their order—which turned out to be the wrong order. Plus, they said a woman who worked at the ticket counter was high on drugs and kept dozing off.

On the other hand, a customer praised the bathroom—which contrasts with the time I went to this location with a school group and noticed that someone had unloaded a big log onto the restroom floor.

A Chuck E. Cheese’s in Ohio got bad reviews too. One woman said a child threw up all over the order counter, and over 20 minutes went by before the restaurant started cleaning it up. This caused customers to walk in the vomit puddle. This reviewer said her husband used the restroom later and found “feces all over.” Then another child threw up.

Presumably, a vast majority of reviewers are not writers—either professionally or to an extent that they have a regular publication that is widely read. That’s fine. But if businesses find that it’s bad to antagonize people who have no writing background, they find that it’s even worse to anger those who do. Thus, I’m on the edge of my seat waiting to see what happens if economic royalists can commandeer our community into adapting to their unreasonable and disjointed whims.

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