

The Last Word™

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Post about Manhattan Harbour trucks uses magic word

After years of the wasteful Manhattan Harbour boondoggle, I'm in no mood to show it any aloha. My ongoing lambasting of it causes the 1% to burn their fingers retrieving their monocle after it falls into their tea.

Dayton residents say Manhattan Fubar construction trucks continue to spray dust and mud on the city's main streets because the trucks refuse to use the road that was built for them. The trucks *refuuuuuuuuuse* to use it! Someone on Facebook noted that 4th Avenue needs to be cleaned again because of all the abuse.

This observation elicited a reply from another local resident that said in part, "My floor mats in my car are ruined because of it." Hear that, everyone? *Ruined!* The magic word!

You tumble out of your chair in a burst of laughter every time that word is used. But this story is no laughing matter. It looks like the next Strongly Worded Letter might be a court summons. Another respondent—whose car windows have had to be repeatedly replaced because of concrete dust—suggested a class action lawsuit. At very minimum, residents should band together to send the construction companies a bill for all the damages.

One of the arguments used for building Manhattan Harbour is that it would improve nearby property values. But all it's doing is destroying others' property. If the board of directors of Manhattan Harbour all stripped naked, smeared fresh dog shit on their butt cheeks, and slid around on their asses in everybody's yards, it wouldn't have done any more damage.

Rough month for Far Right in Kentucky

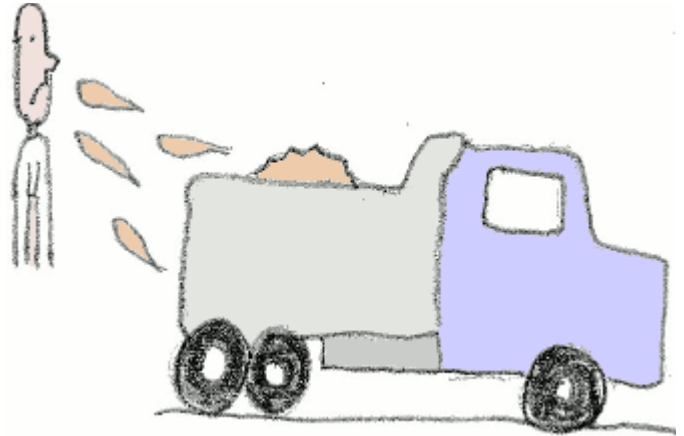
It's been a November to dismember in Kentucky, as the right-wing uniparty was the target of public smackdowns the likes of which they hadn't suffered in years.

It started with Matt Bevin's much-deserved defeat—which should have been unsurprising, considering his towering incompetence and extremism. Republican electoral losses should have been much worse—and would have been if not for unchecked Russian electoral interference and the media's catatonic right-wing bias. Not ones to miss a chance to look a gift horse in the mouth, Republicans in the Kentucky legislature went on the offense after Bevin lost and declared their intent to simply overturn the election result and declare Moscow Matt the winner. This was the biggest election-inspired tantrum since George W. Bush screamed and cried until his loss in Florida was reversed.

Make no mistake, one of the reasons for the latest plan was to see if other states could replicate it at the presidential level in 2020 by canceling the election and simply awarding their electoral votes to Donald Trump. In fact, Republicans in several states—Alaska, Arizona, Kansas, Nevada, South Carolina, and Virginia—have already canceled their primaries so Trump won't face a challenger in his own party in those states. As unlikely as it was that Republicans would nominate a believable candidate instead of Trump, this is still a rocket launcher blast across the bow of democracy, and it's illegal. It's bad enough when the Democrats' right wing shouts down challenges to its diktats, or when Republicans are allowed to run unopposed, but since when do parties cancel elections in advance to protect a candidate?

The Kentucky GOP's commando tactics didn't work this time. Their plan was so roundly laughed at that they slunk back into their bunkers and backed down—for now at least. You can bet your bizcream we'll see something similar next year and that the Republicans' legal eagles are using their boundless genius—such as it is—to try to find ways to nullify the election.

The right-wing stranglehold on the Bluegrass State continued to loosen during the week after Bevin's defeat. That was when Bellevue City Council quite properly enacted a fairness ordinance—which protects the public against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. The vote was 6 to 0. Among the general public, there was almost no opposition to this law. There was even less than there was in Danville



when Mike Harmon—now Kentucky’s right-wing auditor—tried killing the law because he hates gays. And this time, the Tea Party was nowhere to be found. Maybe it’s because Far Right groups like the Tea Party have less focus on social issues than they used to, because they think they can kill more people by focusing on cutting Social Security instead.

That didn’t stop right-wing anti-gay droids on Facebook from attacking Bellevue’s law after it passed. One sarcastically said...

“Hey, that’s awesome! They’ve effectively created a protected class of individuals who have SPECIAL State Infused rights! Fantastic!”

The Orwellian language about “special rights” is an evergreen of far-right agitation. A Republican group even used it in anti-gay mailers in the recent Kentucky election.

Regarding Bellevue’s new law and his intent to move out of town because of it, another right-wing dead-end trying to stay relevant declared...

“Well that’s my Q to move see you Libs.”

See ya!

When I praised Bellevue’s new ordinance, an idiot replied...

“fuck that send those illegal mother fuckers back to where they came from you are a fucking liberal retard you need smacked”

Uh-oh, a person’s feelings got hurt.

I hope Bellevue’s fairness ordinance would result in more than just a Strongly Worded Letter for violators. The city’s tolerance of construction-related noise and traffic violations is legendary. Hopefully, the city won’t be so easy on large businesses that discriminate.

Just before the election, someone had the nerve to insist Bevin would win, and said this to me on another online forum...

“You’re using a poll from over six years ago to try to discredit a result you don’t like”

I responded...

“Bevin is using ideas from 600 years ago to discredit a world he doesn’t like.”

After the election, when I pointed out that pollster Targoz correctly forecast Democrat Andy Beshear as the winner, someone said...

“Polling accuracy is determined by how close the poll is to the final margin, not whether the poll gets lucky and happens to call the correct winner.”

To that, I replied...

“Of course Targoz called the winner, because Bevin will always, always be a loser.”

And that he is. Of all the right-wing losers this year, Governor 48 is the biggest. We were starting to build a new progressive revolution even before he lost. We’re in a battle against evil. Some of our political leaders are not just misguided but are bad people. They want to harm you—and they have.

Kentucky’s Far Right had a third straight week of lousy luck when one of their most intentionally harmful efforts crumbled. Previously, Kentucky Republicans had been trying to slash benefits for the working poor and elderly and impose drug testing as a requirement for programs ranging from Medicaid to Social Security. Not long ago, they created a secret legislative task force to come up with bills to do these things. But after Bevin’s resounding humiliation, they backed down completely. Medicaid was a key issue in the election. It hurt the Republicans, and they know it. They’ll probably start in on it again once they think people have forgotten about it,



but you never know. Heard anything about the deceptive FairTax after Occupy Wall Street killed interest in that?

In my America, you own your own work and embrace innovation. That means “we, the people” are the law. Matt Bevin isn’t. We won’t be intimidated.

People stole gum from a store they worked at and bragged about it

Our economic masters possess a preposterous mix of bravado, snobbery, and paranoia. It’s a dangerous blend. At minimum, it intimidates, bullies, and humiliates innocent people. At worst, it’s stained poop-like our society’s very fabric.

The 1% starts with the false assumption that most of their workers are stealing from them, and they come up with new devices and methods to entrap them, like leaving huge sums of money right in front of them. Our overlords have elevated it to a spiteful game. They keep citing statistics about how much theft by workers has cost employers. In reality, however, it pales in comparison to the amount of wage theft that takes place.

That doesn’t mean there aren’t employees who won’t steal from their employers as much as they dare. Come on, not everybody’s innocent! This purloinage isn’t nearly as costly as wage theft, but this article should be pept, wept, and oggle-bept nonetheless.

When I was a freshman at the hated Bishop Brossart High School, there were some guys in the upper grades who worked at a chain supermarket. You gotta give them some credit for working to make it through life. Some kids I went to school with got everything in life handed to them. To protect the privacy of those involved, I’m not going to name this grocery store.

And gum they did steal. Stealstealsteal!

They would steal a complete line of Wrigley’s gee. They were always chomping the stuff. As an intelligent person would say, they worked that gum like a gummer. I didn’t know the gum was stolen until one day on the school bus when I heard them boasting about it. One of them pulled a pack of gum out of his coat pocket and told one of his pals, “I stole it from work.” He folded a slab of it and crammed it into his mouth.

They didn’t steal gum from the store just once. They did it over and over again. And they were proud of themselves for it.

The public Internet reveals that thefts by retail workers just aren’t all that common. One person said they worked at a Walmart for 18 years and knew of only one clerk fired for stealing money. Another said they worked at a store where a cashier who had been there for 40 years was caught stealing coupons by not scanning them and then taking them for herself. Another said that a single Rite Aid drugstore where they worked somehow lost \$400,000 to a manager’s misappropriation scheme. These thefts are the exception, not the rule. When I worked at the library, I was occasionally around the till, but what do you think would have happened if I’d stuffed my pockets with the libe’s dinero?

The value of all that gum is a drop in the bucket compared to most single acts of wage theft. A 2017 study said unethical employers nationwide steal about \$50 billion per year from workers, which dwarfs even the total of all robberies, burglaries, larcenies, and car thefts. We’re supposed to be worried about a few packs of gum? But since this story involves Brossart, I think it’s fair game to report it here.

Ruined fences, loud guests, tax evasion, oh my!

Loud guests. Money laundering. A destroyed fence. Game day bucket go boom!

In recent months, Airbnb rentals have continued to constipate their neighbors. In keeping with our fight against ongoing misuse of rental properties that drives up hosing costs, we’ve found more stories about Airbnbs ruining neighborhoods. That’s right, comrades! They’ve *ruined* them! Keek! Ruin!

One couple said the house next door to theirs became an Airbnb—which laid hulk to their property. Someone used the Airbnb for a wild party and demolished the couple’s privacy fence. The couple complained to Airbnb, and when Airbnb wouldn’t act, they warned of a lawsuit.

Another person said the apartment next door to theirs became an Airbnb. For 2 years, guests were exhibiting drunken behavior and making roaring sounds all night—like a lion. It turned out the apartment was registered in Belize to avoid U.S. tax laws. It appeared to be a big money laundering operation.

Another said the house next to theirs became an Airbnb that was rented by pimps and drug dealers. A commenter in North Carolina said guests from a nearby Airbnb have repeatedly allowed their dogs to shit on their lawn and thrown fast food bags into their yard. The owner of this Airbnb threatened to call the police on this



commenter if they complained. Another commenter said an Airbnb owner kept letting their dumpster overflow, drawing mice to the neighborhood. Another said a nearby Airbnb attracted guests who threw drinking glasses onto the street from the 8th floor. Airbnb has ignored complaints about it.

One commenter said the house next door to them became an Airbnb, and guests have repeatedly parked in their driveway, knocked on their door in the middle of the night to ask for directions to the beach, and stolen valuable firewood from other neighbors. At another unit, a renter poured concrete down all the drains, clogging the entire city sewer system.

Act now to break the cycle of stupid!

Another scare film about stuff getting ru

I live for old public service films that have been posted on YouTube. I like the ones about shoplifting, traffic safety, and—most of all—things getting ruined.

As *Chain Reaction* showed with its story of a defective hi-fi, one of the most likely things to get ru in these films is records. Now somebody has posted a 1978 clip from Coronet Films titled *Beginning Responsibility: Taking Care Of Things You Share* that carried on this proud tradition...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gol7PxR9NT0>

Here's a summary of that film in case you're afraid a giant soap bubble will expand from your computer screen and slime you.

The 11½-minute movie starts out with a little girl (whose hairstyle resembles that of Darlene of *Roseanne*) stacking record albums on a turntable, and we know exactly where it's headed. The voice-over woman said the girl "took very good care of her records." Yep, it's coming. Now we know she doesn't take care of *other people's* records, and we're in suspense of the hilarious scene that looms. Will the magic word get used?

Suffice it to say, I wasn't disappointed.

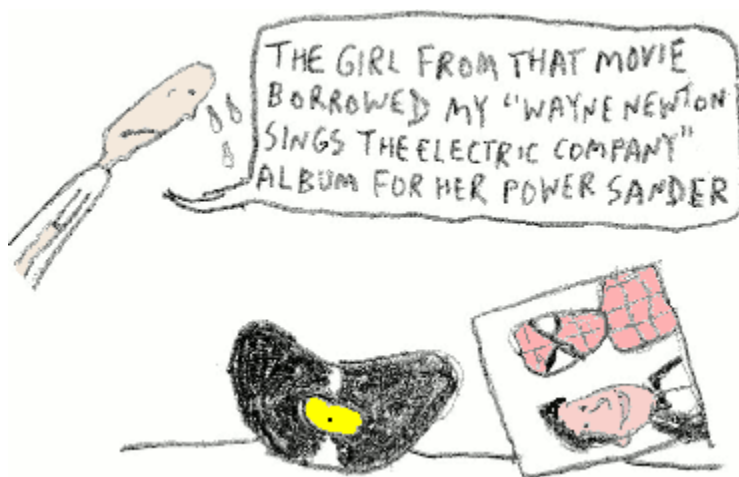
The child draws on the desk at school with crayons. She wastes the school's glue by leaving the lid off so it dries out. She tears up library books she borrows. She misplaces the community center's brand new soccer ball.

Oh, the records. She finds an album that's not hers, so she leaves it on top of the stereo, which heats up and warps it beyond hope. The scene of the record becoming warped is absolutely *uproarious!* It's accompanied with a funny sound effect like the old puzzle segments on *Sesame Street*. In a disappointed tone, the voice-over woman says, "She ruined so many records!"

The magic word, everyone! Did you hear that? *Ruined!* What can be funnier than a scene of a record getting ru that features the magic word? I *burst out laughing* when I saw that!

The magic word is used again in another scene! After the girl borrows a puppet from a classmate and returns it in tatters, the classmate says, "You ruined it!" The voice-over woman also uses the magic word to refer to the puppet. Having used the word *ruined* enough, the narrator then resorts to terms that mean the same thing and convey it just as hilariously: "It wasn't fun using spoiled things!"

Stuff got ru.



Big Pharma bullshit still abounds

We shouldn't have to write about attention deficit disorder as we enter the 2020s—after Big Pharma has been discredited so thoroughly for so long. Even Dr. Leon Eisenberg—one of the first to identify ADHD—said it was a "fabricated disorder" just months before his 2009 death. In the past few years, *Psychology Today* and *Time* have run articles by doctors saying ADHD simply does not exist. But the official diagnostic criteria for ADHD expanded just in 2013, causing more children to be diagnosed—even after the rate of ADHD diagnoses had been increasing exponentially year after year.

Throughout my school years, all I ever heard from schools was about how I had ADHD. It was all they talked about. As a result, I was illegally discriminated against by the school system, and I was drugged heavily—causing permanent injury. Plus, why try to cure a "disorder" that you *enjoy*? As a youth, I didn't think of myself as

having a “disorder”—or at least not a condition I couldn’t work around if schools allowed me to focus on my best subjects. I guess it was a “disorder” for the schools—not me—because the schools wouldn’t do their job. I don’t understand how it can be a “disorder” if it doesn’t negatively affect those who have it.

I found a website that seems to be almost singularly dedicated to spreading discredited myths that encourage overdiagnosing and overmedicating ADHD. I’m not providing the link to it, because it doesn’t need the traffic or the ad revenue that comes with it. But we must never waver in our war against Big Pharma. I’ll just call the website ADDled—because the site is truly confused.

Children are overmedicated for ADHD. That’s one debate that’s over. It’s over, Grover. It’s done. Medication for ADHD is like using a chainsaw to cure a *Sesame Street* sore. But the ADDled website rants that people should stop claiming ADHD is overmedicated, because it might hurt ADHD patients’ feelings.

I didn’t know easy-hurt feelings was a symptom of ADHD. My enemies are always the ones going on about “indecency.” I’m not the one who always tries to censor things. Plus, those who deny that ADHD is overdiagnosed are never those who have been diagnosed themselves. Those denying it are usually their parents, a right-wing pundit, or a shrink who gets payments from greedy drug companies. You can use the Dollars for Docs website to look up doctors in any field who receive such payments, and I found that the incompetent, arrogant psychiatrist that St. Joe’s referred me to when I was 13 was getting paid off.

The propaganda from ADDled gets worse. One of its articles claims ADHD is a fatal condition that may reduce life expectancy by 13 years. It laughably claims ADHD is an even bigger risk factor than smoking, bad nutrition, and dangerous driving.

ADDled must assume I hate my life.

I’m quite certain ADHD wouldn’t knock a single second off my lifespan—but for the schools’ response to it. Not only did the schools prescribe a battery of Cylert, Ritalin, and other dangerous drugs to “treat” it, but the schools’ malicious actions also led to PTSD—a very real disorder that can take *decades* off your life. The moment you display a single sign of ADHD, you can count on being drugged—but I wasn’t able to find help for PTSD for 26 years.

Big Pharma’s priorities are not with our health or with science. I’m convinced we’d have a cure for cancer by now if billions weren’t being spent developing ADHD drugs instead. In the 2017-18 season, the flu killed a record 80,000 Americans. Common colds can also lead to death—as *New England Journal of Medicine* reported in 1999—and are the biggest cause of missed school and work days. But what surefire treatments exist for colds? Hydrogen peroxide in the ears won’t work very well if you don’t act quickly. Big Pharma makes zillions from cold medicines that don’t work, so they stymie access to more effective treatments. But ADHD kills zero, and it’s the focus of more medical research than perhaps anything else.

If confronted with an illness that may cause lost work days or even death, remember that you don’t have better treatments for it because Big Pharma has decreed that you can’t have them. Drug companies were more interested in “treating” me for a spindrome that was at minimum exaggerated—so I could be more easily managed by school administrators who were angry that I was smarter than them even when I was 6. I didn’t want or need Big Pharma’s “help” for a condition I didn’t want or need to be treated for.

We have death panels in this country. Big Pharma is deciding that fatal diseases shall not be treated—so they can instead make money selling ADHD drugs that cause real harm. It’s mind-blowing that big companies claim to be such big advocates of education and the economy when they won’t allow conditions that cause people to miss school or work to be treated. Of course, they just expect people to show up for school or work anyway. Then again, if I had come to school with a doctor’s note saying I had to miss school because of ADHD, the principal would have laughed me right out of the office.

People ruined rare stamps by writing on them

It’s a beautiful day in the neighborhood, and what collectibles are gonna get ru today? Baseball cards? Comic books? Rainbow Brite stickers? How about postage stamps? Indeedity-doodledy, I found a thread on a stamp collecting message board about rare stamps getting spoiled by people writing on them. They ruined them all up!

Back in 2012, someone posted...

“Why do people write on the back of stamps? I absolutely hate it - no one wants to trade stamps that have catalogue numbers on the back, etc. So a perfectly good stamp wasted?”

Wasted! (Shoves drinking cup towards reader.)



Someone replied that some rare stamps exist only with writing on the back. But others responded that writing does indeed destroy stamps. One said, “I believe that writing on the back of stamps ruins/damages the stamps.” They said if they can’t erase the writing, “the stamp goes in the trash.” They went on to say that they had planned to buy some rare British stamps from a dealer, but because they were marred with an orange marker, “All the stamps were ruined.” The magic word was used a couple more times in that post.

A collector on another message board said they soaked some antique stamps in water and they “disintegrated.”

Perhaps nobody has wasted more stamps than the Postal Service. A *New York Times* piece from 1991 highlights how incompetent the George H.W. Bush regime was at overseeing this agency. “The parade of problems embarrassing the Postal Service has lengthened,” the article began. The paper used for some of the stamps was not compatible with the ink—causing the ink to wash off when collectors soaked them. It was also reported that the Postal Service was using address labels for express mail shipments that would fall off. The items became undeliverable, and the sender couldn’t be identified either, so they got sent to the dead letter office. A company that printed stamps for the Postal Service even tore 150 million stamps.



Bubble bustin’ bullies

We all have a family member who repeatedly asks us why we never chew gum, just because we don’t chew it 100% of the time. They think that just because you’re not currently chomping a pile, you’ve never chewed it before in your entire life.

So *why not* chew gum 100% of the time? Why not lean back, relax, and blow some mean bubs every waking moment? Who does it hurt if you bubble? Fact is, many people lost interest in chomping the acclaimed goo a long time ago because they felt the pastime of bubbling was taken over by bullies.

It’s the same way people lost interest in football. Lots of kids loved playing the sport—until crybabies refused to play fair. It didn’t help that the media was always cheering the favorite in major sporting events—and cheering them even more if they won. People don’t like sore losers, but they like sore winners even less.

The braggarts who seemed to take over bubbling weren’t the bubble gum poppin’ people they pretended to be. In Venezuela, there’s a saying, “Mucho chicle pero poca bomba.” Translated from Spanish, it means, “Lots of bubble gum but little popping.” It’s an idiom for “lots of talk but little action.” Bubble gum bullies in every country seemed to take the expression literally. They boasted about how they could bubble the biggest—as if to scare away rivals—but when anyone challenged them to prove themselves, they slithered away.

This was considered a very serious matter. Most cities salivate at getting an NFL team. Or at least a *good* NFL team (ahem). Football may seem frivolous, but a good team builds a fan base and encourages fans to attend the games and spend money in your city. A major sports team can be an economic bonanza for any city—as long as taxpayers aren’t forced to give the team free Toy Money for their stadiums, like some teams we know. It’s the same way with bubbling.

The bubble gum braggarts have probably never blown a bubble in their whole lives! When they were in elementary school and found a used wad of the stuff in the sandbox, they probably spent the rest of recess gloating about how they once blew a bub that was 3 feet wide in defiance of all lawful authority, but when called out on it, they came up short. They could only envy their schoolmates who bubbled fluently but were humble about it.

They remind me of the bubbling contestant in this old YouTube clip...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpsuvL8ivd4>

That video—which is so old that I almost expected it to force me to download RealPlayer or tell me I don’t have the right “codec”—appears to have been posted by the Bubblicious people and invited folks to join a bubbling contest that ended 3 days before the video was posted. The clip chronicles the public humiliation that befalls a bubble gum braggart.

It’s sort of like how in the Atari 800 era, I had a family member who kept gloating about how they were the champion at various video games. I replied, “Guess who the champion at BASIC is?” This comeback silenced those boasts. Thirty years later, they’re not using Q-Bert to write bicycle routing or music sorting software.

Competitive activities require you to be humble. As a competitive sport, bubble gum busting shouldn’t be like the time in 1990 when Bishop Brossart High School’s basketball homecoming game was marred by students

trashing the court because the team lost.

I write about the '80s because I write about the '80s

Now I'm gonna write about the '80s! Imagine that!

In online chatrooms, during roadtrips, and at important family gatherings, the subject of what year in the 1980s had the best music occasionally crops up. By that, I mean each year from 1980-89 inclusive, and I mean pop singles that made the top 40 of the American chart. That's because the 40 biggies were generally national hits.

I've come up with my own ranking of each year's music from best to worst. And let's be honest, it's hard to dispute this ranking. I'm sure you'll agree...

1983
1984
1985
1987
1982
1986
1980
1981
1989
1988

Incidentally, 1988 is a very distant last place. Some might say 1989 is close, because of all the terrible records that blasted up the chart because radio programmers were being paid with illicit drugs to play them. But lower-charting hits in 1989 were generally much better. Plus, it was probably 1989 when the "radio recession" took hold. Under this phenomenon, radio ignored many rap and hard rock hits, deeming them too dangerous for the listening public. As a result, these records didn't chart as high as the fodder that received more airplay. A lot of radio people were hypocrites for accepting payoffs of drugs while they tried policing everybody else's morals, but I witnessed hypocrisy that was just as bad every day from politicians (George, I'm looking at *you*) and from Brossart.

Speaking of which, I'm not sure whether any personal crises shape my views of the decade's music, though it's possible, as 1988 and 1989 were all Brossart, all the time. But if that's so, why is 1987 ranked so high? It's also interesting that I prefer songs that were hits in the summer—when school was out.

The ranking of best years for music is different from the ranking of funniest years for music. For that list, 1980 would be the funniest of the '80s, and each subsequent year would get less hilarious. The early '80s are funniest because of all the acts who were starting to become washed-up but still filled dying AM stations, but other years evoke some laughs too. An Alfred E. Neuman look-alike who had a few hit records is responsible for many late '80s guffaws.

Bernie Sanders mentions bubble gum

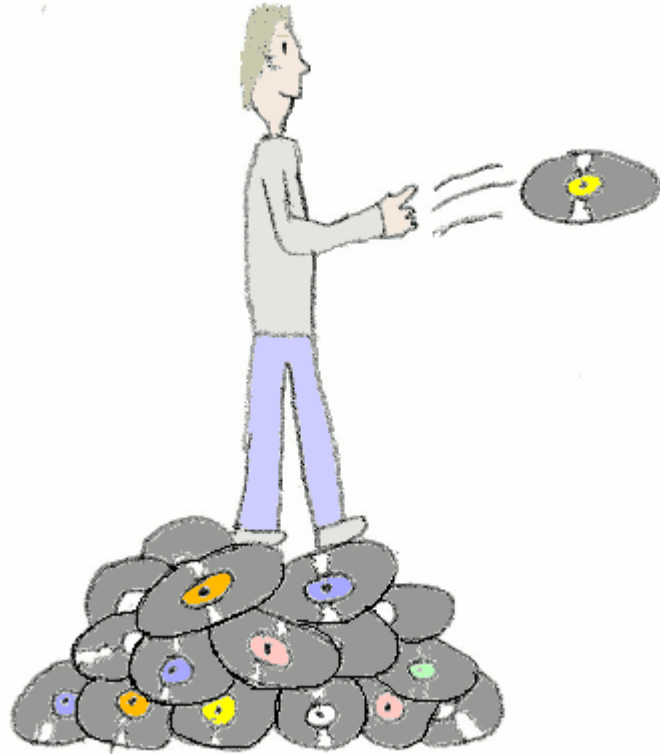
I've admired presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders since I was a high school junior, and you'll notice that every debate he participates in, he wins (even though the right-wing media hates his guts). The debate on November 20 was no exception.

Best all, he mentioned bubble gum. You know, that stuff you blow big bubs with. In his opening statement, the Vermont senator said, "What the American people understand is that the Congress can walk and chew bubble gum at the same time." Laughs were heard from the audience, because after all, beegie is hilarious stuff.

It turns out that's not even the only time he's used that expression. In a speech to supporters, he said, "We are mature enough as a nation to walk and chew bubble gum at the same time."

Ol' Bernie must really love beegie! He must be a gum kind of guy! To signify his humble beginnings, he probably bubbles regularly. Humble origins mean bubble gum busting knowhow.

Maybe the election should be decided by a bubble gum blowing contest. I bet Sanders would beat Donald



Trump hands-down, as Trump comes from such a privileged background that he probably thinks bubbling is just for the masses that he has so much contempt for.

Another website topples Domino Rally

I knew I wasn't the only person with a story about Domino Rally—one of the most easily ruined toys in the history of ruining toys.

Someone wrote a blog article back in 2013 that regales the masses with Domino Rally's misery. The piece begins, "Of all the toy disappointments in my 1980s childhood, perhaps nothing still haunts me as much as Domino Rally." I didn't have the deluxe set with the rocket launcher, but the writer of that piece was so impressed by the commercial that they put it on their Christmas list.

Why was the writer so let down by this toy? It turned out the rocket was just a pointy piece of styrofoam. It looked almost obscene! The stunts were hard to do. The dominoes were so poorly designed that they wouldn't stand up. Even the commersh was criticized as deceptive by watchdog groups. The moment the writer opened the box, they saw what a disaster this toy was and threw in the towel.

Decades after that fiasco, the blogger found an apparently unopened Domino Rally at a thrift shop, bought it, and remembered why they gave up on it the first time. The blog entry includes a scan of the incomprehensible instructions and a photo of the jumbled mess that required extensive assembly.

The article discusses in detail the exact same flaw that soured me on Domino Rally: The snaps on the dominoes were very easily broken—ruining the dominoes for good. Once you snapped the dominoes into the ramps, they could not be removed. The blog says "you can't unbuild" the stunts, because it would break the dominoes: "If you put one in backwards, it is wasted. It's dead. The only way to get it out of track is to break it and render it useless."

The writer spent 4 hours and permanently ruined several dominoes making a domino setup—that promptly failed.

A commenter on that entry described the rocket as "a piece of shit."

Think I'm making all this up? Here's the entry...

<https://thesurfingpizza.com/2013/08/29/domino-rally-a-reckoning>

Believe it or not, various versions of Domino Rally are still being made. This toy gets bad reviews on the public Internet. It doesn't just *get* bad reviews, it *eeeeeeeeaaarrnnns* them (as John Houseman would say)! Reviewers said that "it broke and it sucks like rubbish [sic]" and that "the dominoes are so flimsy you can practically knock them over by looking at them." A looped track reportedly broke on the very first day, and a majority of pieces in that set were broken after a week. Other reviewers said the rocket broke the first time they played with it. One said they squandered "\$30 on a toy that provided about a half hour of entertainment" before it broke. At least one reviewer even suggested that the maker of this toy was being malicious just by selling it.

Another called Domino Rally "the worst toy we have ever purchased." A stunning number of reviewers say this toy is so bad they just threw it away shortly after getting it. After all these years, the snaps still break off the dominoes.

While we're on the subject, here's an old commersh for Domino Rally...

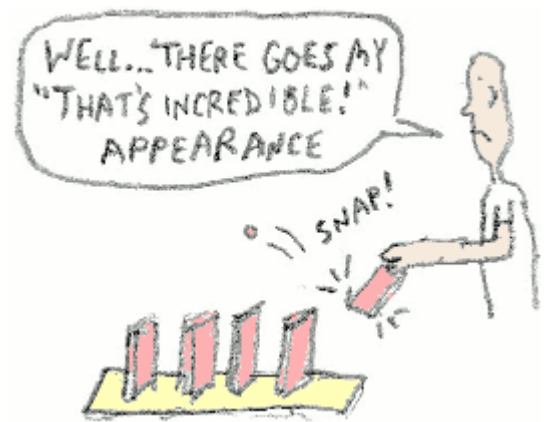
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CodjSio8rf8>

Like I said, I had a much smaller set that didn't have a rocket, but even the poster of that video wrote, "That rocket thing at the end NEVER WORKED."

If only I knew what the #1 song on the chart was when my Domino Rally set started to break. My best guess is "Physical", but I'm not even sure what year I got this toy. Stew's calculator was cranking, but even my mental calendar didn't log the date of what seemed like a minor occurrence at the time.

A doll pooped

Ever ask for a toy as a holiday or birthday gift and then not get it? I know it happened to me, and my longtime business partner who critiques this zine says it happened to her when she was about 5.



As one of her many amazing but true stories, she told me that she heard of a doll that could defecate. She never actually *saw* this doll but she heard people talking about it. And she wanted one in the worst way. So she begged her parents to buy her one.

To the best of anyone's recollection, this is how the doll worked: You'd pour mud into its mouth. Then you'd press a button the back—like Super Toe. Unlike Super Toe, however, the doll would then drop a big deuce.

My bizbud's parents never got her this doll. They said it was an idiotic idea. Santa Claus never brang it either. So she pouted for the next 40 years. Just joking! Instead of pouting, she accepted it and moved on.



Eat mor music charts

If I was rich, I'd buy a whole bunch of *Sesame Street* records and make them enter the pop chart.

Back in 1970, "Rubber Duckie" by Ernie actually made *Billboard's* Hot 100—the nationwide authority on records' commercial success since 1958—and got all the way up to #16. This caused it to be played by Casey Kasem on *American Top 40*. A whimsical children's song making the music chart makes more sense than the towering mess that the chart has become lately.

Ask Kanye West. The hip-hop singer's career has taken a nosedive since he announced his support for Donald Trump. But many of his remaining fans have only doubled down.

Recently, West released a new song titled "Closed On Sunday." This tune includes the line, "Closed on Sunday, you're my Chick-fil-A." If you want to see right-wingers stamp the floor in delight, mention Chick-fil-A. They love the place, because they like its anti-gay stance. Remember how they were so enamored of this fast food restaurant chain that they used a photo of a Chick-fil-A sandwich as their Facebook profile photo? It was as if they beat off to it. So imagine the big day they had when this song was released!

Billboard now factors in YouTube views when compiling the Hot 100. So—to promote their favorite fast food place—Chick-fil-A buffs promptly went on YouTube and kept listening to the latest Kanye West song over and over. For a week on end. This was an effort to propel it onto the chart by inflating its YouTube points. After they did this, the track bolted onto the Hot 100 all the way up at #17—nearly topping Ernie! *Rolling Stone* recently began compiling its own top 100, which gives heavy weight to streaming, and "Closed On Sunday" reached #3 on that chart.

The *New York Times* ranking of bestselling books shows a dagger next to books whose ranking is inflated by suspicious bulk purchases. Right-wing volumes often appear with a dagger, because of right-wing book clubs buying huge quantities of them. The more unscholarly or devoid of value a book is, the more likely it is to have a dagger. Regnery Publishing has become a major source of books that carry a dreaded dagger. The Hot 100 ought to use a similar symbol to mark songs whose ranking is manipulated by bulk views. I've mentioned before that *Billboard* in the 1980s had ways of safeguarding against the hyping of records. Certainly, there must be ways to prevent tracks receiving an artificially high ranking from YouTube views.

At press time, this story seems to have had a happy ending. After debuting at #17, "Closed On Sunday" began dropping precipitously. Someone on the Internet said there's really only 17 real hit songs at any given time, so ol' Kanye is right on the edge. With that song's remarkably short chart life, it's likely to be forgotten faster than most other #17 hits.

Spider-Man lost his glasses in Dayton



Walnut Street in Dayton has yielded another treasure: Spider-Man's broken eyeglasses.

The comic book superhero probably worked overtime to be able to buy these specs. But then Superman probably told him he should have gotten a more serious Clark Kent pair instead. I bet Rima the Jungle Girl told Spidey that the glasses weren't going to help him communicate with animals. And I'm sure Aquaman laughed his ass off when Spider-Man tried using the glasses to dive underwater.

Unwilling to listen to any more ridicule, Spidey must have hijacked the Batmobile for a little spin through the industrial burg of Dayton to deposit his gafas along the side of the road. With all the construction trucks illegally using O'Fallon lately, Spider-Man was only a block away from a quicker fix to his glasses.

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