

The Last Word™

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A little wisp of Hope

Remember our 2021 fact-finding mission to New Mexico when everything went hilariously wrong? On that trip, we met many friendly folks smiling their asses off, but we also encountered a bug-infested motel, an overcooked dinner, a sighting of the Los Alamos goose-step, and a hotel that gave us a room that was already occupied. Now 2023 has brought us more New Mexico fun—and some gruesome personal injuries to go with it!

Our latest trip lasted from October 12 to 19 and focused largely on the annular solar eclipse visible in much of the state on October 14. It was obvious early in the outing that pee would be seen on the floors of most public restrooms throughout the trip. But a Shell station in Hope, Arkansas, had a bonus: a wisp. Not a log. Not a pebble. Just a wisp of poo on the floor in the restroom. Yes, a gas station bathroom in Bill Clinton's hometown had a wisp!

Later, a group of 4 men darted out of Applebee's in Mount Pleasant, Texas, without paying for their meals. The waitress left their half-consumed beverages as evidence. Also in that town, the toilet in our motel room acted as a geyser, as flushing it expelled a spout of water upward.

We visited Carlsbad Caverns on Saturday and had to descend an extremely strenuous trail that went 75 stories deep. The website is very clear: "This trail is not recommended for visitors with heart or respiratory conditions." Yet somehow I ended up on it anyway. I almost passed out. But the good news is that there was bubble gum stuck on a bench along the trail—despite a dictum against gumming. People also gummed throughout. In the Big Room—the cave's highlight—a man yelled, "It smells like sewage down here!"

The park also had a presentation on bats. During this event, a woman dropped her eyeglasses into the aisle of the amphitheater, nearly causing them to be stepped on and thereby wasted.

Later in the trip, I fell in a motel bathroom in Clovis, New Mexico.

On the way home, we camped for a couple nights at Wichita Mountains in Oklahoma. This ruled too, as it gave us a chance to build a campfire out of yet another Brossart "gimme gimme gimme" mailing...





Later, a man at the campground was overheard complaining about Obama. Get with the times, pal! We also found that some kids threw toilet paper all over the restroom at the campground, and on the second night there, someone kept me awake most of the night by blaring some electronic game that sounded like an updated version of Speak & Spell.

On the morning we packed the tents up, one of the segments of the pole for my tent snapped back and sliced open my finger with the jagged metal on the end. Later, a truck driver argued with a toll collector on Interstate 44 and expected to be let through without paying – delaying us more.

The humor highlight of this trip finally took place on the final night. I noticed there were 2 pieces of shit on the floor in the hallway at our motel in O'Fallon, Illinois. A group of women was overheard laughing about it – because it was funny, after all. Admit it: It's making you laugh right now! But nobody was laughing at the overpriced food in this town. Restaurant meals and snacks from convenience stores cost a budget-busting sum. I'm glad I found money on the sidewalk when I was walking down the street to get dinner.

All things considered, biddle gibzz!

Unmasking lockdowns with our new series of reports!

This zine was originally intended for serious articles, but this aim was largely abandoned because our overlords kept outstupidizing themselves so spectacularly that we couldn't keep up. The trend started under Ronald Reagan, and I think it was really brung home with the beginnings of economic and social credit systems, but things have rarely improved since then.

In 2020, I began working on a report on the failures of COVID-19 lockdowns and related restrictions. A month ago, it was up to 204 pages, and it kept growing because the lockdown industrial complex kept piling on with ideas that were more and more extreme. I had planned on releasing this report way back in mid-2020, but I couldn't, because of this expanding buildup of stupid. The media was always happy to help the tyranny grow.

So instead, I've decided to split this report into a series that I've begun posting on Substack. It's being offered for free, and you can find it here...

<https://bandit73.substack.com>

Dump truck dumps on Bellevue again

We're still trying to get answers on the disaster that nearly unfolded on Fairfield Avenue in Bellevue in the early morning hours of October 12.

A dump truck plowed into a utility pole and took down a traffic light. Injuries and worse were only narrowly averted.

Given the involvement of dump trucks in the gentrification land grabs of the past few years, and trucking companies allowing unroadworthy trucks on that street at weird hours, one must conclude that it was one of these trucks that was involved. Past behavior predicts future behavior. There has been no solid information to negate this conclusion. Nobody in authority has come forward and said the dump truck was for something else.

If the truck was for something else, the city would have immediately said so—just so developers wouldn't be incorrectly blamed. Bellevue, Dayton, and Newport have all been cozy with greedy developers. The upward wealth transfer has continued very recently, shown by Newport's total inaction against mass evictions and Dayton's reported attempt to condemn a house because residents decided to ditch their overpriced electric and use solar energy instead.

These days, our cities' "leaders" are often recruited from elsewhere and often disdain individuals and families who have lived in our cities since long before they did. The goal of our officials is often to price people out of their community and let developers take over.

The long and short of it is that a truck serving a gentrification boondoggle likely caused a major accident in our town. Nobody is doing a damn thing about it, and it's even being covered up.

Someone on Facebook blurted out—with no evidence—that the truck must have actually been a highway department vehicle involved in repaving the street. Even if this was so, the gentrification projects are a proximate cause. The road was repaved only a few years ago, and it only has to be repaved now because the trucks for these developments tore the street up so badly.

Meanwhile, Dayton residents have noted that the brand new repaving job there is already being ruined by dump trucks dropping debris on the roadway. The city has vowed to buy a street sweeper, but has cheerfully refused to bill the developer or the trucking companies for this cost—again leaving taxpayers holding the bag.

Cookie Monster caught having sex in McDonald's restroom

Every once in a while, you go into a public restroom and notice that there's 2 pairs of feet visible under the stall wall.

Recently, such a scene transpired at a McDonald's. It appears that customers found that a stall was being used in such a manner, and the manager quickly got word of it. So she stomped into the lav and angrily said, "Hey! What are you all doing?!"

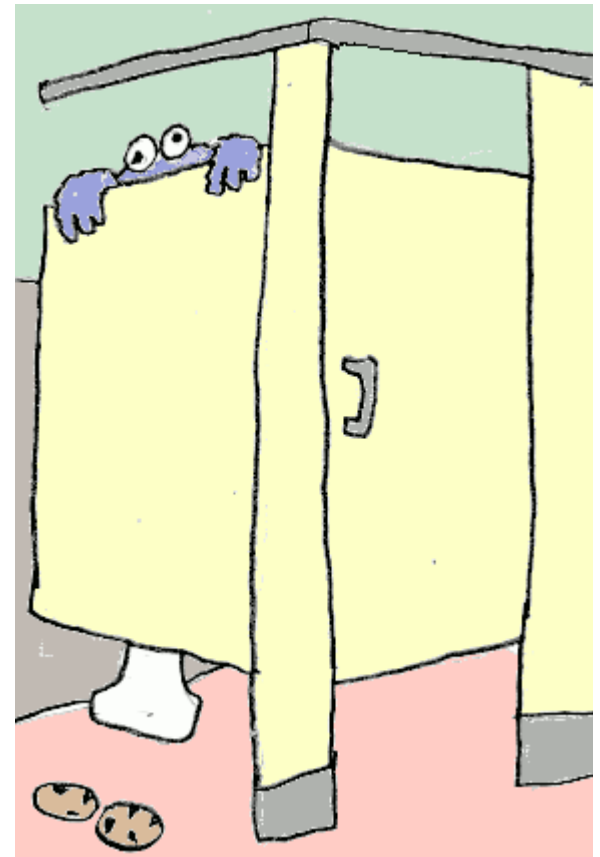
It was then that a blue, furry hand was seen poking above the stall wall. While the manager continued to yell, a pair of googly eyes peered over the wall.

A couple finally emerged from the stall. It turned out that one member of the couple was a man wearing a Cookie Monster costume.

The manager continued to yell at the couple as they skedaddled out of the restaurant and across the parking lot. Bystanders looked on as an embarrassed Cookie Monster lumbered across the lot.

It's true, it's true, it's all true! A video of the hilarious incident has appeared online.

Also, an online commenter said he worked at a McDonald's where a woman shit all over the restroom floor and



tracked it everywhere, forcing the restaurant to be closed for days to be sanitized.

Girls and boys breaking toys

I apologize for not being spoiled growing up, which means I took care of my toys, which in turn means I don't have many stories about toys getting broken the first time I played with them. I had stories from later about a neighbor kid who threw a brand new toy down a flight of stairs and kept throwing perfectly good toy trucks in the air and hitting them with a baseball bat, but not much from my own life.

But these days, many toys are of such poor quality that even the most humble and careful families find them in smithereens almost fresh out of the box.

Behold! The terrible toys of the '20s!

One recent plaything that got a bad review was a toy samurai sword. A parent said it was so cheaply made that their son broke it on the very first day he had it. There's no evidence that the youngster was using it to pry off manhole lids or anything like that.

A dinosaur helicopter got bad reviews too. One reviewer said it was already broken when they got it. Another said their son took only 30 seconds to break it. Another said the toy was reduced to detritus within hours.

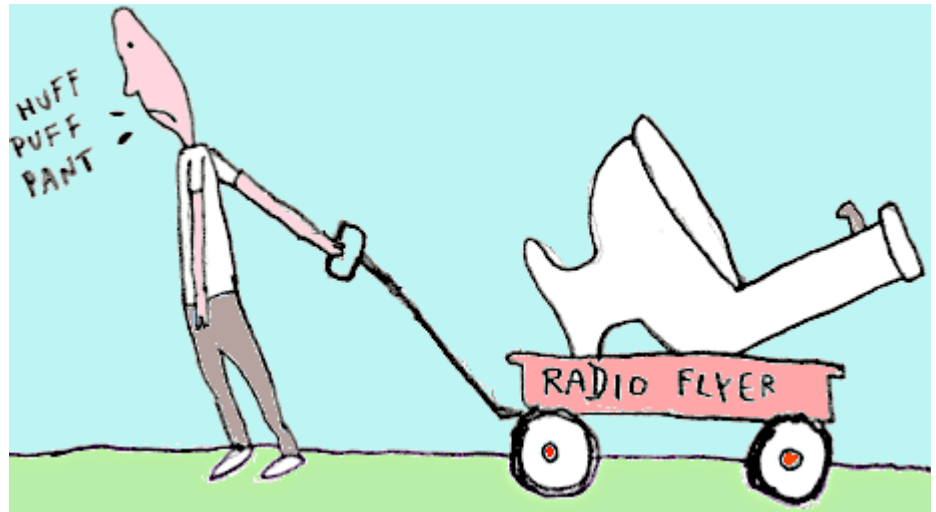
A toy pen that could be folded into different shapes was broken within the day.

An online post from a few years ago described modern toys as "cheap plastic shit."

It's also harder now than it was a few years ago to find stories online about topics like this. Before 2020, you could find gobs of blogs, personal websites, and message boards about these recurring subjects. However, while everyone was focused on the pandemic, the Internet underwent a revolution of sorts—rather, a cleansing. Since 2020, a search for many topics like this often instead yields dozens of copies of the same news article—which features only prefiltered information, often propaganda.

But we did find an online discussion about stores refusing to exchange a defective part of a toy and making the customer bring in the whole toy. Someone replied saying a store made them uninstall their new toilet and lug it in just to replace a defective piece.

Meanwhile, kids are gonna break their toys, and it might go unnoticed by the people as the Internet is censored.



More beer got wasted in transit

I'm pretty sure this isn't the first time we've written about rare beer being destroyed during shipment, and as long as it's able to happen, it might not be the last.

A few years back, someone posted online that FedEx pulverized \$500 of their prized beer and mead. They went on a trip to Alaska and visited gobs of breweries and meaderies. They bought so much drink that they decided to ship it back home to Nashville using FedEx. Each bottle was packed with an inch of bubble wrap, and each package included extra padding. All of this added up to 3 boxes weighing 22 pounds each. Each box was treated to an endurance test to make sure it would survive the journey.

Remember, this wasn't just ordinary beer. This was special, unique beer that you could only get at these Alaska breweries.

When the packages didn't arrive within 5 days, this customer discovered that all 3 of the boxes were somehow "damaged" by FedEx. The remnants of this shipment were placed in a security lockup.

The customer then had to fight with FedEx just to get what little beer wasn't wasted.

As the "Don't Waste Your Money" guy would say: FedEx *wasted beer!*

Someone replied and said not to ship via FedEx, because "Fedex seems to always break bottles." Another respondent said that "'damaged' is code for 'drank.'" In other words, someone at FedEx intentionally opened the shipment and imbibed it.

In a different thread, someone posted that the Postal Service ran over a box of beer he was shipping. The Postal Service then wrapped the crushed box in a trash bag and sent it to its destination. When the sender got home later, he found a SWAT team surrounding his house because he had shipped alcohol.

An online commenter said they shipped their own home-brewed beer via the Postal Service, and the post office opened the package and some of the bottles.

Another commenter said they used UPS to ship beer, but UPS reported the box was "destroyed and contents discarded." UPS claimed every bottle in the box somehow broke, but this claim was highly suspicious.

It's not just beer and mead that keep getting ruined all up. It's wine too. Someone posted on the public Internet that there were complaints all over the country about FedEx shipments of wine breaking. Someone at FedEx kept opening wine shipments.

Someone said that FedEx destroyed their shipment of a bottle of very expensive wine that had aged for 100 years. It appeared as if a forklift had run it over.

Another thread said an entire \$1,000 wine shipment was ruined when it was left in excessive heat.

Another commenter said a shipment of wine was missing a bottle, and they didn't discover it until months later because they stowed the box away until they wanted it. Somebody replied to say that they ordered a set of DVD's of the first season of *Arrested Development* off EBay and found one of the discs was missing. Another person said a shipping company opened their shipment and replaced a bottle of wine with cheaper wine.

People have been known to steal beer in other situations too. Recently, a train that was stalled on the tracks in Bakersfield, California, was robbed of beer that it was hauling. Empty cartons littered the ground nearby. An online commenter said they worked at a grocery store when they were a teenager. They would secretly puncture a can from a 24-pack of beer, so the other 23 cans would have to be taken off the shelf and placed in the back room. Every time they did this, they ended up with 23 free cans of beer to kick off the evening after work.

They always had the time when the number was prime!

Interesting topics like this always get derailed, and people kept posting replies to the ruined drink posts with stories that have little to do with the original topic. Somebody posted that someone spilled beer on their record collection at a party and wanted to know if the sleeves could be cleaned without spoiling the cover art. Somebody else posted that someone kept stealing his sandwiches at work, so he put out a decoy sandwich that mixed in shavings from his electric razor. That put a stop to the thefts.

Whatever the weather, beer got ru.



NBC had to pay lots of loose change over 'Loose Change' error

Everyone still pokes fun at the sorry state NBC was in during the late '70s. Make no mistake, NBC wasn't nearly as bad then as it is now. It only seems better now because other networks have also gotten so bad. Most things were much better in the '70s compared to now, so it's all relative.

But the late '70s at NBC was the era of such ridiculous flops as *Supertrain* and the stylized red and blue *N* that the network was sued over because Nebraska's PBS network was already using a nearly identical logo. NBC had squandered \$1 million designing its logo, but the resulting trademark settlement required NBC to donate over \$800,000 in new equipment to Nebraska ETV.

NBC's pants got pooped in other ways too. During a major ratings sweeps week in 1978, NBC decided to broadcast a 3-part miniseries called *Loose Change*. The network hyped it like there was no tomorrow. But viewers who tuned in for the second part noticed the storyline wasn't making any sense. It was as if an entire part was skipped over.

That's because it *was* skipped over! Instead of showing part 2 of *Loose Change*, NBC began showing part 3!

This went on for 17 minutes before NBC caught its error...

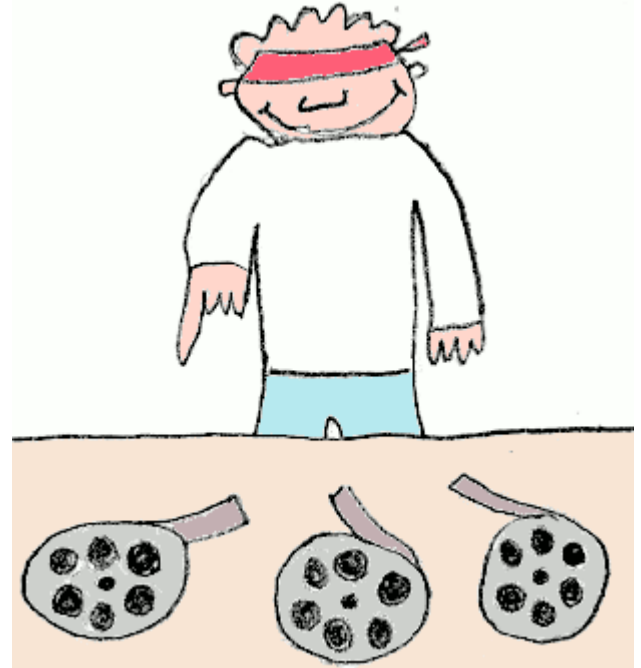
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ktmt9UrPPsE>

How humiliating! During sweeps week, no less!

How did a major TV network let a mistake like this go on for 17 minutes without anyone catching it? A tiny AM radio station would shut off a skipping record after 17 seconds, but this went on for 17 minutes! Maybe NBC was in such shambles then that it didn't even count as a major network. It had *CHiPs* but not much else.

This mistake did not plague the west coast feed that was broadcast later, but it truly put a damper on the evening for NBC affiliates in the eastern half of the country. When this error was found, NBC at least had enough sense to show part 2 in its entirety instead of joining it "already in progress." But this meant affiliates' local news that was shown after it had to be delayed—along with *The Tonight Show*. This in turn meant NBC had to pay overtime to some employees *and* pay each affiliate for 17 minutes of their valuable airtime that was lost. It's like the time ABC had to pay Howard Cosell's fare to take a taxi all the way from Philadelphia to New York (after he got drunk on the air and threw up on Don Meredith's boots).

By showing the second part in its entirety, NBC back then at least had more respect for viewers than networks today probably would. If a network made a mistake like this now, it would probably just cut into the second part in progress, forcing viewers to miss the first 17 minutes. There's video evidence of this: Just last year, someone posted a video on YouTube showing Fox joining *The Simpsons* in progress because a NASCAR race ran too long. I've personally seen networks do things like this more and more over the years.



National parks almost got parked

Do these asshats even hear themselves?

This piece is about yet another issue on which the intelligentsia that claims to represent us has flipped, flopped, and popped: national parks.

The increasingly bizarre shitlib subculture is represented largely by leaders of the Democratic Party. They have degenerated from often being moderately liberal to being right-wing authoritarians. You can't argue that the party was always this bad, because when I first voted, it was where dissenters against Republican authoritarians like Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush flocked. This was a big enough constituency for a major party—not a fringe group. The fact that Democratic leaders have deteriorated so much lately shows they have no principles—or at least none that they once claimed to have.

Democratic panjandrums have jumped directly from the center left to the extreme right and skipped over everything in the middle entirely. Their criticisms now target real leftists and even some party moderates much more than they target establishment Republicans.

How very babyfying.

They have truly shown what bad people they are. As muddle-headed as the Republicans are, most of the GOP at least has some principles. These principles are usually bad, but at least they have some, so we usually know what sort of pain is barreling our way from them. But shitlibs are just

vicious grifters.

The most unpopular closure during the federal government shutdown of 2013 was that of our beautiful national parks. Vacations and even weddings were ruined. National parks are America's crown jewel, yet they were being treated as expendable. To prevent a repeat of this disaster, the National Park Service developed a contingency plan for the longer shutdown of 2018-19. This allowed many parks to remain open—though some services like restrooms were curtailed. At Joshua Tree National Park, even campgrounds and restrooms were open. Yosemite National Park, Everglades National Park, and countless other such sites were open.

This contingency plan was a smashing success.

During the recent shutdown threat, it was expected that this successful contingency plan would be pressed into service again. But—once a shutdown appeared imminent—the Department of the Interior suddenly scrapped this plan and announced national parks would be closed. It was hard to discern any good reason why.

In essence, the government said it didn't have enough money to keep parks open, even as it had enough to close them and keep personnel on the job just to make sure nobody used them.

The real reason for the planned closures was to punish rural areas for not locking down hard enough during COVID. Of that I am 100% certain. COVID calamitism forms Democratic leaders' entire identity. This has helped fuel the all-out war on national parks that has been waged in this decade. Anyone from 2019 would consider their COVID response to be absolutely nutty.

The media offered a few excuses, but none of them made sense. They said it was because visitors left a big mess at Joshua Tree during the last shutdown. If this happened, it would have happened anyway, because that park seemed to be open as normal. This wasn't a situation where a park was accessible but with no services. The media also tried spreading a bullshit myth that it was illegal to keep parks open during a shutdown. But that was just an opinion from the Government Accountability Office—not binding law. If keeping good parts of government like national parks open was illegal, how was it legal to keep bad parts open?

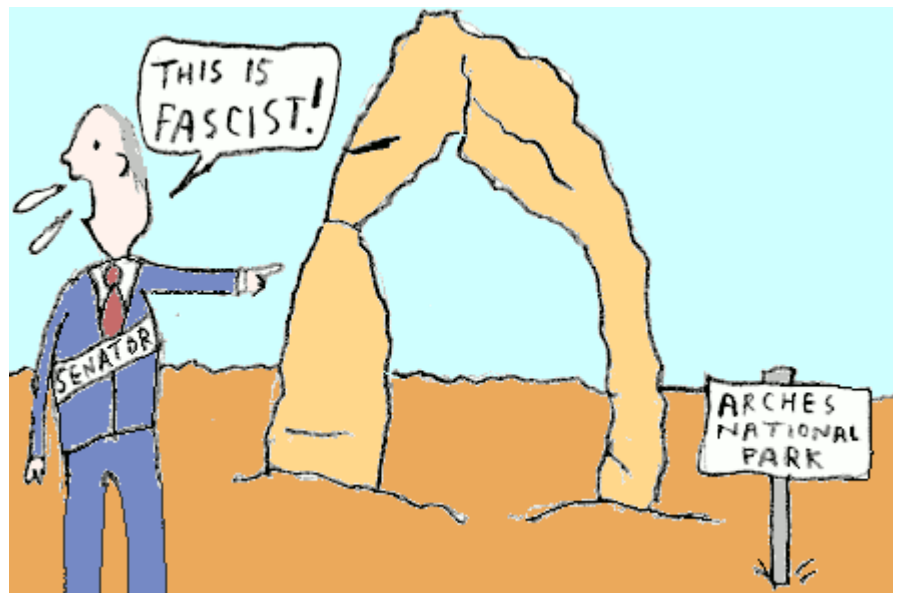
During the recent crisis, a Republican legislator actually introduced a bill to keep national parks fully open during shutdowns. But no Democrats signed on to this bill. Whose fault is that?

Indeed, closing national parks should be off the table. Social Security is considered entitlement spending, not discretionary spending—and quite rightly so. This means it can't be cut during a shutdown. It should be the same for national parks.

Shitlib hostility to national parks is bad not only for recreation but also for the education of visitors. Abandoning the parks like this is also bad for conservation. And it destroys the economies of nearby towns. We're reminded of when the *Kentucky Post's* crusade for year-round school openly dismissed the need for farming. (The *Post* crusaded for some weird things.)

Here's the best part: Advocates for keeping parks open were called "fascist." You read that right: Supporting national parks is now "fascist." Considering shitlibs' support for the Azov Brigade, that's probably not the best choice of words.

When it looked like a shutdown would occur, governors of Arizona, Colorado, and Utah vowed to keep national parks in their states open using state funds. In fairness, 2 of those governors are Democrats. So you might think the Democrats aren't a total loss. But we know damn well that, if those governors aren't term-limited, the media's knives are going to come out against them in the next primary, even if these governors are fairly moderate overall. Bet on it. Look what the media and blogosphere did to Chap Petersen when he wanted schools reopened and went to bat for opponents of an environmentally ruinous pipeline. Plus,



governors of California and Washington—both of whom the media consider to be among the greatest COVID wunderkinds—explicitly announced they would not be opening the national parks in their states, giving some dumb excuse. Their decision would have inflicted deep economic losses on rural parts of their states.

It's not just a war on national parks but a war on all of rural America. Plus, some in the shitlib politburo had already been bumping their gums about national parks for a couple years. Some of the politicians who were already fighting against our parks have used taxpayer funds as hush money to pay off staffers they had drunkenly harassed or been promoted to higher government posts after failing at their old job.

In brief, right-wing shitlibs nearly gutted our national parks and actually called those who disagreed with them "fascist." That's not cool.

Riding on the Metro...

The debate is over, and mask hoopla failed. Science is always up for debate until we can get real world data. Now we have real world info on this, and I am willing to stand by my contention that all this business about masks was a failure, though I fully expect to be censored for this claim.

Yet complaints by lockdown spokespeople piled up like logs. In August 2020, one such lament appeared on Twitter. It appears to be from a Canadian living in Brussels. His post includes a photo of a young woman or teen female riding on the Brussels transit system unmasked. The post read...

"Meanwhile on the metro, this girl can't cover her face because she needs to blow bubbles with her gum. Can't figure out why our cases are skyrocketing"

However, the photo does not show our cooltagonist bubbling. Thus, there was little point in the complainant posting the photo, as it fails to prove his argument. All he accomplished was shaming the subject of the photo. And he did it in a way that was creepy.

Bubbling probably did more to fight COVID than anything else did. I don't have any scientific data on this, but I have to hypothesize that this is so, because nothing else worked.

Blowing bubs in public is an important task. It might not seem so at first, but if it makes a point about the unchecked stupidity of the past 3½ years, people should bubble by the barrelful.

Yet even the complainant who posted the above blurb had his limits when dealing with COVID catastrophism. He finally began questioning Brussels authorities when they outstupided themselves by trying to require bicyclists to wear masks outdoors.



More autographs got ru

Tales of ruined autographs have graced the public Internet with the same fluency as spoiled collectibles in general like comic books, baseball cards, and records.

A few years ago, someone posted that they went to a gaming convention and got some luminaries there to sign a small portable console. But later, this commenter decimated the signatures by trying to preserve them by spraying them with an aerosol sealant. The autographs were almost completely dissolved.

A commenter went on a trip to Las Vegas and had a Michael Jackson impersonator sign a poster. (The impersonator signed it with his own name, not that of the King of Pop.) Afterward, the commenter's younger brothers creased the poster all to hell in the car. The brothers then got in a big argument with each other over who did it. You might think the brothers were under 10 to be acting

that way, but they were 15 and 19.

A 19-year-old woman said her 22-year-old sister ripped up her Stan Lee autograph all because she wouldn't let her borrow her jacket. The commenter said getting Lee's autograph "was one of the best days of my life" –and now it was in shreds. In addition, Lee had died, so the signature could not be replaced. The young woman's dad found some business that might have been able to restore the autograph, so he decided to take money that he had planned to give to the older sister for her car and instead use it to have it restored. As a result, the older sister threw a tantrum.

A commenter on another website said that when he was 8 years old, he played ball with an autographed Roberto Clemente baseball that belonged to a friend's dad and ruined it.

One commenter said he had a baseball signed by the 1973 Oakland A's, but his sisters destroyed it by using it to play catch out in the street.

Another online discussion dealt with an autographed poster that was demolished in transit. Another concerned a signed poster that was eaten by mice.

A commenter said he had a rare, irreplaceable 30-year-old framed poster signed by Stan Lee in his office. It was worth thousands of dollars. His sister showed up one day, and her 7-year-old son kept begging to take the poster home. Finally, the youngster broke into the office and grabbed the poster off the wall when nobody was looking. In the process, he accidentally tore the poster in half. The commenter then sued his sister –and won. Somebody replied saying their cousin stole a rare book worth \$180 from their backpack and ruined it by coloring in it like a coloring book.

The harum-scarum downfall of society was blamed.

What's your favorite thing? Not this!

There's no wa! But there *is* poo!

A person boycotted a Frisch's Big Boy location in Ohio because someone pooped on the toilet seat. Grazing the Internet –public as it is –we found a bad review of this restaurant titled "The bathroom said it all." The reviewer said she canceled her food order after finding what a disgusting mess the beethoom was. This review said one stall was missing a lock, and another had no toilet paper. But here's the best part: One of the stalls had "dried feces on toilet seats."

A Reddit post said another Frisch's location had to close "because it got so bad." It's unclear what aspect of it was so bad, so it's not known if it was related to the restrooms. Another post said the decline in quality has plagued restaurants in general lately –not just Frisch's. Consolidating wealth "means serving the lowest-quality slop that they can get away with."

Just recently, a customer of a Frisch's posted on a Cincinnati forum that they found wadded-up receipts and other garbage in their cup of Dr Pepper. They didn't notice it until they had consumed the beverage. Another customer apparently found a beverage lid embedded in their burger. Another discovered their coleslaw was spoiled, and the restaurant accused them of placing stale slaw in the container themselves. A reviewer charged that Frisch's served "green beans that tasted as though they came out of an old can."

Badeedle-badeed indeed!



St. Joe's sued for racial and disability harassment

This is a late-breaking story, and it's very serious.

St. Joseph School, a right-wing Catholic school in Cold Spring, is being sued in federal court for racial and disability harassment. Causes of action named in the suit include racial and disability discrimination, false imprisonment, negligence, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and retaliation. According to the suit, an 8th grade student was the target of a racial slur by a classmate, and the school refused to investigate. The suit says a teacher then used a racial slur repeatedly in class and harassed the student during a mass. The complaint names the school and the Diocese of Covington.

I attended this school a long time ago. I despised every second of it. Brossart gets most of the ridicule in these pages, but at least my first day at Brossart went pretty smoothly. St. Joe's –a feeder

school for the despicable Brossart—was trouble from day one. St. Joe’s started in the toilet and ended in the toilet.

I hated, hated, hated this school. Detested it with the passion of a million suns. And I was very clear about it to my folks. I was coerced into not actually doing anything about it, but did I protest bitterly!

St. Joe’s was lies on top of lies—built on a foundation of more lies. I had a couple good teachers there, but it doesn’t take many assholes to corrupt a whole organization, especially when its leaders allow it.

And it was bigotry on top of bigotry—built on a foundation of more bigotry. St. Joe’s was basically Stormfront, 1987 style. I have a long memory, and I remember some of the things that were said and done there that targeted many different people. So the lawsuit’s allegations are entirely believable.

Here’s one of many examples of the bigotry displayed at this school over 35 years ago, which was directed even toward people from outside the school. One day, a teacher invited a Jewish woman to give a talk to the class. During this presentation, one or two students kept chanting anti-Jewish slogans under their breath as the woman was speaking. This was far from the only type of bigotry seen at this school, and this speaker wasn’t the only target. More importantly, why was there was so much bigotry there? Where did students learn it from? It’s un-American.

Private school narcissists aren’t much different from public school narcissists, and if you dig deep enough, you can see that each is part of the same evil web of gaslighters and abusers, which stretches even into other fields.

I just wish I’d been kicked out of St. Joe’s sooner—instead of having to wait until a few days before graduation. Or maybe not—since it seemed like every school was worse than the one before it. I know firsthand that our schools are big on retaliation, and this could have ended in an even bigger disaster than it did—believe it or not.

I hope the court throws the book at St. Joe’s. But I wouldn’t bet on it, because it’s truly shocking how much clout schools have—especially the worst schools.

Baseball busts bubbling with delay of game rule

In football, basketball, and hockey, delay of game by players is supposed to result in a penalty or a technical foul.

Baseball, not so much—until recently. This seems to have only been changed because of bubble gum.

Back in 2019, the Miami Marlins’ Starlin Castro went to bat to face a 96 MPH fastball from the Milwaukee Brewers’ Josh Hader. But then Castro opted to bubble big. This resulted in Castro fumbling with his gum for several seconds, as Hader stood on the mound waiting for Castro to finish.

This year, Major League Baseball issued new delay of game rules—apparently in response to that preposterous episode. Under those rules, batters must be in the batter’s box within 8 seconds on the pitch clock. If the batter delays, he will be charged with a strike.

This rule actually began in the minor leagues last year, and it resulted in the average game being shortened by 24 minutes—making for a more action-packed and exciting game. More action-packed, perhaps, but also less hilarious—as it discourages bubbling.



People threw pies on TV

What’s this fad lately with people smashing pies in each other’s faces?

In my day, I didn’t walk around town and throw pies at random people. I still don’t do it every day. One of few places I saw this hilarious technique was on TV.

A few people reading this in huge coastal cities might be surprised by that. There are folks there who think everyone west of the Hudson River lives in a log cabin and has never been able to pick up anything on TV. But you can find statistics showing that even the most remote counties in America have very few people without a TV. I’m not sure how this is accomplished in some areas unless you have cable. We took for granted living near a reasonably big city with 6 or 7 stations—even though

they preempted network shows all the time because of “controversial” content. If you study the locations of TV stations, you wonder how some parts of the country – even a few fairly large cities – can even pick up anything.

But what about the pies?

Back when I was 5 years old, I happened to be in the living room when my parents were watching an episode of *Three’s Company* in which the show’s cast had a gargantuan pie fight. I thought it was uproarious that adults in a show meant for grownups would make such a big mess. It was so funny that I was pounding my fist on the floor in uncontrollable laughter. It wouldn’t have been nearly as funny if it was a kids’ show.

The idea of adults acting like immature babies and making such a scene was too comical for words. But wait! There’s more! In elementary school, our teachers often had the class watch 15-minute educational shows on PBS. You may have heard of the practice of making sculptures of people’s heads by covering their heads with plaster to make the mold. An episode of one of these programs showed a sculptor using a similar method to make a sculpture of Richard Nixon’s head. But instead of covering the real Tricky Dick with plaster, the sculptor used a bust that had already been made.

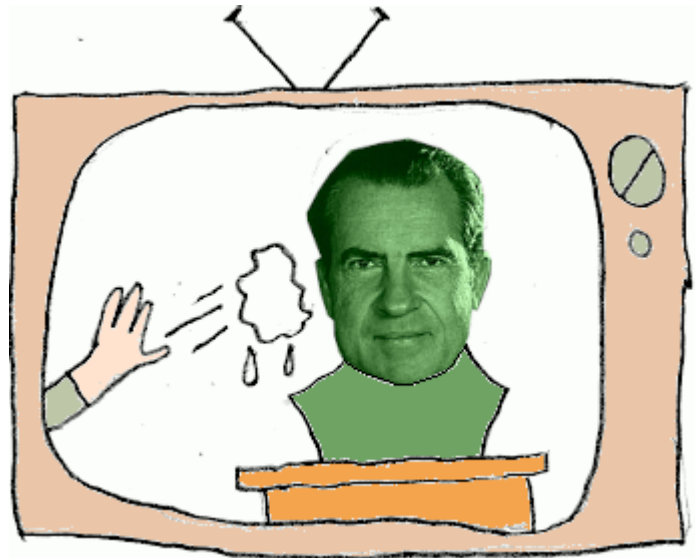
To accomplish this, the sculptor threw big handfuls of wet plaster at the existing sculpture. Our whole class burst out laughing, because it looked like somebody was smashing pies in Richard Nixon’s face.

Maybe the reason a sculpture of a person’s head is called a *bust* is that everyone busted out in laughter.

A few people have told me that they vaguely remember seeing this episode.

This was a couple years before several local radio stations had call-in segments where listeners would call in and say what famous people they’d most like to throw pies at. Ronald Reagan, Rick Springfield, Ozzy Osbourne, and Mrs. Olson of the Folgers coffee commercials were mentioned as possible subjects for pieings.

So the next time you walk down the street, someone might just pop out of a bakery and pie you!



They had it on EBay... (a blast from the past)

This story isn’t as bad as the 25-year-long string of harassing phone calls I was forced to field. We know much of that was an inside job at Cincinnati Bell, because it continued each time I changed my phone number, and Cincinnati Bell has deep ties to our patronage-laden local political machine. But being made whole for the events in this article should be one of my top personal pursuits.

I never used EBay until around the start of 2017. And then, I was defrauded on the only 2 items I ever ordered from it – even though they were from different sellers. I discussed it in these pages then, but nothing was ever done about it.

I still occasionally search for advice on what to do about fraud on EBay. I find lots of info on EBay fraud. But it’s always about fraud by buyers, never fraud by sellers. Some buyer fraud does indeed occur, but the idea that buyer fraud is at epidemic levels is an outright hoax – much of it whipped up by dishonest sellers angry about getting caught. I remember the wasteful supermogul who kept making YouTube videos griping about getting caught making fraudulent sales on EBay. I wanted to reach through the screen and strangle him with my bare hands.

Several people posted just recently that buyer fraud is becoming a growing problem on EBay. But – according to these same people – that’s impossible, because they had already claimed buyer fraud was the worst crisis in the world, which would mean it can’t grow any more.

Like I said, I know some buyer fraud occurs, but seller fraud has been far costlier – and gets swept under the rug.

So what exactly happened some 7 years ago? I tried purchasing a special bicycle wheel off EBay.

The description said it fit all bikes. I ordered a battery from a different seller to go with it. When the wheel arrived, I discovered it did not fit my bike—so the description was wrong. Upon this discovery, I canceled the order for the battery. But later, that seller opted to ship the battery anyway and charge me for it.

I sent back both items. Both sellers refunded the cost of the items but not the cost of shipping to send them back. I posted on EBay's discussion forum about this and got nothing but attitude and lip in response. The seller of the wheel eventually refunded my shipping costs in the hopes I'd give them a good review, but the battery disappeared completely from my list of purchases, even though I was out the \$18.45 it cost to ship it back. Because it was gone from the list of purchases, I couldn't post a review of the scammer who sold it or properly report them to EBay.

EBay was completely unwilling to stand by purchases made through its site. EBay does not care.

I'm lucky I wrote down that I had \$18.45 stolen through EBay, because the battery hasn't reappeared in my list of purchases. In fact, even the wheel has disappeared from the list. It's like neither of these transactions ever took place. They've been flushed down the memory hole. But my memory is long, and I'm still owed \$18.45—plus 7 years of interest.

Meanwhile, seller fraud continues. One video describes how deceitful sellers have been intentionally shipping to wrong addresses. The tracking info tells the buyer that the item was indeed delivered, but the resident of the address it was shipped to ships it back because they didn't order it. Then the seller has the buyer's money and gets the item back. Because the tracking info says it was delivered, EBay closes the case, and the seller gets away with it.

An EBay seller sold a broken appliance and buried the fact that it was broken in the fine print. Then he had the nerve to grouch about the buyer canceling the order.

As for *buyer* fraud, these cases also sometimes go unpunished, but usually not by EBay. One seller said he sold \$7,200 in rare football cards on EBay. Then the buyer said they wanted to return them. But then the buyer returned nothing but boxes full of tissue paper. The buyer then complained to their credit card company about not being refunded. The credit card company actually sided with the fraudulent buyer.

You may recall that just after I was defrauded on EBay, an outside seller on Amazon tried to scam me when I bought an electric bike. This seller sold the bike as new, but when it arrived, it was obvious it was not new. Plus, a pedal, seat, brake, and other parts were defective. When I tried to get them to send me a new pedal, they slipped up by saying, "The chances of getting parts is very slim, we will only get parts if someone returns a bike and we use it just for parts and who know when that could be ..." They were admitting that bikes they sold as new were cobbled together from old parts.

I complained to Amazon to get my money back—but didn't expect to get a thing. I was absolutely floored when Amazon fully refunded me. Because of the seller's clumsy scam, I got an electric bike for free!

As Homer Simpson would say, it was like David and Goliath, only this time David won!

Unfortunately, the bike lasted only 18 months before the engine burned up, but what do you want for free? A rrrrrrrrrrrrrrubber biscuit?

But I still need my \$18.45.