

A sampling of the news and longform articles I'm reading, with quotes that I thought were particularly memorable. NOTE: Placement here does not equal endorsements!

21.03.30 Elle, *The Other Side of Indian Matchmaking: The Indian Divorce*, Shibani Joshi

<https://www.elle.com/culture/movies-tv/a35865843/indian-matchmaking-indian-divorce/> (Our unique arrangement has softened my father's notion of divorce. He also began to miss his grandchildren, opening the door to a reunion, which my mother brokered. Now, I am on more honest, equal terms with my parents. Though India has become more progressive, my parents are driven by the values that existed there when they left the country. Hence, we still remain vague about my ex-husband's absence at community events.)

21.03.18 NYT, *Can Magic Mushrooms Heal Us?*, Ezra Klein

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/opinion/oregon-psychedelic-therapy.html> (I avoided psychedelics when I was younger, fearful of the loss of control, and tried them later, desperately, when there was more darkness in my mind than light. It was not an easy time for me, and these were not easy experiences. They kicked down doors around my anxiety, my marriage, my work, my family, my resentments, my attachments, my self. Those rooms were often unpleasant to enter. There was ecstasy and beauty, yes, but also fear and, often, so often, intense nausea. Things I'd fought to ignore resurfaced. Disparate parts of my life and beliefs and personality connected, and I became more legible to myself. I am not cleansed of anxiety, but I am more aware that my outlook, at any given moment, is just a dance of brain chemistry and experience, and far from the only state possible. That a few micrograms of chemical was all it took to upend my confident grip on reality shook me in ways I'm grateful for. I hold my judgments and worldviews more lightly, and I am friendlier to mystery and strangeness.)

21.03.10 Vulture, *What Went Wrong at Gimlet?*, Nicholas Quah

<https://www.vulture.com/article/gimlet-reply-all-controversy-spotify-test-kitchen.html> (Many of the problems at Gimlet Media — at least through its pre-acquisition years — seemed to be rooted in two related dynamics. The first is the feeling among staffers that power at the company was usually held by and distributed among certain kinds of people with the same tastes in audio. These were usually public-radio veterans: typically people from upper-middle class or wealthy backgrounds who had gone to similar schools, worked at similar jobs, and could afford taking on poorly paid “perma-lance” positions favored by public-radio stations. They were often white, but not always. (Pinnamaneni, who is South Asian, came from the typical audio-professional background.) Some former staffers expressed frustrations at how early senior hires tended to be “grandfathered” in through close informal relationships, creating a sense of a privileged class within the company that could be hard to crack into if you didn't come from the same contexts. In other words, the same dynamics that were presented at Bon Appétit in the “Test Kitchen.” Some workers who came from different work or educational backgrounds — or who simply had different tastes and perspectives — said they felt like they were only guests in someone else's home. “It feels like there's ‘family,’ and then there's field hands,” said a Black former staffer I spoke to.)

21.03.06 NYT, *'I've Never Seen Anything Like This': Chaos Strikes Global Shipping*, Michael Corkery

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/06/business/global-shipping.html> (Viewed broadly, the volume of global trade dipped by only 1 percent in 2020 compared with the previous year. But that doesn't reflect how the year unfolded — with a plunge of more than 12 percent in April and May, followed by an equally dramatic reversal. The system could not adjust, leaving containers in the wrong places, and pushing shipping prices to extraordinary heights. Peter Baum's company in New York, Baum-Essex, uses factories in China and Southeast Asia to make umbrellas for Costco, cotton bags for Walmart and ceramics for Bed Bath & Beyond. Six months ago, he was paying about \$2,500 to ship a 40-foot container to California. “We just paid \$6,000 to \$7,000,” he said. “This is the highest freight rate that I have seen in 45 years in the business.”)

21.03.05 NYT, *Why Has There Been a Spike of Anti-Asian Hate*, Jorge Ramos
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/05/opinion/international-world/anti-asian-hate.html> (“The rhetoric spurred by the previous administration when the pandemic started — using ‘China virus,’ ‘kung flu’ and all that kind of stuff — has made Asian-Americans a target to basically people who are racist,” Daniel Wu, star of the television series “Into the Badlands,” told me in a recent interview. Mr. Wu was born in Berkeley, Calif., worked as an actor in Hong Kong for many years and is now active in the campaign to prevent attacks against Asian-Americans.)

21.02.19 The Cut, *Swallowing Our Bitterness*, Kathleen Hou
<https://www.thecut.com/2021/02/swallowing-the-bitterness-of-asian-american-racism.html> (There is a common Chinese saying of 吃苦 (chīkǔ). It translates literally to “eat bitterness,” to swallow our pain and suffering and endure it. We persevere and we don’t complain, and it is seen as a virtue: Work hard for things that people can’t take away from you. In a study of ethnically diverse cancer patients, they found that Asian Americans reported the lowest pain scores. My mom would not have seen the terrifying incident with our old neighbor as something to tell us about. Sharing it would have meant she was complaining. He used words. He didn’t cause her physical harm. He didn’t even use a racial slur. So, maybe it really wasn’t that bad.)

21.02.17 Marie Claire, *Vanishing Act*, Abigail Haworth
<https://www.marieclaire.com/politics/a35365775/lim-ji-hyun-north-korean-defector/> (Sun-hi believes that the answer to her and Lim’s and countless other female defectors’ plight lies not in a different gender coming to power but in a total change of regime back in her blighted homeland. She accepts that she may never know what really happened to her friend—Kang speculates that Lim could have been executed or sent to a gulag once North Korean officials had no more use for her as a propaganda tool—but Sun-hi refuses to give up on her. “I will never believe that Ji-hyun returned out of loyalty to the Kim regime, and I hope to hear the truth from her in person some day in the future.” In the meantime, Sun-hi must live with the daily fear that—until the Kim dynasty is firmly in the past—she or any defector in the South could be snatched back to the “fatherland” and suffer the same fate.)

21.02.17 NYT, *My Mother Died When I Was 7. I’m Grieving 37 Years Later.*, Nicole Johnson
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/17/well/family/delayed-grief.html> (I read these letters when my mother initially sent them to me back in 1983 and have seen the pictures before. But the loss feels different now. I understand her death as a mother, instead of as her daughter. I understand the grief she must have felt without her children. The Strawberry Shortcake card that arrived just around the time of my birthday declared, “I love you very much.” She signed the card with two more declarations of love and X’s and O’s until she ran out of white space. I felt gutted as I read it.)

21.02.11 The Atlantic, *The Type of Love That Makes People Happiest*, Arthur C. Brooks
<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2021/02/falling-in-love-wont-make-you-happy/617989/> (In other words, the secret to happiness isn’t falling in love; it’s staying in love. This does not mean just sticking together legally: Research shows that being married only accounts for 2 percent of subjective well-being later in life. The important thing for well-being is relationship satisfaction, and that depends on what psychologists call “companionate love”—love based less on passionate highs and lows and more on stable affection, mutual understanding, and commitment.)

20.12.20 Elle, *The Journalist and the Pharma Bro*, Stephanie Clifford
<https://www.elle.com/life-love/a35021224/martin-shkreli-christie-smythe-pharma-bro-journalist/> (When he was transferred to a prison in Pennsylvania, Smythe, who used to get panic attacks when driving, got a license so she could still see him. They talked about Picasso, about philosophy, about her dog and his cat, their

conversation flowing “like water.” He told her she was one of the only people allowed to visit him, and mused about running for office or starting a podcast when he got out. “That belief in himself, although it may seem delusional at times, it draws you in,” she says. “I don’t know if everything he was saying was true, but maybe like 1 percent is, and that’s awesome on its own.”)

20.12.13 LAT, *Disney’s partial California Adventure reopening: Why our safe spaces in 2020 feel forever changed*, Todd Martens

<https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/story/2020-12-13/disney-california-adventure-disneyland-pandemic-changed-safe-spaces> (The more trafficked areas of Buena Vista Street simply saddened me. At the time I was there, guests were encouraged to line up to visit the shops on either side of the street. I didn’t join them, since I currently refuse to go indoors anywhere that isn’t my apartment. But the shops without the attractions also reduced the parks to their most unsavory aspects, that is places that exist as little more to buy products and encourage fetishism among collectors.)

20.12.11 NYT, *This Blockbuster Is Coming to a Living Room Near You*, Peter Suderman

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/11/opinion/movies-warner-bros-hbo-theaters.html> (For better and for worse, the next generation of blockbusters is likely to look more like “Game of Thrones” and less like “Tenet.” It will give us sprawling worlds, fictional sandboxes and interwoven stories and systems that demand time and attention to understand, or at least explain.)

20.12.10 NYT, *What Really Saved the Republic From Trump?*, Tim Wu

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/10/opinion/trump-constitution-norms.html> (The last four years suggest something different: Structural checks can be overrated. The survival of our Republic depends as much, if not more, on the virtue of those in government, particularly the upholding of norms by civil servants, prosecutors and military officials. We have grown too jaded about things like professionalism and institutions, and the idea of men and women who take their duties seriously. But as every major moral tradition teaches, no external constraint can fully substitute for the personal compulsion to do what is right. It may sound naïve in our untrusting age to hope that people will care about ethics and professional duties. But Madison, too, saw the need for this trust. “There is a degree of depravity in mankind,” he wrote, but also “qualities in human nature which justify a certain portion of esteem and confidence.” A working republican government, he argued, “presupposes the existence of these qualities in a higher degree than any other form.”)

20.12.08 (17.01.04) Forward, *The Holocaust Survivor Who Hated Anne Frank*, Philip Graubart

<https://forward.com/subscribe/359022/the-holocaust-survivor-who-hated-anne-frank/?gamp> (But the next day, at lunch, I discovered that Trudy’s Anne Frank induced scowl wasn’t merely personal (it was mostly personal). “Of course, she was a mean girl – like you see today in the movies, yes?” Trudy said. “A mean girl. That was Anne. But that wasn’t really her fault. It was her father, you see, who spoiled her, and, well, never mind, I’ve said too much. But to me, what became insufferable was her optimism. ‘I know in my heart that people are good.’ That was from her diary, yes? People are good? Do you think she believed that in Bergen-Belsen?”)

20.12.08 (16.12.05) Inverse, *Evolution Made Really Smart People Long to Be Loners*, Sarah Sloat

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/evolution-made-really-smart-people-long-to-be-loners> (“In general, more intelligent individuals are more likely to have ‘unnatural’ preferences and values that our ancestors did not have,” Kanazawa tells Inverse. “It is extremely natural for species like humans to seek and desire friendships and, as a result, more intelligent individuals are likely to seek them less.” ... That certainly doesn’t mean that if you enjoy being around your friends that you’re unintelligent. But it does mean that the really smart person you know who spends much of their time alone isn’t a sad loner — they probably just like it that way.)

20.12.05 AirMail, *Crazy Rich Aviation*, Scott Murphy <https://airmail.news/issues/2020-12-5/crazy-rich-aviation> (These experiences may pale, however, when compared with Taiwan's Eva Airways's upcoming "Fly! Love Is in the Air" promotion. For the sold-out flights already scheduled on Christmas and New Year's Eve, 20 men and 20 women—all young and single—will depart from Taipei's Taoyuan International Airport and engage in several rounds of speed dating 30,000 feet in the air, while enjoying in-flight meals prepared by a Michelin-starred chef. Three hours later they'll return to the airport, possibly with coronavirus-free love in their eyes.)

20.12.04 MIT Tech Review, *The coming war on the hidden algorithms that trap people in poverty*, Karen Hao <https://www.technologyreview.com/2020/12/04/1013068/algorithms-create-a-poverty-trap-lawyers-fight-back/> (Miriam is a survivor of what's known as "coerced debt," a form of abuse usually perpetrated by an intimate partner or family member. While economic abuse is a long-standing problem, digital banking has made it easier to open accounts and take out loans in a victim's name, says Carla Sanchez-Adams, an attorney at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid. In the era of automated credit-scoring algorithms, the repercussions can also be far more devastating.)

20.12.03 NYT, *Chinatown: Time Travel Through a New York Gem*, Michael Kimmelman <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/12/02/arts/design/chinatown-virtual-walk-tour.html> (The neighborhood began to grow with the arrival of Chinese laborers driven from the American West after the Gold Rush and the completion of the transcontinental railroad. The passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 meant Chinese in America found themselves prevented from becoming citizens and denied other basic rights. Until the mid-1960s, only a handful of Chinese were legally permitted to enter the country. Chinatowns across the country were formed to provide Chinese communities with a support network and protective shield against racism.)

20.12.02 NYT, *Trump Hints at Another Act in Four Years, Just Like Grover Cleveland*, Peter Baker <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/02/us/politics/trump-2024.html> (How serious he is remains to be seen. Many allies believe his talk of another run in 2024, when he will be 78 years old, is more about maintaining his relevance, enabling him to raise funds, soothing his wounded pride and trying to shed the label of loser. But even if it is only for show, Mr. Trump's talk of a 2024 race has already frozen the Republican field and could delay the emergence of a new generation of leaders while keeping the party tethered to the politically polarizing Mr. Trump for months or years to come. The outgoing president hinted at his ambitions to a crowd of Republican supporters at a White House Christmas party on Tuesday evening in his most overt semipublic comments since losing the Nov. 3 election that he refuses to concede. "It's been an amazing four years," he told guests in remarks posted online by a member of the Republican National Committee. "We're trying to do another four years. Otherwise, I'll see you in four years.")

20.12.01 The Wrap, *Tony Hsieh's Bizarre Death Details Emerge: Former Zappos CEO Was 'Locked' In Basement*, Sean Burch <https://www.thewrap.com/tony-hsieh-death-details-emerge-fire-investigation-zappos/> (Still, the circumstances surrounding Hsieh's death remain unclear. An emergency dispatcher, in audio obtained by The Daily Mail, said the fire was in a "shed that is attached to the exterior of the house," and that a "male is barricaded inside" and unresponsive. "Everyone else is outside the house," the dispatcher said. "They are trying to get him to open up.")

20.12.01 (17.06.26) BBC Worklife, *The Tricks to Make Yourself Effortlessly Charming*, Tiffanie Wen <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-tricks-to-make-yourself-effortlessly-charming> ("Our brains are always surveying the environment for friend or foe signals," he says. "The three major things we do when we approach somebody that signal we are not a threat are: an eyebrow flash - a quick up and down movement of the eyebrow that lasts about a sixth of a second - a slight head tilt, and a smile." So now you have made your

entrance – hopefully without gurning like a maniac – experts agree that the next key to likability is to make your interaction about the other person. That means not talking about yourself. “The golden rule of friendship is if you make people feel good about themselves, they’re going to like you,” says Schafer. Cabane agrees, but says it can only work if you show a genuine interest in what they are saying.)

20.11.30 WaPo, *No game days. No bars. The pandemic is forcing some men to realize they need deeper friendships.*, Samantha Schmidt

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/road-to-recovery/2020/11/30/male-bonding-covid/> (Male friendships are often rooted in “shoulder-to-shoulder” interactions, such as watching a football game or playing video games, while women’s interactions are more face-to-face, such as grabbing a coffee or getting together for a glass of wine, said Geoffrey Greif, a professor at the University of Maryland School of Social Work who wrote a book about male friendship. When Greif surveyed hundreds of men about how they most often socialized with friends, 80 percent of men said “sports” — either watching or participating in them together.)

20.11.30 Independent, *AI solves 50-year-old science problem in ‘stunning advance’ that could dramatically change how we fight diseases*, researchers say

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/protein-folding-ai-deepmind-google-cancer-covid-b1764008.html> (For years, scientists have been struggling with the problem of “protein folding” – mapping the three-dimensional shapes of the proteins that are responsible for diseases from cancer to Covid-19. Google’s Deepmind claims to have created an artificially intelligent program called “AlphaFold” that is able to solve those problems in a matter of days.)

20.11.25 WaPo, *The price progressives paid for getting rid of Trump: A moderate president*, Matthew Yglesias

https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/trump-obama-biden-clinton-progressive-moderate/2020/11/25/9bb8263c-2ea1-11eb-96c2-aac3f162215d_story.html (Biden ran ahead of House Democrats and most of the party’s Senate candidates in key states such as Maine, North Carolina and Georgia. One notable exception was former Colorado governor John Hickenlooper, who won his Senate race positioned to the right of Biden ideologically. Voters wanted Trump gone, and they like some of the Democrats’ ideas, but there’s little sign of a hunger in the electorate for sweeping progressive change. A general-election presidential candidate who promised that probably would have done worse.)

20.11.25 Variety, *Hollywood Grapples With Mass Layoffs as the Biz Redefines Itself for Streaming Future*, Cynthia Littleton

<https://variety.com/2020/tv/news/hollywood-layoffs-streaming-future-1234838650/> (Executives with expertise in marketing and distribution have been hard hit at most studios because those disciplines are radically changing in the streaming epoch. Especially in pandemic conditions, WarnerMedia and its counterparts need data scientists more than they need film distribution experts. The art of driving consumers to sign up for a monthly content service is different from opening a popcorn movie on a busy summer weekend. The departure of Warner Bros.’ film marketing chief Blair Rich and TV marketing chief Lisa Gregorian within weeks of each other is the starkest example. Warner Bros. is now laser-focused on supplying content to drive the HBO Max streaming service. NBCUniversal in October unveiled a radical new structure that divided management into two primary groups, for content creation and distribution, much as Disney has aligned itself following its acquisition of 21st Century Fox. NBCUniversal wants to move content more freely around the ecosystem and through its ad-supported Peacock streamer. Disney continues to fine-tune its massive content operations to feed Disney Plus, Hulu and other platforms.)

20.11.25 Politico, *It Wasn’t Ideology That Sank House Democrats. It Was Bad Strategy.*, Miti Sathe

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/11/25/democrats-campaigns-lost-house-seats-dccc-439676> (Our party leaders need to respect the judgment of candidates running in towns, suburbs and rural areas far

outside of the Beltway. They need, in particular, to do a better job of listening to candidates of color, who are not currently well-served by the “top” professionals dispatched from D.C. to advise them. And they need to vastly loosen the reins when it comes to imposing potentially destructive one-size-fits-all national strategies on local congressional races.)

20.11.23 New Yorker, *The Underground Movement Trying to Topple the North Korean Regime*, Suki Kim <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/11/23/the-underground-movement-trying-to-topple-the-north-korean-regime> (LINK was “ninety per cent Adrian,” PK told me; he became less involved after a couple of years. LINK sought out college students who, PK said, “need to be a part of something. So many young people join fraternities. They don’t want to be alone.” Adrian told me, “I built LINK on Xanga,” a blog-based social network then popular among Asian Americans, where he had been active since 1999. (PK said, “Asians were Internet addicts more than most other groups.”) Travelling to two or three college campuses a week, Adrian would change into his one “crappy suit,” and give presentations about the horrors of life in North Korea, sometimes screening the documentary film “Seoul Train,” which follows defectors escaping to China. Adrian got Asian American singers, rappers, and dance crews to accompany his presentations.)

20.11.22 Vox, *I handled holiday orders at a grocery store. Trust me: The holidays are miserable.*, Dylan Morrison <https://www.vox.com/2020/11/21/21587723/coronavirus-covid-19-thanksgiving-holidays-canceled> (Stay home for the holidays this year. It’s not only the right thing to do for your own safety, the safety of your family, and the safety of every American; it’s also the only way to protect the service workers who have suffered many terrible holiday seasons and will inevitably suffer many more. And if you find yourself out and about, then please: Be kind to every service worker you meet, wherever you meet them. As hard as this year’s holiday season has been for you, it has almost certainly been even worse for them. They’ve likely been working day in and day out at constant risk of exposure, unable to afford to take time off, absorbing the frustration and aggression of customers who are struggling, too.)

20.11.22 Bloomberg, *Pompeo Trolls Critics in Long Goodbye as He Looks to His Future*, Nick Wadhams <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-22/pompeo-trolls-critics-in-long-goodbye-as-he-looks-to-his-future> (The trip started in Paris, where Pompeo’s first event -- before seeing government officials -- was a private meeting with reporters from right-wing French media, including Valeurs Actuelles. It’s a magazine that was roundly condemned as racist -- and was put under preliminary investigation by a prosecutor -- after printing an image that depicted a Black French lawmaker as a slave in a piece of fiction. In Turkey, Pompeo proposed that government ministers come to him in Istanbul -- they refused -- where he met with the head of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Turkish officials called Pompeo’s statement on religious freedom in the country “extremely inappropriate,” while senior State Department officials blamed a scheduling conflict for his failure to travel to Ankara, the capital. In Georgia, Pompeo waded into that country’s election dispute, lending legitimacy to a government that has cracked down on protesters demanding a new vote.)

20.11.20 Vox, *How affluent people can end their mindless overconsumption*, Eliza Barclay <https://www.vox.com/21450911/climate-change-coronavirus-greta-thunberg-flying-degrowth> (Degrowth, as the economic anthropologist Jason Hickel puts it, is about rich countries “actively scaling down resource use and energy use.” On a recent episode of the Freakonomics podcast, he clarified: “When people hear ‘degrowth,’ they think that sounds like a recession. But here’s the thing ... a recession is what happens when a growth-oriented economy stops growing. It’s a disaster. People lose their jobs. They lose their houses. Poverty rates rise, etc. ‘Degrowth’ is calling for a shift to a fundamentally different kind of economy altogether.” As Wiedmann, Steinberger, and their co-authors describe it, degrowth is a “downscaled steady-state economic system that is socially just and in balance with ecological limits.”)

20.11.20 NYT, *'People of Color' Do Not Belong to the Democratic Party*, Jay Caspian Kang
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/20/opinion/sunday/immigrants-vote-election-politics.html> (Democrats must find a similarly broad platform that focuses on the needs of working-class immigrants for health care, access to quality education and other universal programs. If Democrats want to continue winning elections in states with sizable immigrant populations, which now include swing states like Georgia, North Carolina and Arizona, they must find some coherent message that goes beyond "the other side is racist." If such a message, immersed in the idea of immigrant debt, did not work after the Muslim ban, "China virus" and the inhumane treatment of families at the border, what hope does it have in the future?)

20.11.19 DNyuz, *Zillow Surfing Is the Escape We All Need Right Now*
<https://dnyuz.com/2020/11/19/zillow-surfing-is-the-escape-we-all-need-right-now/> (The amount of data Zillow provides, some say, is key in aiding their fantasies. While platforms like Pinterest and Instagram offer an endless stream of beautiful interiors, Zillow provides images, data, video tours and highly detailed information on each house. It's easier to picture your future when you have access to the floor plan of the space or know which school your children would attend if you lived there. Some will go to great lengths to find new and interesting houses. "I'll see a house on Instagram then go to Google Maps to try to find the house using street view, then go to Zillow to look up what it's currently worth, who bought it and historical price data," said Kelsey Steele Cooper, 24, a hotel manager in Arkansas. "I'd like to think that hasn't become my hobby, but I'll use three different apps to take a look at this house that's 1,000 miles away from me. That's how much time we have on our hands in 2020.")

20.11.19 The Bulwark, *The Marketing Theory Which Explains Why Trump Owns the GOP*, David Shaywitz
<https://thebulwark.com/?p=68798> (We contain multitudes. Divided as our country may seem, we also yearn deep down to come together and experience once again our shared sense of community and mission, dedication and accomplishment. We are ready—more than ready—to heal together. The question is whether Joe Biden—or some other leader—can articulate this shared vision in a compelling, salient, emotionally resonant fashion that pierces partisan division, speaks to our common needs, and connects with our better natures. Without leadership that activates us emotionally, and elevates us collectively, we risk being rendered further asunder.)

20.11.19 NYT, *When Will We Throw Our Masks Away? I Asked Dr. Fauci*, Elisabeth Rosenthal
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/19/opinion/anthony-fauci-covid-interview.html> (I think that we're going to have some degree of public health measures together with the vaccine for a considerable period of time. But we'll start approaching normal — if the overwhelming majority of people take the vaccine — as we get into the third or fourth quarter [of 2021].)

20.11.19 Politico, *Trump goes for broke as legal effort sputters*, David Siders
<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/11/19/trump-election-results-legal-team-438470> (Rep. Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.), meanwhile, told POLITICO he has been encouraging officials in his home state of Arizona to block the certification of the presidential election results until an audit is conducted. He also discussed the quixotic idea of states overriding the will of voters and sending Trump delegates to the Electoral College, though Gosar acknowledged that the Arizona governor is unlikely to pull the trigger on such an unprecedented move. Hard-line members of the conservative House Freedom Caucus are discussing another potential Hail Mary: objecting to the vote-counting process on the floor when Congress certifies the Electoral College votes during a joint session in January. "Everyone's just talking about it," said Rep. Warren Davidson (R-Ohio.), noting that members are "studying" up on the idea.)

20.11.18 Vox, *How brunch became political*, Terry Nguyen

<https://www.vox.com/the-goods/21572182/brunch-biden-political-indifference> (As a uniquely American, often expensive, and typically alcohol-soaked meal, brunch has become a stand-in for complacency and centrist indifference, for the insular mindset of Trump-era liberal activism. Now that Biden has been elected, the idea of “going back to brunch” highlights a widening political chasm within the Democratic Party, as centrists and leftists clash over ideology and messaging, or the lack thereof. For those whose livelihoods are not tied to policy decisions, it’s possible that activism doesn’t feel as urgent in a post-Trump world, and that parts of the status quo work just fine. Centrist “brunch” Democrats are invoking Obama-era politics of unity and compromise, believing this rosy vision will appeal to moderate voters. Meanwhile, progressives are arguing that voters and activists should push Biden and congressional Democrats toward the left, and not back away from policies like Medicare-for-all and the Green New Deal to appease a subset of swing voters.)

20.11.18 NYT, *Why Do Chinese Liberals Embrace American Conservatives?*, Ian Johnson

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/18/opinion/trump-chinese-liberals-biden.html> (One answer is provided by the political scientist Yao Lin in an article for The Journal of Contemporary China earlier this year. Mr. Lin wrote that many Chinese liberal intellectuals are victims of what he calls “beaconism”: an idolization of the United States that treats ideas from there as a guiding light to follow. One effect, Mr. Lin warned, is that even as these thinkers fight for human rights, they also reflect colonialist, racist attitudes. Some Chinese liberals sympathized with Mr. Trump’s 2017 policy to stop Muslims from certain countries from entering the United States. In a 2018 discussion about Edmund Burke that appeared in the magazine Open Times, the Chinese constitutional scholar Gao Quanxi justified the immigration ban by arguing that it was meant to defend “the uniqueness of the American people” and oppose “the weakening of American society due to unrestrained pluralism.” Mr. Biden’s presidency is unlikely to dampen many Chinese liberals’ support for American conservatism.)

20.11.18 NYT, *A Simple Theory of Why Trump Did Well*, Jamelle Bodie

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/18/opinion/trump-election-stimulus.html> (Nearly everything in politics has multiple explanations and there are many factors that can and do explain the election results. But I would not ignore the extent to which the Republican Party’s strong performance can be explained simply by the fact that it was the party in power when the government put a lot of money into the hands of a lot of people who didn’t have it before. The upshot of this, for the incoming Biden administration, is straightforward: Do not listen to the debt worriers and the deficit hawks. Ignore the calls for means-testing and complicated workarounds. Embrace, instead, the simplicity of cash. Take a page from the left and give as much direct help to as many people as possible.)

20.11.17 Reason, *Another Wave of Business Closures Devastates the Suffering Restaurant*, Christian Britschgi

<https://reason.com/2020/11/17/another-wave-of-business-closures-devastates-the-suffering-restaurant-industry/> (Some libertarian policy experts are divided on the subject of aid to restaurants and other small businesses affected by government shutdowns. “Evidently, the case for some sort of aid from the government is stronger when the government in question is explicitly closing down businesses and preventing them from trading,” says Ryan Bourne, an economist with the Cato Institute. On the other hand, policy makers “have no concept of how much this pandemic will change the demand for eating out,” says Bourne. A federal aid package like the RESTAURANT Act would “entail subsidizing businesses that may well not be viable in the near future, and that comes with an economic cost. It will take us longer for the economy to adjust to its new condition after the pandemic,” Bourne says.)

20.11.17 New Yorker, *The Rise and Fall of Getting Things Done*, Cal Newport

<https://www.newyorker.com/tech/annals-of-technology/the-rise-and-fall-of-getting-things-done> (Mann no longer uses the full G.T.D. system. He remains a fan of David Allen (“there’s a person for whom G.T.D. is a perfect fit,”

he told me), but the nature of his current work doesn't generate the overwhelming load of obligations that first drove him to the system, back in 2004. "My needs are very modest from a task-management perspective," he said. "I have a production schedule for the podcasts; it's that and grocery lists." He does still use some big ideas from G.T.D., such as deploying calendar notifications to remind him to water his plants and clean his cat's litter box. ("Why would I let that take up any part of my brain?") However, his day is now structured in such a way that he can spend most of his time focussed on the autonomous, creative, skilled work that Drucker identified as so crucial to growing our economy. Most of us are not our own bosses, and therefore lack the ability to drastically overhaul the structure of our work obligations, but in Mann's current setup there's a glimpse of what might help. Imagine if, through some combination of new management thinking and technology, we could introduce processes that minimize the time required to talk about work or fight off random tasks flung our way by equally harried co-workers, and instead let us organize our days around a small number of discrete objectives. A way, that is, to preserve Drucker's essential autonomy while sidestepping the uncontrollable overload that this autonomy can accidentally trigger. This vision is appealing, but it cannot be realized by individual actions alone. It will require management intervention.)

20.11.16 The Atlantic, *The Black People Who Voted for Trump Know He's Racist*, John McWhorter <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/11/racism-isnt-everyones-priority/617108/> (Progressives may suppose that, now that the country has come so far in recognizing the backwardness of racism, Americans can afford to be more exacting. And racism is indeed a gruesome reality that an enlightened America must get past as much as possible. However, there is a difference between embracing this goal as one among many and treating it as a religiously tinged mic-drop concern. Black or Latino Trump voters may know quite well that racism exists, or that Trump is racist, yet not prioritize it to the degree that the woke consensus assumes any sensible person would. To psychologically healthy individuals, the fact that Trump wouldn't want to be their friend may seem an abstraction, as they will never meet him, have fulfilling lives that have nothing to do with him, and are quite sure that they are as good as him anyway. To these people, Trump's policies, or even just some of them, or even just the cut of his jib, may seem more important than what Trump would say about them in private—or public.)

20.11.14 Politico, *Trump's media favorites battle for the Trump trophy*, Tina Nguyen <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/11/14/trumps-media-battles-for-maga-436502> (Without Trump in office — or even in public life — it's more than likely that these disparate groups fragment back into their own separate zones online. White nationalists, after all, can't exist in the same movement as hardline pro-Israel activists. Anarcho-libertarians don't naturally fit with more extreme evangelicals. And QAnon supporters can hardly stomach anyone reporting any unfavorable news about Trump, even if it's from Newsmax.)

20.11.12 AP News, *Grief, anger, disbelief: Trump voters face Biden's victory*, Tamara Lush <https://apnews.com/article/trump-voters-face-biden-victory-ced7bebdfebdeb63e545704d652daf85> (But Piotrowski also described herself as "extremely" surprised by the result of the election. She's struggling to reconcile her version of the campaign with the results. She says she saw so many images of large Trump rallies in the final days. On a recent drive from Las Vegas to Reno — through rural, GOP-leaning Nevada — she saw only Trump signs and banners, she said. "The votes didn't reflect that amount of enthusiasm. I just find that very surprising," she said. "It makes me wonder.")

20.11.08 CNN, *What Trump's four years taught me about the two White Americas*, John Blake <https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/08/politics/trump-white-voters-blake/index.html> (I now know that as intoxicating as Trump's unholy triffecta of racism, sexism, and anti-immigrant hostility was to millions of White Americans, most rejected it. He never reached a 50% approval rating. More than half of all Americans think he is a racist, according to one recent poll.)

20.11.08 NYT, *The Digital Nomads Did Not Prepare for This*, Erin Griffith

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/08/business/digital-nomads-regret.html> (In August, Ms. Jacobs Stanton gave away most of her possessions, bought a Tesla and prepared to hit the open road with Taco, her golden retriever. “I had this image of a glorious, beautiful American landscape and mom-and-pop, Main Street U.S.A.,” she said. She found a different reality. First, someone stole her Tesla. (The police recovered it.) Then her first stop, Reno, was grim. “It’s a very sad city,” she said. In Tahoe, wildfires raged. In Bozeman, Mont., Taco became sick. A trip to a veterinarian led to emergency surgery; Taco had eaten a tube sock. ...She froze while camping in snowy Yellowstone and stressed over the icy roads. Then her daughter in college got the coronavirus, and Taco needed more surgery. (Both recovered.) On top of it all, people in small towns she visited didn’t wear masks and were hostile about it. By late October, she was ready to call her gap year short. “I think I just want to go back home,” she said. “No more road trips for Katie Stanton.”)

20.11.08 (20.01.31) Believer, *The People of Las Vegas*, Amanda Fortini

<https://believermag.com/the-people-of-las-vegas/> (The residents of Las Vegas interact with the tens of millions of tourists who visit each year—around 42 million, according to the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, three times as many as go to Mecca—in fascinating and complicated ways. This is a company town, after all. ... In some ways, Las Vegas are like the permanent crew of a cruise ship—Las Vegas as The Love Boat, if you will—and the tourists, the real character actors, stream on and off, week in and week out.)

20.11.06 NY Mag, *The Final Gasp of Donald Trump’s Presidency*, Olivia Nuzzi

<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/11/donald-trump-presidency-election-week.html> (The adviser asked if he was trying to say that votes cast illegally (something that happens rarely, despite Trump’s claims) should not be counted. “He said, ‘Yeah, yeah. That’s what I mean.’” People knew that by “stop the count,” he didn’t mean to literally stop the count, Trump said. “No,” the adviser told him, “people think you mean stop counting. If they stopped counting, you’d lose because you’re behind.” Oh. The president asked the adviser what to say instead. After consulting with the campaign’s lawyers, they settled on a message that claimed if the count was confined to legal votes only, he’d win, which put through the presidential tweet filter came out like this: “ANY VOTE THAT CAME IN AFTER ELECTION DAY WILL NOT BE COUNTED!” and “STOP THE FRAUD!”)

20.11.05 Bloomberg, *Trump’s Special Treatment on Twitter Would End With Biden Win*, Kurt Wagner

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-05/trump-s-special-treatment-on-twitter-would-end-with-biden-win> (But former world leaders aren’t protected under that policy. High-profile politicians no longer in office -- like former U.S. President Barack Obama -- are treated like regular users if they violate Twitter’s rules, which prohibit messages that include hate speech or posts that glorify violence or contain certain types of false information, like dangerous health-related misinformation. Trump will fall into the “former” group if he leaves office in January, Twitter confirmed. If that happens, breaking one of Twitter’s rules means his tweets may be removed entirely instead of labeled. He could also rack up “strikes” for multiple violations, which would increase the severity of punishment issued from the company, and could lead to temporary account freezes, suspensions or even a permanent ban.)

20.11.04 Slate, *The Blue Wave Isn’t Coming*, Lili Loofbourow

<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/11/blue-wave-isnt-coming.html> (The fact is, if you’re anything like me, that quasi-superstitious rejection of the polls concealed a subconscious expectation that they were right at some level. Maybe you took them “seriously but not literally.” It was just hard to believe that poll after poll would show Biden healthily ahead and Trump behind in swing states over months (and in the middle of a pandemic!) and then turn out to be wrong. Even Fox News polls showed the large majority of American voters favoring progressive policies, including a path to citizenship, spending more on green energy, and even government-run

health care. A better world seemed both possible and wanted, even if it would be a heavy lift. It looked like Donald Trump was going to finally, definitively, be shown the door. There was something enlivening about that. There would be a chance to grow meaningful change after four years trying to keep things from dying needlessly—institutions, principles, the thousand-plus people who died just today of COVID-19. I no longer think that's the message of this election. Joe Biden still may win the presidency, sure. But a bigger proportion of the country than we thought is fine with things as they are. And they want more of it.)

20.11.04 LAT, *Lots of Latinos voted for Trump. That should not be a surprise.*, Gustavo Arellano <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-11-04/latino-voters-trump-election-day> (Even in California, where 77% of Latinos voted for Biden, not enough of them favored propositions that would bring back affirmative action, enact more rent control and roll back tax breaks — all liberal dreams, all seemingly headed for defeat because Latinos will never be as progressive as everyone insists they ought to be. Trump, in many ways, is a quintessential Latin American leader. Too many of them in the region's tortured history have held on to power with personality cults built on fear. But as the rebels who eventually toppled those tin-pot dictators knew, the best way to victory is to inspire in Latinos an emotion just as visceral, and one that Democrats have seemed to forget: hope.)

20.11.04 Salon, *However the election ends, white supremacy has already won* <https://www.salon.com/2020/11/04/however-the-election-ends-white-supremacy-has-already-won/> (Contrary to what many liberals and progressives would like to assert, Trump's white "working class" voters are not irrational. Instead, Trump's "white working class" voters have made a different calculation about what is most important to them. Here, Whiteness and the psychological wages which come from it (especially the entitlement and privilege to cause nonwhite people pain and suffering without consequences) are more important for Trump's white voters than their health, income or even lives.)

20.11.04 Independent, *There is no landslide for Joe Biden. And we need to be honest about why that is*, Noah Berlatsky <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/biden-election-results-landslide-2020-trump-aoc-b1580021.html> (We are a nation of self-deception and hatred. Trump isn't some alien boil on the body politic. He's the natural offspring of what America is, and what a lot of Americans want to be. Maybe some candidate other than Biden could have beaten that other America back more effectively. But we shouldn't be surprised that xenophobia, hatred, or smug indifference to suffering have a constituency in the United States. They all have a deep history here, and the fight against them is longer than one election. Making America better is a long, hard slog, and perhaps one doomed to failure. But we haven't failed yet.)

20.11.03 Salon, *Trump's supporters haven't budged, despite everything. WTF?*, Amanda Marcotte <https://www.salon.com/2020/11/03/trumps-supporters-havent-budged-despite-everything-wtf/> (But as I wrote in my original article, this also reflects the psychological concepts of "cognitive dissonance" and "rationalization." As psychologist Carol Tavis told me in 2017, most people want to believe, "I am a smart person." That's contraindicated by a vote for Trump, however. Instead of admitting they were wrong in the first place, many Trump voters dig themselves ever deeper into rationalizations for why they were right, and why anyone who says otherwise has nefarious intent. That defensiveness is only heightened because the people who were right all along are liberals. The ego blow of admitting that they were wrong and the despised latte-sipping liberal "elite" was right is too much for most Trump voters. So they'll cling to anything — including completely outlandish QAnon conspiracy theories — to craft a narrative where they're actually the smart ones and the liberals are not just wrong but evil and immoral. ... Trump voters dug their heels in so hard because voting for Trump was understood, from the beginning, as a more fraught choice than voting for a more

standard Republican. They invested more of themselves — more of their ego, more of their reputation — in this choice, and therefore the sunk costs of admitting they were wrong are much higher.)

20.11.03 Slate, *Will My Children See the World Any Differently Tomorrow?*, Allison Benedikt <https://slate.com/human-interest/2020/11/trump-election-parenting-good-or-bad.html> (We're letting the kids stay up really late tonight and ordering in their choice of dinner. They'll surely be asleep before we know anything. Only once have I let myself imagine what it will be like to tell them Trump lost. For them to not just hear me say that a truly good thing can happen, but to see it. Will that be the start of something new for them? A childhood with fewer worries? Less skepticism? More optimism? Will a weight be lifted for them like it will be for me? Will they be able to look back on this period as an aberration? Like, remember Trump and that pandemic? I don't want to get my hopes up. But even worse, I don't know if I want them to get their hopes up. They've already learned to expect bad things from people and believe their country to be broken. They've grown up with a dumb and dangerous president and remember little before him. If I have to wake them up one morning this week and say Trump won, do I want them to be crushed, or unsurprised?)

20.11.02 New Yorker, *Are Asian Americans the Last Undecided Voters?*, Hua Hsu <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/11/02/are-asian-americans-the-last-undecided-voters> (Among the Republicans' Young Guns, the designation that the National Republican Congressional Committee gives its most promising candidates, two are Korean Americans from Orange County: Young Kim, who is hoping to win a rematch against Gil Cisneros, and Michelle Steel. Li was hopeful that they would win in November, but the rest of America, he explained, was not like California. The Party was overlooking Asian votes in places such as Florida and Pennsylvania. A few days after Li and I spoke, the Trump Administration moved to ban WeChat, where most of his strongest Asian American supporters organized their communities. I asked Li whether the National Committee of Asian American Republicans had a position on the Presidential race. "Frankly, we are sitting out on this one," he said. The group would not endorse Trump or put any work into national campaigning and outreach. "This year is very difficult for our organization, or myself, to come and say, with confidence, 'You're Asian American—vote on the Republican side.'" Last week, Li told me that the committee was debating whether to endorse Biden. He would be voting for the Democrat, even though he disagreed with a lot of his positions. Li still considered himself a staunch conservative, but he told me that he wanted to sound an alarm to Republicans. "On the ground, there is so much doubt," he said. "On November 3rd, you will see what I'm talking about.")

20.11.02 New Yorker, *The Republican Identity Crisis After Trump*, Nicholas Lemann <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/11/02/the-republican-identity-crisis-after-trump> (The Remnant strategy entails relentless attacks. It rests on the idea of an outpowered cohort of traditional Americans who see themselves as courageously defending their values. The obvious candidate to carry out a high Trumpist strategy in 2024 would be Donald Trump, Jr., who is an active speaker in Trump-admiring circles and in the past two years has published two books that excoriate liberals. Several other potential Republican candidates, most notably Senators Tom Cotton, of Arkansas, and Josh Hawley, of Missouri, have demonstrated that they see Trump's success as instructive.)

20.10.30 LAT, *Disneyland is more than a job for some workers. A wave of layoffs will hit Sunday*, Hugo Martin <https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2020-10-30/disneyland-layoffs-theme-park-workers-universal> (For Thomas, it's the returning guests that made the job so special. Many customers would drop by her eatery year after year to greet her. After the park closed, she said, some parkgoers have contacted her at home to check in with her. "I've watched their children grow and become regulars," she said of her returning guests. "To me, that's the best, and there aren't many companies that we can grow that kind of relationship with." She still holds out hope for a Disney-worthy happily ever after, calling her current job status "a technicality." "Even with layoffs,

at some point restrictions are going to ease,” she said. “They have to. I hope to retire from there. I have no interest in going anywhere else.”)

20.10.29 NYT, *How to Be an Active Bystander When You See Casual Racism*, Ruth Terry

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/29/smarter-living/how-to-be-an-active-bystander-when-you-see-casual-racism.html> (One of the most effective tactics, Dr. Sue said, is what he calls the art of the comeback. “A person will say to me, ‘You speak excellent English,’ and I will say, ‘You do, too, John!’” said Dr. Sue, who is Chinese-American. “The ‘compliment’ has a hidden communication to me that I’m a perpetual alien in my own country, I’m not a true American.” He said that “by simply reversing it, it may have a humorous or sarcastic impact” that reveals the comment’s underlying meaning. Dorothy J. Edwards, president and founder of Alteristic, a nonprofit consultancy that provides bystander training, focuses on “the three D’s”: direct, distract and delegate. “We emphasize that ‘direct’ doesn’t have to be combative or confrontational; it just means you address the situation directly,” Dr. Edwards said. This can be as simple as “checking in on the person at risk” by asking if the person is OK or telling the perpetrator to “knock it off.”)

20.10.29 Bloomberg, *Virtual Influencers Make Real Money While Covid Locks Down Human Stars*, Thuy Ong

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2020-10-29/lil-miquela-lol-s-seraphine-virtual-influencers-make-more-real-money-than-ever> (“Virtual influencers, while fake, have real business potential,” says Christopher Travers, the founder of virtualhumans.org, a website that documents the industry. “They are cheaper to work with than humans in the long term, are 100% controllable, can appear in many places at once, and, most importantly, they never age or die.” Seraphine — who on Oct. 13 was also revealed to be a playable character on League of Legends, which draws as many as 8 million concurrent daily users — is one of about 125 active virtual influencers, according to Travers. More than 50 of those debuted on social media in the 18 months to June 2020. On YouTube, virtual influencers number more than 5,000.)

20.10.29 The Cut, *Shameless on Vacation*, Anna Silman

<https://www.thecut.com/2020/10/americans-traveling-international-vacation.html> (Back home in New York, Kira continued to live her life. She and a friend had mostly done their own thing on the trip instead of being with the big group; plus, she felt fine. The next week, she bopped around town, as well as heading to the Hamptons with some friends. When she found out that she, like 16 other people on the trip, had tested positive for COVID, it was too late; she had already infected at least one friend of hers back in the city. “I was like, ‘Oh my God, I can’t believe I gave it to you. I’m so sorry,’ like, Holy shit,” she says. “He was like, ‘Well, it was my choice to hang out with you, obviously.’” After her experience, she cautioned another girlfriend not to go on a private-jet trip to Tulum: “I was like, ‘Don’t you dare do that.’” But does she regret going? “I’m actually thankful that I got COVID,” she tells me, since it “was a very mild strain. And if it wasn’t on that trip, I would have gone on another trip and gotten it another way probably, because I was not taking precautions.” Now all bets are off. “I have antibodies. I’m planning a trip to Miami soon.”)

20.10.29 WaPo, *As Election Day nears, Trump ponders the prospect of defeat*, Toluse Olorunnipa

<https://www.chron.com/news/article/As-Election-Day-nears-Trump-ponders-the-prospect-15684509.php> (During the rally in Allentown, Trump looked over at a truck and mused about hopping in and leaving his presidential life behind. “I’d love to do it. Just drive the hell out of here,” he said. “Just get the hell out of this. I had such a good life. My life was great.” ... Trump, who has openly mocked Biden’s mental acuity and political skills, has said losing to him would be especially devastating. “Could you imagine if I lose? My whole life, what am I going to do?” the president told supporters earlier this month in Macon, Ga. “I’m going to say I lost to the worst candidate in the history of politics. I’m not going to feel so good. Maybe I’ll have to leave the country. I don’t know.”)

20.10.28 Politico, *'I'm Absolutely Expecting Him to Do Something Weird': How Trump Could End His Presidency*, Garrett Graff <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/10/28/trump-wild-transition-433025> (Presidential pardons — as Gerald Ford demonstrated in pardoning Nixon — don't require existing criminal charges; they can also be used to block attempts to bring federal charges in the future. Trump's application in this category could include both people already under criminal indictment — like Steve Bannon — those who appear to be under federal investigation, like Brad Parscale and Rudy Giuliani, as well as perhaps even family members like Jared Kushner, Ivanka, Don Jr., and Eric who may face investigation and charges after Trump leaves office ... The cleanest — and legally bulletproof — way for Trump to escape any further federal investigation post-presidency would be for him to resign early, even just minutes before noon on January 20, and have a newly sworn-in President Mike Pence grant him a full and complete pardon. However, such a move would seem to be un-Trump — he seems unlikely to be willing to leave the presidency a minute early — and would be incredibly dicey politically for Pence, who clearly has own presidential ambitions for 2024.)

20.10.27 Vox, *The best (or worst) \$20,000 I ever spent: The money to start a small business*, Jeanna Kadlec <https://www.vox.com/the-goods/21527084/bluestockings-boutique-best-money-small-business-owner> (These days, my relationship to Bluestockings yo-yos between ambivalence and shock at my naivete and hardheadedness. I ran the store on the leanest budget possible for four years, never once taking a paycheck. I ultimately closed the store in 2018, unwilling to drive myself deeper into debt and also wanting to focus more on my writing. But then, it would be dishonest to discuss the hardships without also naming the blessings: I met some of the best, most enduring friends of my life through the lingerie industry. Bluestockings is what got me onto Twitter, a platform that would become integral to meeting still more queers, writers, and creatives over the years. I learned more about running a business (mostly through mistakes) than I ever thought possible, lessons that would translate to every kind of work I would do in the future. It was ultimately Bluestockings — not academia — that opened up the doors for me to work at tech startups in New York, leading to marketing work that would pay my bills for years.)

20.10.26 NYT, *They Did Not Vote in 2016. Why They Plan to Skip the Election Again.*, Sabrina Tavernise <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/26/us/election-nonvoters.html> (One predictor of political engagement is growing up in a family that talked about politics. Ms. Miller did not. And she is so sick of the one person in her life who is loudly insisting that she vote — an aunt who supports Mr. Trump — that she has started simply pretending she will. Like many people interviewed for this article, Ms. Miller was scrambling to pay rent and buy groceries. Monroe County's unemployment rate stood at around 13 percent in August, as the coronavirus pandemic bit into the county's tourism industry. Her tips have fallen by half and she is now working for Instacart to make up the difference. Two close relatives have died of Covid-19. "Politics? It's the least of my worries," she said.)

20.10.25 Scientific American, *The Science of Nerdiness*, Scott Kaufman <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-science-of-nerdiness/> (However, in recent years, other dopamine pathways in the brain have been proposed that are strongly linked to the reward value of information. People who score high in the general tendency toward exploration are not only driven to engage in behavioral forms of exploration, but also tend to get energized through the possibility of discovering new information and extracting meaning and growth from their experiences. These "cognitive needs," as the humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow referred to them, are just as important as other human needs for becoming a whole person.)

20.10.24 Vox, *Are we living in a computer simulation? I don't know. Probably.*, Rizvan Virk <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/4/10/18275618/simulation-hypothesis-matrix-rizwan-virk> (The truth is that there's much we simply don't understand about our reality, and I think it's more likely than not that we are in some kind of a simulated universe. Now, it's a much more sophisticated video game than the games we

produce, just like today World of Warcraft and Fortnite are way more sophisticated than Pac-Man or Space Invaders. They took a couple of decades of figuring out how to model physical objects using 3D models and then how to render them with limited computing power, which eventually led to this spate of shared online video games. I think there's a very good chance we are, in fact, living in a simulation, though we can't say that with 100 percent confidence. But there is plenty of evidence that points in that direction.)

20.10.24 SacBee, *What's the matter in the State of Jefferson? Rural California is divided, armed for revolt*, Ryan Sabalow <https://www.sacbee.com/news/california/article246652603.html> (There has long been a notion that the liberal world — the Democratic Party, Hollywood, university professors — looked down on common, conservative Americans, and tried to impose their own beliefs upon them, Rosenthal said. Trump capitalized on the lingering resentment, and amplified the idea that there was a battle for liberty between “Blue America” and conservatives, Rosenthal said.)

20.10.23 NYT, *Why Does Trump Win With White Men?*, Michael Sokolove <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/opinion/gender-gap-2020-election.html> (“Women think about government in terms of the well-being of the country,” says Melissa Deckman, a professor of political science at Washington College in Maryland who has written extensively on the gender gap. “Men are much more likely to think about it in terms of their wallet. Their bottom line is, how does this affect me?”)

20.10.22 GrubStreet, *The Nightmare Inside Mission Chinese Food*, Chris Crowley <https://www.grubstreet.com/2020/10/inside-mission-chinese-food-report.html> (In reality, former employees say, Le embodied the toxic traits that Bowien and Dimayuga disavowed in public. “You couldn’t be in that kitchen without seeing that Quynh Le was a monster,” Keith continues. He says this started from “day one,” and remembers one instance when Le threatened to strike him because he had “reached in front of him to grab a sizzle tray or something stupid.” “If you do that again,” Le told him, “I’m going to fucking hit you.” “Sorry, reaching, my bad,” Keith apologized. “Don’t talk back,” Le snapped. Keith says Le wouldn’t let it go. “It happened again about a minute later, and he squared up and had his fist drawn and was like, ‘I’m going to punch you in the fucking face.’ I was like, ‘You’re my boss, you can’t do that.’” Worst of all, Keith adds, Bowien and Dimayuga personally witnessed the moment, and failed to intervene. “Danny and Angela were there,” he recalls, “and they said nothing.” In response to a question about this incident, Bowien wrote, “I do not recall the specific incident with Andy but I do not deny that things like that happened in my presence, and I was not fully absorbing the situations as they happened.” Dimayuga says that she doesn’t remember the exact details of the night.)

20.10.22 Defector, *Let’s Just Do It And Be Legends. Let’s Make Pasta.*, Drew Magary <https://defector.com/lets-just-do-it-and-be-legends-lets-make-pasta/> (I did it. I made pasta. And it was fucking GOOD. This was some shit I would have paid \$24 for in a restaurant. It was the best thing I’ve eaten since the pandemic started. There’s no way to say that without sounding boastful, so fuck it: I’M A BIG BAD PASTA BOY NOW. A goodfella. A paisan. I spent my wife’s entire birthday dinner saying, “This is really fucking amazing!” and I kept saying it after we were done. HOW BOUT THAT PASTA, HONEY? She saw this bit coming a mile away and had her eyes pre-rolled for it. Whose birthday was it, exactly? I’m still thinkin’ ’bout that pasta. I have more dough still sitting in the fridge for tonight. Rolling it out will suck but I am no longer daunted. I know it’ll be worth it. I no longer fear pasta. And if my sorry ass can make it, then so can yours.)

20.10.22 LAT, *Quibi was supposed to be a haven for creatives. Then it shut down*, Ryan Faughnder <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/business/story/2020-10-22/quibi-closing-reaction> (Shapiro said Quibi took a top-down approach to decision-making, with Katzenberg, the former DreamWorks Animation and Walt Disney Studios leader, taking a hands-on approach. “I think a lot of the strategy was based on his gut, and

in fairness it's hard to argue with his gut," Shaprio said. "He essentially served as the head of programming there with a sort of iron grip on what content was made.)

20.10.22 Vox, *The fight is for democracy*, Ezra Klein

<https://www.vox.com/21524807/donald-trump-joe-biden-2020-election-voting-suppression-democracy>

(Sitaraman's argument is that we are in a time of transition, an unstable space between potential equilibriums. If Democrats win the fight to make America a democracy, the Republican Party will have to transform itself into a party capable of winning majorities in a country that is becoming more diverse and more secular. That will force the GOP to become a different type of party, with a different animating coalition, and a more broadly appealing policy agenda, if it wants to avoid irrelevancy. But if Democrats lose the next few elections, they may lose democracy itself to a conservative Supreme Court and an anti-democratic Republican Party. In that world, the Democratic Party will have to become a different party than it is, and a different party than its voters want it to be, as it tries desperately to win over the older, whiter, more religious places that retain disproportionate political power, and to satisfy the demands of a conservative Supreme Court that Republicans control.)

20.10.20 NYT, *The Real Divide in America Is Between Political Junkies and Everyone Else*, Yanna Krupnikov

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/20/opinion/polarization-politics-americans.html> (For partisans, politics is a morality play, a struggle of good versus evil. But most Americans just see two angry groups of people bickering over issues that may not always seem pressing or important.)

20.10.20 NYT, *A Centuries-Old Korean Style Gets an Update*, Hahna Yoon

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/19/style/hanbok-k-pop-fashion.html> (When Ms. Hwang began thinking about creating hanboks for everyday wear, she turned to the internet. A majority of traditional hanbok shops were, and still are, reluctant to stray from the expensive, '70s-style tailored-to-fit designs, but online communities devoted to hanbok subcultures were already discussing what changes they wanted in the garment as early as the mid 2000s.)

20.10.19 Vox, *Hybrid school might be the worst of both worlds*, Anna North

<https://www.vox.com/21515864/covid-hybrid-school-learning-remote-plan-pandemic> (Given these and other concerns, some are pushing for different solutions to the problems of pandemic education. For example, a lot of districts chose hybrid models because it was the only way to allow for social distancing within their school buildings, Nuzzo said. But districts could use outdoor space or temporary structures to make room for more kids. Alternatively, younger children could be brought back first, freeing up larger high-school buildings to host elementary-school classes. Overall, there's been a lack of creativity around physical space when it comes to schools, Nuzzo argues: "Think about places that were able to create hospitals and have tents and things like that, and yet we haven't applied that level of thinking with respect to schools.")

20.10.19 The Atlantic, *Why People Who Hate Trump Stick With Him*, Sarah Longwell

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/why-people-who-hate-trump-stick-him/616758/> (Some meaningful number of voters who are clear-eyed about Trump and his manifest failures—even those who think he is plainly doing a bad job—will stick with the president because they believe Democrats are worse and the media aren't to be trusted. And these aren't voters who are glued to Fox News and reading Breitbart News. Often they don't think about politics at all—and they certainly don't follow the daily machinations of Washington. They're typically not on Twitter. Instead they swim in a cultural soup of Trumpism, surrounded by friends, family, and social-media acquaintances who do live more exclusively in a right-wing-media ecosystem.)

20.10.17 NYT, *As the Coronavirus Surges, a New Culprit Emerges: Pandemic Fatigue*, Julie Bosman

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/17/us/coronavirus-pandemic-fatigue.html> (If the spring was characterized by

horror, the fall has become an odd mix of resignation and heedlessness. People who once would not leave their homes are now considering dining indoors for the first time — some losing patience after so many months without, others slipping in a fancy meal before the looming winter months when the virus is expected to spread more readily. Many people are still wearing masks to support their neighbors and keep others safe, but sidewalks that were decorated with chalk messages of encouragement for health care workers and others at Easter are likely to be bare at Halloween. “In the spring, it was fear and a sense of, ‘We are all in it together,’” said Vaile Wright, a psychologist at the American Psychological Association who studies stress in the United States. “Things are different now,” she said. “Fear has really been replaced with fatigue.”)

20.10.17 NYT, *Shh. It's Breakfast Time.*, Hillary Richard

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/17/style/self-care/silent-breakfast-mindfulness.html> (As quarantine dragged on and loneliness became a real concern, I realized that silent breakfast unexpectedly helped me navigate that, as well. “When I feel lonely, there’s always this sense that I need something external to fill it: another person or another engagement or to go somewhere,” said Barbara Vacarr, the chief executive of Kripalu.)

20.10.16 NYT, *The Science Behind Your Child's Tantrums*, Ashley Abramson

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/15/parenting/kids-tantrums-advice.html> (Dr. Mary Margaret Gleason, a child and adolescent psychiatrist at Children’s Hospital of The King’s Daughters in Virginia and a consultant at Tulane University, likens child meltdowns to a pot of boiling water, with the PFC acting as its lid. “In these moments, the intensity of the feeling overwhelms the child’s ability to organize it, so the feelings get stronger than the lid,” she said. Fortunately, with your own developed brain, you can help your kid replace the lid on the pot during a meltdown moment by using your prefrontal cortex as a surrogate.)

20.10.16 Colorlines, *I Went to a 'Filipinos for Trump' Rally. Here's What I Found*, Anthony Ocampo

<https://www.colorlines.com/articles/i-went-filipinos-trump-rally-heres-what-i-found> (“Trump is kind of a troll. He says sarcastic stuff a lot of times, which is taken out of context, and he cherishes that because it’s free media for him. ... I really don’t care if he calls something the ‘China virus.’ I don’t see him as a racist at all. ... One must learn to take him seriously, but not literally. Democrats do.” I thought about sharing findings from studies showing how Trump’s xenophobic rhetoric fosters violence against people of color, including Asian Americans like us. One psychology study found that anti-Asian bias increased sharply in the months after Trump referred to COVID-19 as the “China virus.” Ultimately, I didn’t. After hearing Ang’s defense of Trump as nonracist, in spite of decades of evidence to the contrary, it was clear we had very different working definitions of the word “racism.”)

20.10.16 Nat Rev, *If the Democrats Win Everything*, Robert VerBruggen

<https://www.nationalreview.com/2020/10/if-the-democrats-win-everything/> (An across-the-board defeat next month would also influence the broader conservative movement. One good effect would be to unite us against an onslaught of left-wing initiatives. Honestly, we’ve been at our best lately when fighting a common enemy, as during the Kavanaugh hearings. Most of us are exhausted by the “MAGA”/“Never Trump”/“anti-anti-Trump” divisions that have us perpetually fighting with each other — defending the indefensible, lashing out impotently at the choices our party’s voters have made, and trying to make the best of an embarrassing president without losing our souls. If Republicans, and especially Trump himself, get demolished next month, it will also begin a new chapter of the “What does Trump’s election mean?” debate. There are some things he proved beyond any doubt in 2016: There’s enough of a constituency for populism in the GOP that a populist can win the primaries, especially if the establishment candidates fracture the rest of the vote; some swing voters will connect with this approach as well; and GOP voters — most of whom are not sticklers for traditional conservative ideology — will consolidate around the party’s nominee more or less no matter what.)

20.10.12 The Daily Beast, *Inside Disney's Ugly COVID Reopening Battle in California*, Tarpley Hitt <https://www.thedailybeast.com/inside-disneys-ugly-covid-reopening-battle-with-california-governor-gavin-newsom> ("My main concern is that we're all safe going back," said Inez Guzman, a furloughed full-time housekeeper at the Disneyland Hotel. "We live with a lot of older people—that's true in my own family—and I can't bring anything back to them." The stalemate has no obvious end in sight. In a press conference last week, Gov. Newsom announced that he felt "no hurry" in putting out reopening guidelines. "We're going to be led by a health-first framework," he said, "and we're going to be stubborn about it.")

20.10.09 NYT, *Talk Radio Is Turning Millions of Americans Into Conservatives*, Paul Matzko <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/09/opinion/talk-radio-conservatives-trumpism.html> (Yet talk radio still somehow manages to fly below the national media radar. In large part, that is because media consumption patterns are segregated by class. If you visit a carpentry shop or factory floor, or hitch a ride with a long-haul truck driver, odds are that talk radio is a fixture of the aural landscape. But many white-collar workers, journalists included, struggle to understand the reach of talk radio because they don't listen to it, and don't know anyone who does.)

20.10.05 New Yorker, *The Students Left Behind by Remote Learning*, Alec MacGillis <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/10/05/the-students-left-behind-by-remote-learning> (The effect of Trump's declaration was instantaneous. Teachers who had been responsive to the idea of returning to the classroom suddenly regarded the prospect much more warily. "Our teachers were ready to go back as long as it was safe," Randi Weingarten, the longtime president of the American Federation of Teachers, told me. "Then Trump and DeVos played their political bullshit." Ryan Hooper, the former soldier, saw the effect on his colleagues. "It was really unhelpful," he said. A week later, the Baltimore Teachers Union and the Maryland State Education Association sent a four-page letter to the Maryland governor, Larry Hogan, a Republican, and the state superintendent of schools, Karen Salmon, calling on them to bar any in-person instruction for the first semester. They noted that, by one count, nearly a quarter of teachers nationwide were considered especially susceptible to the virus, and cited the lack of funding for personal protective equipment and testing. They questioned whether students could be counted on to wear masks, wash their hands, and maintain social distancing.)

20.09.30 Politico, *Trump Is Not the Man He Used to Be*, Tim Alberta <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/09/30/trump-debate-2020-analysis-423916> (On the debate stage, Trump has long benefited from a commanding presence, an intimidating persona, that compensates for his lack of policy knowledge. This was the story of his success in the Republican primary season: He was never going to be the smartest kid in class, but he was always going to be the strongest. And yet, Trump didn't come across as strong Tuesday night. He came across as spooked and insecure. The president who graduated from Wharton made fun of his opponent for getting bad grades. The president who is charged with guiding his country through a pandemic mocked the idea of wearing an oversized face mask. The president who promised to Make America Great Again depicted the U.S. (without evidence) as a failed state that can't run a legitimate election.)

20.09.29 Daily Star, *AI deepfake videos to make up '90% of online content' in just five years*, Michael Moran <https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/artificial-intelligence-created-deepfake-videos-22761685> ("You're already starting to see that where authentic evidence is emerging of people having said or done something and it's being dismissed as a deepfake. "So essentially deepfakes are a threat to liberal democracy because if you have no objective sense of what's real and what's not it's very difficult to see how that isn't an existential threat to liberal democracy. "Great for authoritarians, very bad for democracy.")

20.09.21 Vox, *Minority rule in America*, Matthew Yglesias

<https://www.vox.com/21448334/republicans-supreme-court-ginsburg-democracy> (In the desperate year of 2017, Democrats did turn to mass resistance outside the electoral system as a political tool, but after the midterms, they dropped it, to their detriment. It was protests that toppled Mariano Rajoy's corrupt right-wing government in Spain in 2018, Park Geun-hye's corrupt right-wing government in South Korea in 2017, and Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson's corrupt right-wing government in Iceland in 2016. And it is mass protests in Belarus that may topple a corrupt and authoritarian government there. So far, few in charge of anything in America seem to be thinking along these lines. But after a summer of uprisings and sporadic rioting, it's worth remembering that while patience is a virtue in politics, charging ahead with unworkable ideas is not.)

20.09.18 Slate, *It Makes Perfect Sense That QAnon Took Off With Women This Summer*, Lili Loofbourow

<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/09/qanon-women-why.html> (This summer has been especially tough on mothers, who have seen normal life completely disrupted while bearing the disproportionate burden of pandemic child care. And the acuteness of that challenge has occurred at the same time as the rise of Q-stagram. You can almost understand the allure of succumbing to what I think of as a normalcy fetish—a dogma that insists things are actually fine, no matter what the media says. That the visible stressors are made up, that COVID-19 isn't real, or it's over, or that masks are just a "test" separating the sheep from the proudly noncompliant. The normalcy fetish must, paradoxically, create a different boogeyman for people to identify as the real problem, and Q does: No one wants to talk about the pedophile rings! But it posits that the president is competent and these real problems are being fixed as we speak. "For a 'conspiracy theory' it's strange how many prostitution rings are being shut down & how many children are being saved. must be a coincidence," reads one post, in white text over a watercolor gradient of coral and teal.)

20.09.17 Politico, *This Is What Trump's Suburbia Really Looks Like*, Tim Alberta

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/09/17/trump-suburbs-wisconsin-415148> (Still, Gettelman said, "There is a lot at stake. The safety and security of my kids. The world is so polarized now. I worry constantly about my kids being safe, because people are so angry and so upset, they won't think twice about doing something that will endanger my children. We came up here because we thought it was a safe community, but I don't feel safe anywhere anymore." At this, Loomis cocked her head to the side. "Really?" she asked. "You don't feel safe *here*?"

20.09.15 NY Mag, *National Review Has Elevated Anti-Anti-Trumpism to an Art Form*, Jonathan Chait

<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/09/national-reviews-biden-profile-is-anti-anti-trumpism-as-art.html> (Having worked himself into a righteous lather at the prospect that a moral monster like Biden might ascend to the Oval Office, Smith laments that his appeal might work because of his opponent: "Biden's voter pitch is this: Ignore a half-century record of dishonesty, incompetence, and wretched judgment and think only this: 'Joe's a nice guy who reaches across the aisle.' It may work, given exogenous circumstances." Ah, yes, exogenous circumstances. That is Smith's delicate way of acknowledging that, despite his normal-politician shortcomings, Biden might win because his opponent has engaged in disqualifying behavior on a daily basis. The very decision to treat these circumstances as exogenous is the essence of anti-anti-Trumpism; Trump's critics became the center of the analysis, and the thing they are reacting to lies outside the frame. Perhaps if National Review had to do it all over again, its 2016 issue would have run the headline "Against Exogenous Circumstances." It would have made it much less embarrassing to endorse four more years of them.)

20.09.15 The Dispatch, *What Makes People Fall for QAnon?*, Audrey Fahlberg

<https://thedispatch.com/p/what-makes-people-fall-for-qanon> (Conspiracy theories therefore become a vehicle through which people who feel they have lost a sense of control in their lives can channel their fear and uncertainty of the future into something productive. Productive, that is, in the sense that they can lay blame on

a set of individuals—whether that’s Bill Gates, the “Deep State,” Hillary Clinton, or George Soros—as conspiratorial masterminds behind otherwise inexplicable events. “They feel that if you just imagine that there are these bad people in control of the world, then you can also imagine that they might act differently, and then the world would be a better place,” Lewandowsky said. “And that ability to think something could be different is providing comfort if they’re afraid.” Lewandowsky also listed dispositional factors that make people prone to conspiratorial thinking: feeling left behind, feeling left out, feeling that society is not giving individuals their due, as well as general disgruntlement and resentment. Cognitive style also plays a role in fueling conspiracy theories, Lewandowsky said. Some people, for example, think that intuition or magical thinking are better ways to understand the world as opposed to concrete evidence.)

20.09.14 New Yorker, *How My Mother and I Became Chinese Propaganda*, Jiayang Fan

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/09/14/how-my-mother-and-i-became-chinese-propaganda> (At the beginning of the pandemic, I had read that a virus is neither dead nor alive, and replicates only in the shelter of a host organism. I began to think of “Jiayang Fan” as viral not in a social-media sense but in a biological one; the calamitous state of the world and certain random mutations in the story had made it unexpectedly contagious. My original posts had served their purpose; now they were serving the purposes of others. I had unwittingly bred a potent piece of propaganda. Corners of the Chinese Internet buzzed with theories about my motivation. I was slandering China in exchange for American citizenship. No, I was after fame and fortune. When a nationalist publication wrote a public letter offering to donate a brand-new ventilator to save my mother’s life—“to combat evil with kindness”—it was presumed that an ingrate like me would try to find fault with the machine. I was besieged on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Many people on Twitter seemed to have come from Chinese platforms; sometimes, when a new crop of assailants descended, they would be hailed as “soldiers” come to do battle with the enemy, Jiayang Fan.)

20.09.09 NYT, *The Pandemic Is a ‘Mental Health Crisis’ for Parents*, Jessica Grose

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/09/parenting/mental-health-parents-coronavirus.html> (Over the course of the pandemic, the biggest stressor for parents surveyed by the University of Oregon’s RAPID-EC project has been an inability to sufficiently feed, clothe and house their children, said Philip Fisher, Ph.D., the director for the Center of Translational Neuroscience at the university, who is leading the project. “We thought early on that fear of getting sick would be the biggest source of stress,” he said, but as time went on, it was clear that parents struggling to meet their children’s basic needs were feeling the greatest ongoing emotional turmoil. Over 60 percent of caregivers who are experiencing extreme financial problems reported emotional distress, compared with just over 30 percent of caregivers who have no financial issues.)

20.09.06 LAT, *For L.A. Latinos, Whittier Boulevard is still a crossroads of change and hope*, Priscella Vega

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-09-06/la-latinos-whittier-boulevard-offers-change-hope> (Back in the day, Guerrero recalled, East L.A. was a “homogenous community” that felt somewhat protected from white-majority Los Angeles, a place where you were “not exposed to direct discrimination or racism on a day-to-day basis.” When he went with his father to L.A., he could sense strangers’ suspicious, hostile stares. Families didn’t need to travel far to get the essentials. Garfield and Roosevelt high schools were only a few miles away. JonSons Markets employed folks from the neighborhood. A Número Uno market recently took its place as the community grocery store. Teens worked summer jobs at Thrifty, local movie theaters or the family business. Wenger, 58, started working at his family’s furniture store when he was about 8. During lunch breaks, his family always would go out to eat at new restaurants, but Marcel and Jeanne’s French Cafe was his favorite for their soups. Wenger also remembers helping his dad board up the store’s windows with wooden panels to prevent damage during the 1970 demonstration. Several other marches were held throughout 1970, but the one in August left a bittersweet feeling. What started out as a festive and peaceful protest among an estimated 20,000 attendees quickly turned into a fury of chaos when police intervened.)

20.09.04 The Atlantic, *Why Trump Supporters Can't Admit Who He Really Is*, Peter Wehner
<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/09/predicate-fear/616009/> (Very few Trump supporters I know are able to offer an honest appraisal of the man. To do so creates too much cognitive dissonance. That they are defending a person who is fundamentally malicious, even if he makes judicial appointments of which they approve, is too painful for them to admit. They are similarly unable to admit they are defending an ethic that is at odds with what they have long championed. They have accepted, excused, and applauded Trump's behavior and tactics, allowing his ends to justify his means. In important respects, this is antithetical to a virtue ethic. So once again, it's easier for them to look away or engage in self-deception; to convince themselves that Donald Trump is not who he so clearly is.)

20.08.24 FiveThirtyEight, *Why There Are So Few Moderate Republicans Left*, Lee Drutman
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-there-are-so-few-moderate-republicans-left/> (The bottom line: American political parties are not top-down entities, capable of turning on a dime. They are loose networks and coalitions of many actors and groups. And because the Republican Party has been pulling in a more extreme direction for decades now, most Republican moderates have either quit the team or reoriented themselves in a more combative, Trumpian direction to stay alive. And these forces will most likely continue to tug at the party, leaving would-be moderates with the same choice they've faced for decades: Quit, or get on board.)

20.08.24 Politico, *The Grand Old Meltdown*, Tim Alberta
<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/08/24/republicanmeltdown-trump-convention-400039> (If there is one principle driving Republican politicians today, it is that traditional American values—faith, patriotism, modesty, the nuclear family—are under siege. There is no use adjudicating this dispute or enumerating the ways in which Trump has himself undermined these ethics. Rather, what's fascinating to observe is the shift in priorities and proportionality. What was once a source of annoyance and frustration for one sect of the party, social conservatives, has turned into the dominant life force for the GOP. The good news for Republicans is that "grievance politics," as Sasse describes it, continues to be highly effective in motivating their base. The bad news? It has diminishing returns when it comes to the many millions of persuadable voters in the middle. It's also especially difficult for an incumbent party to sell grievance to the masses, as it amounts to a tacit acknowledgment of powerlessness. This is perhaps the most baffling aspect of the GOP's approach to 2020: Instead of downplaying the social upheaval, treating it as a fleeting phenomenon that will pass with time and promising better days ahead, they are highlighting it at every turn, claiming it's a sneak preview of Biden's America when it is, factually speaking, the feature presentation of Trump's America.)

20.08.24 Vox, *Why this former Republican says the party must be burned to the ground*, Stuart Stevens
<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/8/24/21348295/rnc-2020-trump-stuart-stevens-it-was-all-a-lie> (I think we're in for a long period of Democratic government. The country's future will be decided inside the Democratic Party. The Republican Party won't have anything to do with it. They can't come up with an alternative. They don't want to come up with an alternative. So the battle within the Democratic Party between the AOC or Bernie Sanders wing and the Biden wing, or whatever you want to call them, that's the debate now. I don't see how the Republican Party comes back from this. I think they'll lose and lose big moving forward. What Hemingway said about going bankrupt also applies to the death of political parties: It happens slowly and then all at once. And as I keep saying, once you have a major political party that validates hate, it's very hard to undo. And that's what the Republican Party has done.)

20.08.22 CNN, *How a brand of chalk achieved cult status among mathematicians*, Trisha Gopal
<https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/22/us/hagoromo-chalk-great-big-story-trnd/index.html> ("His second daughter had come to Korea as an exchange student and was very fond of Korea," says Shin of Watanabe's daughter. "Mr.

Watanabe and his wife would visit Korea several times a year to eat Korean food and go sightseeing ... So, when I approached him saying I wanted to import the chalk from Japan, he welcomed the idea." They formed a business relationship that spanned over a decade. Then, in 2014, Watanabe was diagnosed with cancer. As all his own children had careers of their own, Watanabe was afraid he would have to shut down the company. So Shin put forth his own proposal: What if he brought the technology to Korea and just kept making Hagoromo chalk himself? Watanabe was skeptical. "He really tried to stop me," says Shin of Watanabe. "He said, 'You're a teacher with no experience in manufacturing ... you should not make this decision lightly.'" Eventually, Shin won him over.)

20.08.18 NYT, *What if Trumpism Is the G.O.P.'s Natural State?*, Adam Jentleson

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/opinion/trump-republican-party.html> (The way forward is to face the reality of what the Republican Party has become and prioritize delivering results for the American people over gauzy, pundit-pleasing fantasies. Sure, invite Republicans to participate constructively in the legislative process, but take away their ability to scuttle it. To this end, it is encouraging to see Mr. Biden shifting from his staunch opposition to reforming the filibuster, whose modern iteration is what has allowed Republicans to raise the bar for passing most bills in the Senate from the majority threshold the framers set to the current 60-vote supermajority. Mr. Biden knows the risks of spending valuable time and energy chasing members of a party whose incentive structure precludes cooperation. In the summer of 2009, Democrats spent nearly a year pursuing the votes of Senate Republicans like Chuck Grassley on health care. Meanwhile, the Senate majority leader, Mitch McConnell, and his allies deployed every tool at their disposal to prevent Republicans like Mr. Grassley from working with Democrats, and succeeded.)

20.08.12 Vanity Fair, *"She'll Scare the S--t Out of Suburban Women": Inside Trumpworld's Anti-Kamala Harris Attack Plan*, Gabriel Sherman

<https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2020/08/inside-trumpworlds-anti-kamala-harris-attack-plan> (Donald Trump didn't expect Joe Biden to pick Kamala Harris as his running mate. "He thought Biden would choose Karen Bass," a Republican briefed on Trump's thinking said. Trump's view, according to sources close to the White House, was that Biden would prefer a candidate with Bass's low national profile and one who wouldn't outshine him. Trump was also hopeful that Bass, a California congresswoman, would join the ticket given her record of making positive comments about the late Cuban dictator Fidel Castro. "Trump thought Bass would help him with the Cubans in Florida," the source said.)

20.08.11 NYT, *How to Foil Trump's Election Night Strategy*, Jamelle Bouie

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/11/opinion/trump-election-day.html> (There you have it. To head off the worst outcomes, Trump must go down in a decisive defeat. He's on that path already. The task for his opponents is to sustain that momentum and work to make his defeat as obvious as possible, as early as possible. The pandemic makes that a risk, but it's a risk many of us may have to take.)

20.08.10 The Atlantic, *What Is MasterClass Actually Selling?*, Carina Chocano

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/09/what-is-masterclass-actually-selling/614200/> (I've taken Atwood's class, Rhimes's class, and most of Gladwell's, among others. I've watched Part One of Keller's course, and a little bit of Part Two. I've watched Brown's "smoky eye" tutorial, tried the technique on myself, and came out looking like a prizefighting panda. The classes are visually sumptuous, transporting, uplifting, and yet, frankly, a little boring, especially if you try to watch them all the way through. Doing so feels like being seated next to the dinner guest of your dreams—the Dalai Lama or Oscar Wilde or Barack Obama—and discovering that they won't stop talking and that the dinner is 12 courses long.)

20.08.09 NYT, *'Christianity Will Have Power'*, Elizabeth Dias

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/09/us/evangelicals-trump-christianity.html> (The years of the Obama presidency were confusing to her. She said she heard talk of giving freedoms to gay people and members of minority groups. But to her it felt like her freedoms were being taken away. And that she was turning into the minority. "I do not love Trump. I think Trump is good for America as a country. I think Trump is going to restore our freedoms, where we spent eight years, if not more, with our freedoms slowly being taken away under the guise of giving freedoms to all," she said. "Caucasian-Americans are becoming a minority. Rapidly." She explained what she meant. "If you are a hard-working Caucasian-American, your rights are being limited because you are seen as against all the races or against women," she said. "Or there are people who think that because we have conservative values and we value the family and I value submitting to my husband, I must be against women's rights." Her voice grew strong. "I would say it takes a stronger woman to submit to a man than to want to rule over him. And I would argue that point to the death," she said.)

20.08.04 (19.11.09) Outside, *This Scientist Believes Aging Is Optional*, Graham Averill

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/this-scientist-believes-aging-is-optional> (Fasting, in particular, has been well supported by other research: in various studies, both mice and yeast that were fed restricted diets live much longer than their well-fed cohorts. A two-year-long human experiment in the 1990s found that participants who had a restricted diet that left them hungry often had decreased blood pressure, blood-sugar levels, and cholesterol levels. Subsequent human studies found that decreasing calories by 12 percent slowed down biological aging based on changes in blood biomarkers.)

20.08.01 (18.11.08) The Conversation, *Could Consciousness All Come Down to the Way Things Vibrate?*, Tam Hunt

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/could-consciousness-all-come-down-to-the-way-things-vibrate> (The central thesis of our approach is this: the particular linkages that allow for large-scale consciousness – like those humans and other mammals enjoy – result from a shared resonance among many smaller constituents. The speed of the resonant waves that are present is the limiting factor that determines the size of each conscious entity in each moment ... Our resonance theory of consciousness attempts to provide a unified framework that includes neuroscience, as well as more fundamental questions of neurobiology and biophysics, and also the philosophy of mind. It gets to the heart of the differences that matter when it comes to consciousness and the evolution of physical systems. It is all about vibrations, but it's also about the type of vibrations and, most importantly, about shared vibrations.)

20.07.30 The Atlantic, *'Success Addicts' Choose Being Special Over Being Happy*, Arthur C. Brooks

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2020/07/why-success-wont-make-you-happy/614731/> (The last step is to find the right metrics of success. In business, people often say, "You are what you measure." If you measure yourself only by the worldly rewards of money, power, and prestige, you'll spend your life running on the hedonic treadmill and comparing yourself to others. I suggested better metrics in the inaugural "How to Build a Life" column, among them faith, family, and friendship. I also included work—but not work for the sake of outward achievement. Rather, it should be work that serves others and gives you a sense of personal meaning.)

20.07.30 GQ, *From Productivity to Psychedelics: Tim Ferriss Has Changed His Mind About Success*, Tim Ferriss

<https://www.gq.com/story/tim-ferriss-interview-quarantine-psychedelics> (How do you feel when you wake up and before bed and how easily do you fall asleep? [laughs] The time in bed in the morning and at night tells you all you need to know. It's not a purely intellectual reasoning. It's not a pro and con list. It's not a spreadsheet. It's not a Venn diagram. It's like, how do you feel? And are you even aware of how you're feeling? How much energy have you spent blocking out feeling, because you don't want to feel certain things? To borrow from Tarah Brach, she said to me once, "There was a wise old sage who said, 'There's really only one

question worth considering and that is: What are you unwilling to feel?” So I really check in, in the morning and at night. Do you wake up with a sense of foreboding and anxiety and a desire to stay in bed? When you go to bed, is it full of anxiety and worries and preoccupation about what happened, or what's going to happen the next day? If so, that's an issue.)

20.07.30 Nat Rev, *Donald Trump's Weak, Self-Defeating Call for Delaying the Election*, Dan McLaughlin <https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/donald-trumps-weak-self-defeating-call-for-delaying-the-election/> (If I were, say, a Republican senator running for re-election right now, I'd be furious. One lesson of past campaigns is that the head of the ticket is supposed to play all the way to the whistle to keep the bottom from dropping out of down-ticket turnout. Bob Dole, for all his flaws as a national candidate, understood that and ran himself into the ground the closing weeks of 1996, doing nothing to save his own failing ticket but salvaging Republican control of Congress. If Trump is already focused in July on making excuses for losing, that is a very bad omen for Republicans in November.)

20.07.29 Vox, *Student activists want change — and they're starting in the classroom*, Terry Nguyen <https://www.vox.com/identities/2020/7/29/21345114/students-diversify-curriculum-change-antiracist> (In early June, Le discovered Diversify Our Narrative, a campaign spearheaded by California college students with the aim of introducing more diverse, anti-racist texts in America's public school system. She is one of roughly 1,700 students across 200 school districts in the US to have signed up as a community organizer; she was then given tools and resources, like email templates and social media tips, to start a local petition targeting her community and school board. Currently, Le and 17 others are working to present their proposal at Huntington Beach's school board meeting on August 11. “We're figuring out what we want to implement in the school curriculum since it's such a new initiative,” Le said, “but we're trying to start small and slowly inch our way up, while also trying to fundraise for new books.” The Diversify Our Narrative campaign has a recommended reading list of nonfiction and fiction titles Le hopes to draw from, featuring books like *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison, *There There* by Tommy Orange, and *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates.)

20.07.25 (18.10.07) Scientific American, *What Would Happen If Everyone Truly Believed Everything Is One?*, Scott Barry Kaufman <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/what-would-happen-if-everyone-truly-believed-everything-is-one> (In their second study, the researchers looked at values and self-views that might be related to the belief in oneness. They found that a belief in oneness was related to values indicating a universal concern for the welfare of other people, as well as greater compassion for other people. A belief in oneness was also associated with feeling connected to others through a recognition of our common humanity, common problems, and common imperfections. At the same time, there was no relationship between a belief in oneness and the degree to which people endorsed self-focused values such as hedonism, self-direction, security, or achievement. This means that people can have a belief in oneness and still have a great deal of self-care, healthy boundaries, and self-direction in life.)

20.07.24 Slate, *Coronavirus Diaries: I'm Working Rides at the Reopened Disney World*, Anonymous <https://slate.com/human-interest/2020/07/disney-world-worker-reopening-diary.html> (With cases spiking so much in Florida, I'm not sure what conditions would make the park shut down again. My coworkers and I even asked my management team, and they're not sure either. I'm sure that Disney does have some plan stashed away in a room somewhere, but none of us are privy to that information right now. If things keep going in the direction that they are, I would be in favor of closing—but it also depends on if the Florida unemployment site will be kind to me this time.)

20.07.23 Vanity Fair, *How Carlos Ghosn Escaped Japan, According to the Ex-Green Beret Who Snuck Him Out*, May Jeong <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2020/07/how-carlos-ghosn-escaped-japan> (Ghosn, Taylor, and Zayek left the Grand Hyatt and around 4:30 p.m. boarded the high-speed train from Tokyo. The cars were packed, with passengers standing in the aisles, and the three men rode in silence. Arriving in Osaka a little after 8 p.m., they returned to the hotel, where Taylor plugged in his phone so it could finish updating and headed to the airport alone. Taylor explained to the terminal manager that his party was running late. They would need to rush through security, he said, so they could take off on schedule for an important meeting in Istanbul. He handed the manager an envelope which contained the equivalent of \$10,000 in Japanese yen. When she insisted that the tip was too large, he took out half and gave the rest back. Then Taylor returned to the hotel, where he took the speaker out of the larger of the two boxes and placed it in the smaller box to make room for Ghosn, who climbed in. Taylor shut the lid and secured the latch.)

20.07.22 Vox, *Meet the 2020 grads entering the bleakest economy in decades*, Michael Waters <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/21322934/coronavirus-class-2020-grads-economy-jobs-gen-z-covid-19> (It's never been more clear to me that there's absolutely no security for me or for anyone. There's no guarantee, if I do find work, that it won't be gone the next month. I don't anticipate the spread of the virus getting any better anytime soon. I don't anticipate the job market clearing up anytime soon. I anticipate the repercussions of this to follow me for many, many years.)

20.07.21 FiveThirtyEight, *Every Decision Is A Risk. Every Risk Is A Decision.*, Maggie Koerth <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/every-decision-is-a-risk-every-risk-is-a-decision/> (In a pandemic that's been filled with unanswerable questions and unwinnable wars, this is our daily Kobayashi Maru. And no one can tell us exactly what we ought to do. ... We are faced with too many choices — not just what to do, but how to do it and when and where. The stakes are high, 140,000 people are dead in the U.S. and death rates are starting to climb again. And because of those stakes, we've assigned a morality to all these choices — something that psychology researchers have shown leads us to frame things as “all good” or “all bad” and lose sight of the gray areas all around us. We're all bogged down and floundering, questioning our own goodness while we arch our eyebrows at our friends and argue over whose patch of muck is really solid ground.)

20.07.17 NY Mag, *David Shor's Unified Theory of American Politics*, David Shor <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/07/david-shor-cancel-culture-2020-election-theory-polls.html> (So this suggests there's a big mass of voters who agree with us on some issues, and disagree with us on others. And whenever we talk about a given issue, that increases the extent to which voters will cast their ballots on the basis of that issue. Mitt Romney and Donald Trump agreed on basically every issue, as did Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. And yet, a bunch of people changed their votes. And the reason that happened was because the salience of various issues changed. Both sides talked a lot more about immigration, and because of that, correlation between preferences on immigration and which candidate people voted for went up. In 2012, both sides talked about health care. In 2016, they didn't. And so the correlation between views on health care and which candidate people voted for went down. So this means that every time you open your mouth, you have this complex optimization problem where what you say gains you some voters and loses you other voters. But this is actually cool because campaigns have a lot of control over what issues they talk about. Non-college-educated whites, on average, have very conservative views on immigration, and generally conservative racial attitudes. But they have center-left views on economics; they support universal health care and minimum-wage increases. So I think Democrats need to talk about the issues they are with us on, and try really hard not to talk about the issues where we disagree. Which, in practice, means not talking about immigration.)

20.07.16 LAT, *The true story of the heartthrob prince of Qatar and his time at USC*, Harriet Ryan <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-07-16/qatar-prince-usc-ucla-la> (The four years Al Thani spent in L.A. were a payday for many. But not USC. Nikias traveled to Doha and visited the Qatar Foundation, the deep-pocketed nonprofit run by the prince's mother, Sheikha Moza. He came away empty-handed, university officials said. The grant that USC sought for the Catalina Island marine center never materialized. Still, Sheikha Moza and her husband, the now-former emir, were expected to honor the campus with their presence at their son's 2015 commencement, according to faculty members and employees of the prince. A section of Shrine Auditorium had been reserved for the royals, and a golf cart designated to squire them across campus. None of the Al Thanis showed, not even the prince. The professors on the Shrine stage were left staring out at empty seats.)

20.07.16 LAT, *How will the L.A. Phil carry on amid COVID-19? Dudamel and Smith lay out a plan*, Mark Swed <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/story/2020-07-16/la-phil-cancels-fall-season-covid-gustavo-dudamel> (Spring concerts are up in the air. If they can be resumed, they surely will be highly reduced in number, limited in size and socially distanced. In the meantime, though, the orchestra will return to radio with broadcasts of archived concerts, and it will release a wealth of commercial recordings of live concerts, including Dudamel's Ives, Schumann and Dvorák symphony cycles. Beyond that, Smith said, "the only thing I am certain of is that whatever we imagine we're going to be doing in two months is probably not going to happen. Something else will." There is, though, one other certainty for Smith. "If you lose \$90 million of revenue, the economic tail of that is long. But for us it's not existential. "When I was doing nothing but financially modeling and trying to figure out every possibility, Gustavo said to me, 'My dear, we're going to get through this, and we're going to get through this because we're the L.A. Phil.'")

20.07.15 NYT, *What Is Betsy DeVos Thinking?*, Jessica Calarco <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/opinion/coronavirus-school-reopen-devos.html> (Pushing privileged families out of public schools has two notable effects, both of which happen to align with policies that Ms. DeVos has promoted throughout her career. First, it has the potential to shift resources from public schools. Second, it has the potential to undermine the public's confidence in the quality of public education and the necessity of funding it as a public good. (As I have found in my research, privileged families play a critical role in maintaining the financial viability and perceived quality of public schools.) If privileged families opt out of public schooling, they leave behind schools that even more disproportionately serve students of color and students from low-income families. Because of persistent racism and classism in America, that shift in school demographics may make it even easier for policymakers to underinvest in public education and push federal funds toward alternative options. For Ms. DeVos, then, the current crisis may be more of an opportunity than a threat. By pressuring public schools to open, even if unsafely, she will compel many privileged families to abandon those schools. Many less fortunate students will find themselves with little choice but to attend unsafe schools with even fewer resources than they had before. And public schools will take the blame for the inequalities that will almost inevitably result.)

20.07.14 The Guardian, *End of the Office: The Quiet, Grinding Loneliness of Working From Home*, Simon Usborne <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/end-of-the-office-the-quiet-grinding-loneliness-of-working-from-home> (Flick Adkins, who is 28, counts some of her colleagues as her best friends. For three months, she has been cut off from them while working from the flat she shares with five other people in north London. She works for LRWTonic, a market research company, and takes a lot of private calls. She has to sit cross-legged on her bed, stacking her laptop on part of her vinyl collection. She has settled on 20 records as the optimal height. Adkins's now empty office has a ping pong table and a coffee machine, where she would chat with friends before starting her day. On Fridays, she and her 20 mostly young colleagues would go out for lunch and have drinks

after work. Like Francis, Adkins feels lonely, down and unmotivated. “Having an office was symbolic of normality,” she says. “I loved just being at my desk and hearing the buzz and all the conversations ... I can count on two hands the number of times I’ve said: ‘I don’t know much longer I can do this.’”)

20.07.13 Slate, *Mary Trump’s Book Shows How Donald Trump Gets Away With It*, Dahlia Lithwick <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/07/mary-trump-book-psychoanalysis-enablers.html> (Mary Trump is, among other things, a brisk and gifted writer, and she is a fact witness to, and also a victim of, a family that elevated a mediocre and vicious man, at the expense of justice, fairness, and truth. Her real beef is not with her uncle Donald, who has always been exactly as we have long known him to be; that’s why a smattering of new details about his business failures and meanness were never really the point of this book. We’ve read that book before. The perspective of this book is made possible exactly because Mary Trump was one of the first children to be written out of the will, cast out of the family, and denied the support and love that should have been hers, as a result of her father’s perceived failures. It is this—because she was ousted rather than being forced to remove herself—that allows her to see clearly why everyone else stuck around. And what she reveals is a devastating indictment of all the alleged adults who stick around Donald Trump, who came together to fail America, to leave vulnerable populations to fend for themselves, and who continue to lie and spin to pacify his ego. They do it because they can’t admit the payoff is never coming, and to save themselves from the embarrassment of having to admit they were catastrophically wrong.)

20.07.12 The Atlantic, *The Role of Cognitive Dissonance in the Pandemic*, Elliot Aronson <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/role-cognitive-dissonance-pandemic/614074/> (Understanding how dissonance operates reveals a few practical lessons for overcoming it, starting by examining the two dissonant cognitions and keeping them separate. We call this the “Shimon Peres solution.” Peres, Israel’s former prime minister, was angered by his friend Ronald Reagan’s disastrous official visit to a cemetery in Bitburg, Germany, where members of the Waffen SS were buried. When asked how he felt about Reagan’s decision to go there, Peres could have reduced dissonance in one of the two most common ways: thrown out the friendship or minimized the seriousness of the friend’s action. He did neither. “When a friend makes a mistake,” he said, “the friend remains a friend, and the mistake remains a mistake.” Peres’s message conveys the importance of staying with the dissonance, avoiding easy knee-jerk responses, and asking ourselves, Why am I believing this? Why am I behaving this way? Have I thought it through or am I simply taking a short cut, following the party line, or justifying the effort I put in to join the group? Dissonance theory also teaches us why changing your brother-in-law’s political opinions is so hard, if not impossible—especially if he has thrown time, money, effort, and his vote at them. (He can’t change yours either, can he?) But if you want to try, don’t say the equivalent of “What are you thinking by not wearing a mask?” That message implies “How could you be so stupid?” and will immediately create dissonance (I’m smart versus You say I’m doing something stupid), making him almost certainly respond with defensiveness and a hardening of the belief (I was thinking how smart I am, that’s what, and masks are useless anyway). However, your brother-in-law may be more amenable to messages from others who share his party loyalty but who have changed their mind, such as the growing number of prominent Republicans now wearing masks. Senator Lamar Alexander from Tennessee said, “Unfortunately, this simple, lifesaving practice has become part of a political debate that says: If you’re for Trump, you don’t wear a mask; if you’re against Trump, you do... The stakes are much too high for that.”)

20.07.10 The Bulwark, *What Women Want*, Sarah Longwell <https://thebulwark.com/what-women-want/> (It wasn’t until the killing of George Floyd and the resulting protests that the bottom started to drop out. Two weeks after Floyd’s death I ran a focus group with seven women from swing states—all of whom voted for Trump but currently rated him as doing a “very bad” job. Only one was leaning toward voting for him again. Three were definitely going to vote for Biden. The other three were still making up their minds. But even these

undecideds were unequivocal in their distaste for Trump's posture on race and his handling of the protests. They actively recoiled. One of the Trump voters who had decided to vote for Biden said, "The stakes are too high now. It's a matter of life and death." That's a pretty a good distillation of why Trump has been shedding support from women over the last few months. The multiple crises laid bare the fact that Donald Trump isn't the savvy businessman these women voted for. Instead, they see him as a divisive president who's in over his head. And they see that his inability to successfully navigate this environment has real-world consequences for actual people.)

20.07.09 (20.04.19) *The Conversation, Why Did Women Vote for Hitler? Long-Forgotten Essays Hold Some Answers*, Daniel Maier-Katkin

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/why-did-women-vote-for-hitler-long-forgotten-essays-hold-some-answers>
(For men, the cult of personality appears to center around Hitler as a strong leader charging toward a Germany which defined itself by those it excluded. It's not surprising that women, on the cusp of exclusion themselves, were less captivated by this component of Nazism. Rather, the women's essays tend to refer to religious imagery and sentiment conflating piety with the Hitler cult. The women appear to be moved more by Nazism's proposed solutions to problems such as poverty rather than the supposed grandeur of Nazi ideology in the abstract. In her essay, Helene Radtke, a 38-year-old wife of a German soldier, describes her "divine duty to forget about all my household chores and to perform my service to my homeland." Agnes Molster-Surm, a housewife and private tutor, calls Hitler her "God-given Führer and savior, Adolf Hitler, for Germany's honor, Germany's fortune and Germany's freedom!" Another woman replaced the star on her Christmas tree with a photograph of Hitler surrounded by a halo of candles. These men and women shared the message of National Socialism as if it was gospel and refer to new party members as "converts." One such woman describes early efforts to "convert" her family to Nazism as falling "on stony soil and not even the slightest little green sapling of understanding sprouted." She was later "converted" through conversations with her mailman.)

20.07.08 NYT, *What It's Like to Enter the Work Force From Your Childhood Bedroom*, Bryan Pietsch
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/business/work-from-home-jobs-coronavirus.html> (New hires may have expected to start their careers in sleek offices — Amazon built giant tree-filled greenhouses for employees at its Seattle headquarters — or in fancy glass meeting rooms with sweeping views of the Chicago lakefront or the New York skyline. Ms. Todd, who had planned to move to Minneapolis, will be taking conference calls from a more rural setting, next to a window that overlooks fields, with cows nearby. "There are actually hay bales outside my window," she said. While she is disappointed to miss out on exploring Minneapolis's museums and restaurants with friends, Ms. Todd said she was looking forward to breakfasts and midday dog walks with her father, who is also working from home.)

20.07.08 NYT, *Churches Were Eager to Reopen. Now They Are a Major Source of Coronavirus Cases.*, Kate Conger
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/coronavirus-churches-outbreaks.html> ("It's an ideal setting for transmission," said Carlos del Rio, an infectious-disease expert at Emory University, referring to church gatherings. "You have a lot of people in a closed space. And they're speaking loudly, they're singing. All those things are exactly what you don't want." Congregants at Graystone Baptist Church in Ronceverte, W.Va., began to fall ill 10 days after Sunday services resumed in late May, with masks optional. There have been at least 51 confirmed cases and three deaths tied to the church, local health officials said. Charles Hiser, 82, was the first of three churchgoers to die after contracting the virus. His daughter, Libby Morgan, said her father had lived alone and had spent the last few months cooped up at home to stay safe. She brought him groceries and talked to him regularly on the phone so he was not lonely. But Mr. Hiser missed going to Graystone Baptist, where he had attended services for 30 years or so, his daughter said. So as soon as regular services resumed, he went right back, eschewing a mask. Within two weeks, he had tested positive for the virus. "I felt like, gosh, I

was thinking he'd be safe there," Ms. Morgan said. "You know, you're in church. Just like a child that goes to school is supposed to feel safe.")

20.07.07 Rawstory, *'Bad as it gets': GOP insiders reveal their true feelings about being stuck on Trump's 2020 'hell ship'*, Brad Reed

<https://www.rawstory.com/2020/07/bad-as-it-gets-gop-insiders-reveal-their-true-feelings-about-being-stuck-on-trumps-2020-hell-ship/> (However, these Republicans say that they have little choice but to stick with the president since their base voters all demand unquestioning loyalty to him and everything he does. "There are two options, you can be on this hell ship or you can be in the water drowning," one Republican explained. "There are practical realities — we ran a bunch of red district primaries, and it would come back that the number-one issue for 80+% of Republican primary voters was loyalty to Donald Trump," claimed another. "I'm not making that number up." These operatives say they're even concerned about Trump not only losing Texas but taking Sen. John Cornyn down with him. This anxiety is especially acute because Cornyn does not have the luxury of angering the president's followers.)

20.07.06 NYT, *I'm a Direct Descendant of Thomas Jefferson. Take Down His Memorial.*, Lucian K. Truscott IV <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/06/opinion/thomas-jefferson-memorial-truscott.html> (That's why we don't need the Jefferson Memorial to celebrate him. He should not be honored with a bronze statue 19 feet tall, surrounded by a colonnade of white marble. The time to honor the slave-owning founders of our imperfect union is past. The ground, which should have moved long ago, has at last shifted beneath us. And it's time to honor one of our founding mothers, a woman who fought as an escaped slave to free those still enslaved, who fought as an armed scout for the Union Army against the Confederacy — a woman who helped to bring into being a more perfect union after slavery, a process that continues to this day. In Jefferson's place, there should be another statue. It should be of Harriet Tubman. To see a 19-foot-tall bronze statue of a Black woman, who was a slave and also a patriot, in place of a white man who enslaved hundreds of men and women is not erasing history. It's telling the real history of America.)

20.07.04 WaPo, *Trump's push to amplify racism unnerves Republicans who have long enabled him*, Robert Costa https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-racism-white-nationalism-republicans/2020/07/04/2b0aeb6-bbaf-11ea-80b9-40ece9a701dc_story.html (Still, Cornell Belcher, a Democratic pollster who has done extensive research on racial divisions, argued that Trump is likely to continue to play to "white resentment politics" because it is the only strategy that could stave off further erosion of his support. "Without white resentment, there is no rationale for Donald Trump," Belcher said. "Without that, what reason do his supporters you have to be with Donald Trump if he's not going to be your tribal strong man? He started there and will end there.")

20.07.03 NYT, *The #Vanlife Business Is Booming*, Nellie Bowles <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/03/technology/the-vanlife-business-is-booming.html> (Vanlife has been an influencer trend on Instagram for years. It usually involved a good-looking young couple in a van posting gauzy portraits of each other and sweeping scenes of the places they visited. The fantasy life they sold is freedom and simplicity, a radical reduction in burden — but not comfort. For these are not backpackers looking tired and worn, with massive calves and wild hair. Vanlife is an aesthetic trend, closer to the tiny-home movement, yet even richer, lusher and typically sexier. It is the minimalist fantasy, which is always in part a lie. The vans are 6,000 or more pounds of gear, and living very small and possession-free is often much more complicated than living big and sprawling. But as the pandemic has worn on, it is a fantasy more people are finding themselves having.)

20.07.02 Politico, *Tucker Carlson 2024? The GOP is buzzing*, Alex Thompson

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/02/tucker-carlson-2024-republicans-348334> (“There is at the very least a significant faction within the Republican Party that [Carlson] has a huge stake in and arguably leadership over,” Lowry, who writes a column for POLITICO, said. “If he has political ambitions, he has an opening. He has a following and a taste for controversy. He’s smart, quick on his feet and personable. Political experience matters less than it once did.”)

20.06.29 Gizmodo, *'We Are Frightened': Disney Cast Members Share Their Anxiety and Anger About the Parks Reopening*, Beth Elderkin

<https://io9.gizmodo.com/we-are-frightened-disney-cast-members-share-their-anxi-1844079620> (“I will defend the company when I feel like they deserve it, and will try to be a voice of reason to people who very much are, you know, more against the company’s decisions,” Paige said. “But at this point now, I can’t think of really any good reasons, aside from money, that they would want to reopen this quickly. It saddens me more than anything else because I just kind of feel like a hostage to the company at this point.” ... “Disney is a magical place where they can escape the realities of the world, but the reality of the situation is that the pandemic is everywhere, even at Disneyland,” Julie said. “The pandemic doesn’t magically go away just because you’re at a theme park.”)

20.06.27 Politico, *Trump admits it: He's losing*, Alex Isenstadt

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/06/27/trump-losing-2020-election-342326> (Trump has endured what aides describe as the worst stretch of his presidency, marred by widespread criticism over his response to the coronavirus pandemic and nationwide racial unrest. His rally in Oklahoma last weekend, his first since March, turned out to be an embarrassment when he failed to fill the arena. What should have been an easy interview with Fox News host Sean Hannity on Thursday horrified advisers when Trump offered a rambling, non-responsive answer to a simple question about his goals for a second term. In the same appearance, the normally self-assured president offered a tacit acknowledgment that he might lose when he said that Joe Biden is “gonna be your president because some people don’t love me, maybe.” In the hours after the interview aired, questions swirled within his inner circle about whether his heart was truly in it when it comes to seeking reelection. Trump has time to rebound, and the political environment could improve for him. But interviews with more than a half-dozen people close to the president depicted a reelection effort badly in need of direction — and an unfocused candidate who repeatedly undermines himself.)

20.06.26 NYT, *Beyond 'White Fragility'*, Jamelle Bodie

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/26/opinion/black-lives-matter-injustice.html> (Which brings us back to the present. The activists behind the Black Lives Matter movement have always connected its aims to working-class, egalitarian politics. The platform of the Movement for Black Lives, as it is formally known, includes demands for universal health care, affordable housing, living wage employment and access to education and public transportation. Given the extent to which class shapes black exposure to police violence — it is poor and working class black Americans who are most likely to live in neighborhoods marked by constant police surveillance — calls to defund and dismantle existing police departments are a class demand like any other. But while the movement can’t help but be about practical concerns, the predominating discourse of belief and intention overshadows those stakes: too much concern with “white fragility” and not enough with wealth inequality. The challenge is to bridge the gap; to show new supporters that there’s far more work to do than changing the way we police; to channel their sympathy into a deeper understanding of the problem at hand.)

20.06.26 The Independent, *Trump suddenly has a bigger problem than his plummeting poll numbers*, John Bennett

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-election/trump-2020-election-poll-coronavirus-protests-rally-a9587826.html> (Mr Trump's whiff on Thursday night only appeared to confirm what some Democrats have been saying for a few weeks: Mr Trump only wants to win, and has no plans for what he would do after potentially being inaugurated a second time. "The speech has now lasted for about 90 minutes. Can anyone name a single policy initiative that Trump will pursue if he's elected to a second term?" former Barack Obama aide Jon Favreau tweeted Saturday night during Mr Trump's return to the campaign trail at a rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It's not just Democrats, however, who sense trouble for the GOP incumbent. "He's the president of the United States," Steve Bannon, Mr Trump's 2016 campaign chief and former White House chief strategist. "He's not a candidate. You act like [the] president of the United States. You take action like the president of the United States. You govern like you are president of the United States, you are going to be re-elected.")

20.06.25 NYT, *When the Toppled Statue Is of Your Great-Great-Great-Grandfather*, Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/25/us/historic-statues-monuments-descendants.html> (Mr. Lee, 27, grew up thinking of the Confederate general he is named after as a hero. He hung a Confederate flag in his bedroom until middle school, when a mentor urged him to take it down, and he was proud of his Southern heritage, believing in its "lost cause" mythology. The turning point came when he saw throngs of white supremacists rally around his ancestor's statue in Charlottesville in 2017. "You want to love your family, you want to be proud of your family, you want to be proud of your name, you want your name to mean something," said Mr. Lee, a pastor. "So this has been quite hard for me." At the same time, he said, it is liberating to publicly atone for his family's past, and to be part of correcting how Lee, a slave owner with many racist beliefs, is remembered.)

20.06.25 NYT, *Are You Willing to Give Up Your Privilege?*, Darren Walker <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/25/opinion/black-lives-matter-corporations.html> (If we, the beneficiaries of a system that perpetuates inequality, are trying to reform this system that favors us, we will have to give up something. Here are a few of the special privileges and benefits we should be willing to surrender: the intricate web of tax policies that bolster our wealth; the entrenched system in American colleges of legacy admissions, which gives a leg up to our children; and above all, the expectation that, because of our money, we are entitled to a place at the front of the line.)

20.06.24 FiveThirtyEight, *The Republican Choice*, Clare Malone <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-republican-choice/> (Brock's flip-flop embodies a contradiction inherent in many of the internal GOP struggles of the past few decades, and ones that continue today: Should the party invest in appeals to new voters or pluck racism's low-hanging electoral fruit? Brock availed himself of the latter in his 1970 Tennessee Senate race. His "victory could be credited almost entirely to his sophisticated attempts to play on Tennessean's [sic] racial fears and animosities," according to the Almanac of American Politics. Often, the party has attempted to play both strategies, though the racial one usually seems to blot out the more ecumenical approach.)

20.06.24 Vox, *In praise of polarization*, Ezra Klein <https://www.vox.com/21299730/george-floyd-democratic-party-joe-biden-black-lives-matter-protests-2020-identity-politics> (The historically multiethnic nature of the Black Lives Matter protests, and the rapid change in polling around racial issues, is partly the result of decades of polarization that have put African Americans in coalition with Hispanics, Asians, and white liberals. The Democratic Party is increasingly a coalition of people who experience racism directly or base part of their identity on opposing it ideologically. This is something new in American politics, and it carries within it real reason for hope. "If we were ever to have a national reckoning with our legacy of racial violence, it would require immense political power on the side of the people who wanted the reckoning," says University of Maryland political scientist Lilliana Mason, who studies polarization.

“We’ve never had a political party that was almost entirely in agreement that systemic racism exists, particularly among the white partisans. But that’s changing very quickly.”)

20.06.21 DailyDot, *Video of Trump looking defeated after Tulsa rally is being set to history’s saddest tracks*, Mikael Thalen <https://www.dailydot.com/debug/trump-tulsa-rally-sad-music-memes/> (A video of a disheveled President Donald Trump arriving at the White House on Friday evening has become a meme online. The footage, which shows Trump exiting the Marine One helicopter hours after his underwhelming campaign rally in Tulsa, is being combined with a wide-range of somber music. In just one example, the end title music from Marvel’s *The Incredible Hulk* was tied together with the tie-less Trump. Not long after, countless other versions began rolling in. The iconic Charlie Brown theme was another seemingly perfect fit.)

20.06.19 New Yorker, *Growing Up with Juneteenth*, Annette Gordon-Reed <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/personal-history/growing-up-with-juneteenth> (I also did not know, as a child, how intensely African-Americans had fought to keep alive the memory of Juneteenth—to commemorate our ancestors’ struggles and their hopes, and to link them to our own. As I grew older, I learned, from my mother, about Emancipation Park, in nearby Houston. Emancipation Park is one of the oldest public parks in the state. It was founded, in 1872, when four men who had been enslaved raised money from two churches and purchased ten acres of land on which to hold Juneteenth celebrations. A few decades later, in the nineteen-tens, the city gained control of the land and made it a segregated public park. On Juneteenth, black people gathered there, in their Sunday best, to hear speeches and readings of the Emancipation Proclamation. All of this took place in the years of Jim Crow. Texas, with a smaller percentage of blacks than more notorious southern states like Mississippi or Alabama, was a very hard place. Between 1882 and 1968, it had the third-highest number of lynchings in the United States. By the time I left for college, Juneteenth had become even more established in Texas, and I saw more instances of blacks and whites celebrating it together. Indeed, while I was home on Christmas break, in 1980, it became an official state holiday. This amounted to a big admission in a state that had long framed itself as the land of wide-open spaces and cowboys, instead of the land of mainly Anglo-American planters who had moved west out of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, dragging enslaved people, my ancestors among them, to pick cotton, cut sugar cane, and fell trees in the piney woods of East Texas. Those same planters fought a war with Mexico, which had abolished slavery, to maintain their independence. We normally think of the enslaved running North. Enslaved people in Texas often ran South.)

20.06.17 NYT, *Does Trump Want to Fight for a Second Term? His Self-Sabotage Worries Aides*, Maggie Haberman <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/17/us/politics/trump-2020-election.html> (In those moments, and in repeated ones since then, the president’s customary defiance has been suffused with a heightened sense of agitation as he confronts a series of external crises he has failed to contain, or has exacerbated, according to people close to him. They say his repeated acts of political self-sabotage — a widely denounced photo-op at a church for which peaceful protesters were forcibly removed, a threat to use the American military to quell protests — have significantly damaged his re-election prospects, and yet he appears mostly unable, or unwilling, to curtail them. ... But for now, they said, the president is acting trapped and defensive, and his self-destructive behavior has been so out of step for an incumbent in an election year that many advisers wonder if he is truly interested in serving a second term. ... Mr. Trump seems cognizant that his political fortunes have shifted, although he has not assumed responsibility for the change. In an interview with Fox News last week, he made the rare acknowledgment of a reality he hasn’t willed away. “If I don’t win, I don’t win,” Mr. Trump said. “I mean, you know, go on and do other things.” He added, “I think it would be a very sad thing for our country.”)

20.06.17 Nat Rev, *As Shortfalls Grow, Public-Pension Funds Roll the Dice*, Daniel Tenreiro <https://www.nationalreview.com/2020/06/calpers-public-pension-funds-add-risk-to-meet-return-targets/> ("There is no alternative," said Meng, but that isn't quite true: The pension fund's assumed rate of return (or discount rate) could be reduced. The CalPERS board did just that in 2016, moving its 7.5 percent discount rate to 7 percent, and 42 public pension funds followed suit the next year. California's modest 2016 revision increased the required contributions of public employers and certain employees, a small first step toward filling the fund's gaping holes. With internal estimates pegging the expected return of the current CalPERS portfolio at 6 percent, hitting the current target would take a whole lot of leverage. A 6 percent discount rate brings CalPERS's unfunded liabilities up to roughly \$250 billion. The greater the assumed portfolio return, the lower the contributions from public employers and workers. For fund managers, a lower target effectively admits defeat, and the CalPERS board comprises mostly union representatives who are not especially eager to mark down their net worth. With no one willing to pull back the curtain, the illusion of strong investment performance has long given cover to public officials who would rather ignore mounting pension shortfalls.)

20.06.16 The Bulwark, *Supreme Court Rules on Sex Discrimination. "But Gorsuch" Hardest Hit.*, Tim Miller <https://thebulwark.com/supreme-court-rules-on-sex-discrimination-but-gorsuch-hardest-hit/> (Unfortunately for the mild-mannered Coloradan, he has found himself in the crosshairs of the ultimate marginalized group: the zealots who sold their soul to a Bad Orange Man and no longer like what they got in the deal. The only question is whether the end of BUT GORSUCH is enough to make them finally sashay away from their heathen president.)

20.06.15 The Week, *Justice Gorsuch fires a torpedo at Trump's re-election*, Damon Linker <https://theweek.com/articles/920057/justice-gorsuch-fires-torpedo-trumps-reelection> (When Trump critics accused social conservatives of having sold their souls to a president unworthy of their adoration, the stock response was now "But Gorsuch!" Translation: Trump might have flaws, but he promised to deliver us the judiciary, and on that he's made good! No matter what happened over the coming decades in the political arena, conservatives had captured the courts, and that would ensure victories on the issues that really matter to the religious right: protecting the unborn and religious freedom, and limiting gay and transgender rights. With his 29-page majority opinion in *Bostock*, Gorsuch blew that electoral rationale out of the water.)

20.06.12 NYT, *Trump's Actions Rattle the Military World: 'I Can't Support the Man'*, Jennifer Steinhauer <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/12/us/politics/trump-polls-military-approval.html> (Erin Fangmann grew up in a military family, has been married to a captain in the Air Force for 18 years and has voted Republican all her life, including for Donald J. Trump. But as with a number of other veterans, troops and military family members who have watched the president with alarm, her support has evaporated. "He has hurt the military," said Ms. Fangmann, who lives in Arizona, one of several states in play this November with a high percentage of veterans and active-duty service members. "Bringing in active-duty members to the streets was a test to desensitize people to his future use of the military for his personal benefit. I think the silent majority among us is going to swing away." ... "My fundamental understanding is that the president is the commander in chief and that the office demands respect. But I have never wanted a different commander in chief more.")

20.06.11 NYT, *Reactionaries Are Having a Bad Month*, Paul Krugman <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/11/opinion/trump-confederate-flag-military-bases.html> (The answer is that Trump, and most of his party, are reactionaries. That is, as the political theorist Corey Robin puts it, they are motivated above all by "a desire to resist the liberation of marginal or powerless people." And Confederate iconography has become a symbol of reaction in America ... The reactionary impulse also explains, I believe, why some privileged white men, from the editor of the influential *Journal of Political Economy* to the (now former) C.E.O. of CrossFit, have been unable to control self-destructive outbursts attacking the Black Lives

Matter protests. After all, from a reactionary's point of view the past three weeks have been a nightmare. Not only are marginal people who are supposed to know their place standing up for justice, they're overwhelmingly winning the battle for public opinion. That's not how things are supposed to work!)

20.06.10 Nat Rev, *A Presidency Is a Terrible Thing to Waste*, Rich Lowry

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/06/10/a-presidency-is-a-terrible-thing-to-waste-312289> (And yet the president has worsened his position with his profligate tweeting, unpresidential conduct and refusal or inability to step up to the magisterial aspect of his office. None of this is new, but it acquires a different significance playing out against a backdrop of crisis, when the stakes and emotions are elevated, rather than a backdrop of peace and prosperity, when nothing much seems to matter. There is a substantive case to be made against the Trump administration on the coronavirus, but it would have been difficult to keep the pandemic from reaching our shores, and leaders in other hard-hit Western countries got bounces in polling. The president's poor ratings on coronavirus have much to do with his overexposure, squabbling with reporters and meandering performances at his news briefings—all of which was avoidable, and indeed was eventually avoided by stopping the briefings.)

20.06.10 LAT, *Older voters put Donald Trump in the White House. Now some are having second thoughts*,

Mark Barabak <https://news.yahoo.com/older-voters-put-donald-trump-170017427.html> (The disenchantment of older voters like Eng is further jeopardizing Trump's difficult reelection prospects, undermining his support in key states with large senior populations such as Florida, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and here in broiling Arizona. If the pattern holds — and strategists for the president's reelection insist it won't — the defections could not only cost Trump a second term but also mark a major political shift. Since 2004, Republicans have enjoyed a significant advantage among older voters, whose reliable backing helped offset a substantial Democratic edge among Asian American, Black, Latino and younger voters. In 2020, the opposite could happen, with Joe Biden's unusually strong support among seniors making up for a less-than-robust turnout among the country's youth.)

20.06.07 (19.04.08) FiveThirtyEight, *A Tale Of Two Suburbs*, Clare Malone

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/a-tale-of-two-suburbs/> f(But there is an alliance forming in the Democratic Party between minorities — who are estimated to become the majority in the U.S. by 2045 — and another group of college-educated white people, those who say they share a race-conscious worldview but who don't live in the same cities as minorities or send their children to the same schools. What that portends for our politics after the upheaval of the Trump era isn't entirely clear. Already, that alliance can be tense, particularly on issues where politics are personal. In Shaker, for instance, the schools are ostensibly integrated, but some people feel black students have limited academic opportunities compared with white students.)

20.06.01 The Bulkmark, *What Did They Think Would Happen?*, Sarah Longwell

<https://thebulkmark.com/what-did-they-think-would-happen/> (Donald Trump has spent his entire political career using maximally divisive, racially charged, rhetoric that glorifies violence while winking and nodding to those eager to receive the high-pitched dog-whistle of hate. What did they think was going to happen? The president's behavior sets the tone for the country. When the president lacks restraint, he creates permission structures for less restraint from everyone down the chain—politicians, cops, citizens. When the president lacks character, there is a vacuum of leadership. And chaos always fills that void. When the president relishes violence and promises to unleash “vicious dogs” and “ominous weapons” on protesters, why should not be shocked when things escalate.)

20.05.22 NYT, *Can Anyone Save New York's Bars and Restaurants?*, Toby Cecchini

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/22/opinion/nyc-bars-restaurants-coronavirus.html> (Contemplating what the

landscape of my city could look like without help evokes a melancholic dread of what will be lost. What could replace my favorite reggae-themed Japanese izakaya, or the venerated Italian slice spot with the octogenarian pizzaiolo, the Malaysian cafe with superb French toast, or the lauded cocktail bar hidden behind the telephone booth door? These are not just whimsical indulgences for idle spending; independent restaurants and bars are a defining element of a city's very identity. To envision New York as a moonscape of nothing but the few major franchises that can fund a long loss, a monotony of McDonald's, Chipotles, Domino's and Sweetgreens, is to shudder at an unrecognizably reduced city. Bereft of the smaller, idiosyncratic places that safeguard its lifesaving charm against the tussle and insult of big city life, would New York still be a place tourists would bother to flock to? Would it continue to be a city any of us would want to live in?)

20.05.18 NYT, *The Man Who Coaches Husbands on How to Avoid Divorce*, Jancee Dunn

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/18/parenting/marriage-invisible-labor-coach.html> (He gently suggested that Tom first practice not judging my requests. "Instead of listening to their partner, digesting the information and caring about why they feel bad, I've found that guys invest their energy in one of three ways," Fray said. "They dispute the facts of the story their partner just told; agree with the facts, but believe their partner is overreacting; or defend their actions by explaining why they did it. In all three cases, his partner's feelings are invalid." ... He will keep spreading his message, one client at a time. "I tell my story," he said, "so that maybe other people won't get divorced like me.")

20.05.14 NYT, *What I Want the Woman Behind the Counter to Know*, Min Jin Lee

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/14/opinion/essential-workers-restaurants-covid.html> (The jajangmyeon restaurant door swung open. The Korean woman in the apron handed me the paper bag and stepped back. We bowed to each other, the way we might have at a Korean church. "Su go ha se yo," I said, which translates to "Keep up your hard work," but that isn't it exactly. The phrase is a kindness, meaning, I recognize you're making an effort, and I encourage you to bear up, and it also means, I admire your labor. My city is five boroughs, and each borough has many neighborhoods, and each neighborhood is made up of numerous blocks, and on each block, there are businesses, and in each one, there is a counter, and that's where you and I meet. I hope when we can take off our masks, I get to tell you how much I need you.)

20.05.11 NY Mag, *The Coming Disruption*, Scott Galloway,

<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/05/scott-galloway-future-of-college.html> (I think we're saying the same thing. If UCLA were to say it's only offering online learning or you could go to Pepperdine and overlook the Pacific Ocean in Malibu and go to parties, you'd go to Pepperdine. What I'm saying is UCLA and Pepperdine will both have a mix, some sort of hybrid distance learning, and UCLA will have expanded its enrollment. UCLA could meet you in one of its parking-lot garages, and you would enroll in UCLA because 50 percent of this investment is in one thing: certification. The cruel truth of what pretends to be a meritocracy but is a caste system is that your degree largely indicates or signals your lifetime earnings. When kids get out of business school, they say, "I have an offer from Amazon and I have an offer to go to work for a regional bank, and I'd much rather go to work at a regional bank." I just tell them, "Stop wasting my time. You're going to work for Amazon." Because when you go to work for Amazon out of business school, your career launches at a much greater angle. Going to UCLA versus Pepperdine starts you at a 10 to 30 percent higher salary coming out of school, which, over the course of your lifetime, when you add in salary increases, just creates a different life.)

20.05.06 NYT, *An Adoption, a Pandemic and an Evacuation*, Maria Abi-Habib

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/06/parenting/fertility/pandemic-adoption-india.html> (Sam said he often lies awake at night, thinking about how different his life would be if he had never been adopted. Would he be an auto-rickshaw driver? A farmhand? "I know what my circumstances could have turned out to be, what happens in orphanages when children grow older. People don't want them," he said. He was struck by the Mosier's

deep love for Selvi. “They will give her a life no others can,” he said. Meeting the young missionary eased the Mosiers’ biggest worry: that Selvi might feel she never truly belonged with Seth and Meg, because they were a different race. “Here was this kid, born in India, adopted by Mormon parents, who grew up in the U.S. and came back to see what happened to him, where his story began, 16 years before,” Seth said. “It made us feel like everything would be all right.” Eventually everyone piled into buses to head to the airport. Sam grabbed his bag and looked up at the Mosiers. “Goodbye kid,” he said to Selvi. “You’re going to have a great life.”)

20.05.06 Vox, *The debate over what “believe women” means, explained*, Anna North

<https://www.vox.com/2020/5/6/21246667/believe-women-joe-biden-tara-reade-sexual-assault-allegation> (The message of “believe survivors” is that when people come forward to report sexual assault and seek support, “Their stories are listened to and are taken into account and are not immediately discredited,” Sage Carson, manager of Know Your IX, a project combating sexual violence at schools and on college campuses, told Vox. But it’s not always clear what it means to take allegations seriously, especially when they’re made against the presumptive Democratic nominee for president. Biden has called on the National Archives to “identify any record of the complaint [Reade] alleges she filed,” but Reade has asked for a fuller investigation. Meanwhile, the public is weighing the allegation: 26 percent of Democrats now want a different nominee, according to a Morning Consult poll conducted after the Morning Joe interview (though some respondents may have preferred a different candidate to begin with). And others, including prominent Democrats like Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Kirsten Gillibrand, are lining up behind the former vice president, saying they still support him despite the allegation. Whatever happens with Reade’s allegation, it’s clear that Democrats are in the midst of a reckoning around what it really means to believe women. “What we’re seeing now with Tara Reade’s story is that there were too many people who jumped on that catchphrase for political purposes,” Lucy Flores, a social justice advocate who wrote at The Cut last year about experiencing an unwanted kiss from Biden, told Vox. “It was very easy to jump on this because it was politically convenient.”)

20.04.29 The Atlantic, *Friends Are Breaking Up Over Social Distancing*, Ashley Feters

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2020/04/friends-are-breaking-up-over-social-distancing/610783/> (It’s common for people to perceive input or feedback from their friends as criticism, she told me—and to take that perceived criticism as a personal insult, even if it’s not meant as one. “We tend to see it as criticism not just that we’re doing something wrong, but that we’re inherently bad,” Kirmayer told me. Plus, in this situation, the subtext of You’re doing this wrong is coupled with the heavy accusation that you’re endangering people’s lives—which, well, you could be. (Do a little digging on Twitter, and you can find first-person accounts of what it’s like to hear from a friend or relative that you haven’t taken social distancing seriously enough.))

20.04.28 Afar, *Inside the Growing Community of Families on the Road, Full Time*, Kieran Dahl

<https://www.afar.com/magazine/the-rise-of-full-timing-families-when-an-rv-is-a-year-round-home> (The greatest challenge for full-timing parents, it seems, is to convince outsiders that their kids won’t end up antisocial, goalless, or illiterate dropouts on welfare, in the case of one comment on the Meinhofers’ YouTube channel. Romantic notions of a wild-and-free childhood aside, full-timing children are just as happy and well-adjusted, their parents argue, as their peers from more traditional backgrounds. If anything, they spend more time with those outside their own age group, learning “empathy by communicating with people who aren’t exactly like them,” Longnecker says. And their socializing, after all, doesn’t look much different than it would in your average American neighborhood. Children visit each other’s campsites, go hiking, and hang around the RV park’s pool—or, in many cases, go online, maintaining friendships made on the road. Parents do, too.)

20.04.24 Texas Monthly, *Should Neiman Marcus Exist?*, Jason Heid

<https://www.texasmonthly.com/news/should-neiman-marcus-exist/> (Retail analysts agree that Neiman’s is taking the right sorts of steps—like the digital stylist program, the attempts to develop technology that could aid

in increasing sales, and the reimagining of its stores as places where a wider (but still selectively upscale) range of services and products are sold. They also agree that specialty retailers like Neiman's are in a better position to survive in a world of declining business for brick-and-mortar retailers than are lower-cost chains like JCPenney or Sears. Among those experts is Robert Sakowitz, who ran his family's Houston-based chain of high-end specialty stores—directly competing with the likes of Neiman Marcus—for nearly thirty years, until the eighties' Texas oil bust proved to be its undoing. Since 1990, he's run his own consulting firm, and he outright rejects the notion that the retail industry is failing. "To the contrary, brick-and-mortar stores aren't just all dying off. It's the ones that overexpanded, or it's the ones who no longer have a reason to exist. The JCPennys and the Searses of the world don't have a niche anymore, as opposed to Neiman's," he says. "People will always want fine quality. But it's delivering that fine quality with good service—that's the challenge of the digital world." What Sakowitz and the others questioned is whether any of these measures would make more than a marginal difference or bring about change quickly enough to prevent Neiman's from being sunk by the weight of its financial burden.)

20.04.23 NYT, *My Restaurant Was My Life for 20 Years. Does the World Need It Anymore?*, Gabrielle Hamilton <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/23/magazine/closing-prune-restaurant-covid.html> (It would be nigh impossible for me, in the context of a pandemic, to argue for the necessity of my existence. Do my sweetbreads and my Parmesan omelet count as essential at this time? In economic terms, I don't think I could even argue that Prune matters anymore, in a neighborhood and a city now fully saturated with restaurants much like mine, many of them better than mine — some of which have expanded to employ as many as 100 people, not just cooks and servers and bartenders but also human-resource directors and cookbook ghostwriters. I am not going to suddenly start arguing the merits of my restaurant as a vital part of an "industry" or that I help to make up 2 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product or that I should be helped out by our government because I am one of those who employ nearly 12 million Americans in the work force. But those seem to be the only persuasive terms — with my banks, my insurers, my industry lobbyists and legislators. I have to hope, though, that we matter in some other alternative economy; that we are still a thread in the fabric that might unravel if you yanked us from the weave.)

20.04.21 AP News, *"I just can't do this." Harried parents forgo home school*, Gillian Flaccus <https://apnews.com/a3e86445d1387ecd8d1df8f9f7743e1f> (Her fourth-grade son had six English assignments all due at the end of the day. Her second-grade daughter had to build a table that would support a dictionary using only printer paper, cardboard and duct tape. She could barely keep track of their assignments, four different school email accounts, 12 Google livestreams, and her own worries as she transitioned to a new job while working from home. "I was feeling like a failure. I thought, 'I just can't do this,'" she said. She posted a message on a private Parent Teacher Organization group on Facebook, asking: "Is anyone else having a hard time keeping up with all of this?" She added: "My entire Facebook feed is nothing but photos of happy, organized families, sitting together at the kitchen table doing classwork and I can NOT relate." The post immediately got more than 70 replies, most of them supportive, and earned her a call from a slightly irritated school principal, she said. Within days, the district told teachers to no longer assign work with a daily deadline.)

20.04.14 The Atlantic, *What Happened to American Childhood?*, Kate Julian <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/05/childhood-in-an-anxious-age/609079/> (The good news is that new forms of treatment for children's anxiety disorders are emerging—and, as we'll see, that treatment can forestall a host of later problems. Even so, there is a problem with much of the anxiety about children's anxiety, and it brings us closer to the heart of the matter. Anxiety disorders are well worth preventing, but anxiety itself is not something to be warded off. It is a universal and necessary response to stress and uncertainty. I heard repeatedly from therapists and researchers while reporting this piece that anxiety is uncomfortable but, as with most discomfort, we can learn to tolerate it. Yet we are doing the opposite: Far too

often, we insulate our children from distress and discomfort entirely. And children who don't learn to cope with distress face a rough path to adulthood. A growing number of middle- and high-school students appear to be avoiding school due to anxiety or depression; some have stopped attending entirely. As a symptom of deteriorating mental health, experts say, "school refusal" is the equivalent of a four-alarm fire, both because it signals profound distress and because it can lead to so-called failure to launch—seen in the rising share of young adults who don't work or attend school and who are dependent on their parents.)

20.03.30 New Yorker, *Life on Lockdown in China*, Peter Hessler

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/03/30/life-on-lockdown-in-china> (On the forty-fifth day of the lockdown, our family went out to dinner for the first time. Businesses had slowly started to open, according to the logic of the Party. Barbershops were among the first, probably because there was no online alternative. Banks came later, and then a barbecue place across the river opened its doors. My daughters still hadn't interacted with another child their age, and there had been no announcement about school. At the restaurant, the hostess shot Ariel and Natasha with an infrared gun, and then Leslie and I took our turn. The hostess carried a clipboard on which we wrote our names, cell-phone numbers, and temperatures: Ariel, 36.5; Natasha, 36.2; Leslie, 36.2; me, 36.0. We sat down and unmasked. This place had always been popular, but tonight it was half full. Across China, there had been more than eighty thousand confirmed cases and 3,119 deaths, but the rate of increase in both figures had slowed dramatically.)

20.03.20 Tech Times, *COVID-19 CURE: Australia Will Now Roll Out The Use of Two Existing Medications After Patients Have Successfully Recovered in Secret Trials*, Christine Roger

<https://www.techtimes.com/articles/248234/20200320/covid-19-patients-have-successfully-recovered-using-two-medications-in-secret-trials-australia-to-start-rolling-out-the-treatment.htm> (In a secret trial that was held, they were all given HIV medication, Kaletra and Malaria treatment hydroxychloroquine. The tests were truly successful that these drugs will now be rolled out to COVID-19 patients in at least 50 hospitals nationwide.)

20.03.12 NY Mag, *The Night the Coronavirus Broke Through to the American Consciousness*, Matt Stieb

<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/03/the-night-covid-19-broke-into-the-american-consciousness.html> (The incident in Oklahoma City was one of three jarring events on Wednesday night that appear to have shocked the American consciousness into a higher level of concern about the threat of the coronavirus. (According to the president's sturdy approval rating it hadn't happened yet, despite his administration's egregious handling of the crisis.) Right on target, two of the episodes were related to entertainment: On the day that the World Health Organization upgraded the global outbreak to a pandemic, actor Tom Hanks announced that he and his wife Rita Wilson tested positive for the virus after traveling to Australia to shoot an Elvis biopic.)

20.03.12 LAT, *Coronavirus is forcing social distancing, but we've already been doing that for years*, Nita Lelyveld

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-03-12/coronavirus-pandemic-social-distancing-loneliness> (Right now, of course, just a few days in, I want nothing more than to go out to eat with friends, to hug a neighbor, to hold a hand. I'm hoping we get to the other side of this without large-scale tragedy. There's no way of knowing yet if we will. But if we do, I'm hoping that the experience of social distancing gives us pause and makes us realize how much we have missed company, not just the company of those we know and love but of strangers.)

20.03.09 OC Register, *Korean American community fights coronavirus rumors spread through social media*, Jeong Park

<https://www.ocregister.com/2020/03/09/korean-american-community-kept-tight-knit-by-social-media-fights-ill-effects-of-coronavirus-rumors/> (The rumors – many baseless, community leaders said – have been pinging

around apps such as KakaoTalk that are used almost universally by Korean Americans who tend to form tight-knit circles surrounding churches and social groups. And they helped spiked fear in an anxious community that has been following the rapid growth in South Korean coronavirus cases – it has surpassed 7,000 in recent days – and what friends and family there were experiencing. “Korea has come to a standstill, and the Korean community has had a lot of concern and fear about it,” said Raymond Choi, a Korean business leader in Orange County. “In the midst of it, we get an incident like this, and people are not going out.”)

20.03.09 LAT, *Democrats gear up for brutal 2020 fight with Trump in Michigan*, Michael Finnegan <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-03-09/democratic-presidential-primary-michigan> (Dietz, 73, didn't vote in 2016 but approves of the job Trump is doing, particularly his tough and unpredictable posture on the world stage. “At first, I didn't want a guy like that close to the button,” he said. “But now I don't know. Maybe he's scaring the other guys.” Ken Jackson, an English professor at Wayne State University in Detroit, grew up in Macomb County. He sees Trump's swagger as a big part of his appeal to white working-class voters here, including many whose families fled Detroit for the suburbs in the “white flight” that began amid the racial tensions and riots of the 1960s. “A lot of that aggressive banter is very deeply connected to the cultural habits and speech patterns of these folks,” Jackson said. “That's something they're quite comfortable with. They associate that with authenticity and truth-telling.”)

20.03.06 CNN, *In the middle of a coronavirus outbreak, people of Seattle adjust to changes*, Omar Jimenez <https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/06/us/seattle-changing-life-coronavirus/index.html> (Michele Auld owns a dessert shop and she's stressed. A majority of her business is people who come by to get cupcakes, cookies and other delicious treats. Business at Indulge Desserts is off from walk-ins and people aren't coming in and hanging out as much. Her catering business is down as well. She thinks she lost business yesterday because of confusion over health officials' recommendations about large gatherings. Ordering supplies is difficult, too. “It can be stressful when you're just in your day-to-day trying to do what you normally do and you're running into stumbling blocks of things beyond your control,” she says as she prepares for her first customers. She has three employees and there are fewer shifts these days. “It all feels like it's trickling down,” she says. She says in the short term she is trying to keep appropriate stock levels and not overschedule. After that, she doesn't have a plan. She is hopeful people in Seattle will try to keep some normalcy in their lives. Because if normalcy goes away, “I'm not sure what it looks like after that.”)

20.03.06 Slate, *Coronavirus Diaries: I'm a Luxury Travel Agent. We're Screwed.*, Erica Wilkinson <https://slate.com/human-interest/2020/03/coronavirus-diaries-travel-agent-halt.html> (At our monthly meeting of university travel agents at the end of February, a colleague who handles group reservations said that all of her European study abroad groups were backing out, preemptively afraid of the virus spreading there. Airlines were refusing to refund deposits. The clients were bleeding money. When the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention started warning about coronavirus spreading in the U.S., the spigot of travel requests just shut off. Less than two weeks ago, I was so busy I could barely type fast enough to make all the airline reservations I needed to. Today, I'm writing this article instead. I wasn't an agent when 9/11 happened, but I've heard stories from older colleagues about the uncertainty and fear that surrounded travel, the sudden cessation of business in our industry. What's happening now feels like what they've described.)

20.03.05 NYT, *How to Stop Touching Your Face*, Jenny Gross <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/health/stop-touching-your-face-coronavirus.html> (“My general advice would be that people should try to reduce their stress over all, as opposed to obsessively worrying about what they touch,” said Stew Shankman, a professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Northwestern University. “Stress impacts your immune system, and the more you're stressed, the more you're reducing your body's ability to fight off infections.” He said he worried about the effects of using ritualistic behaviors, like

snapping a rubber band on your wrist each time you touch your face. It is more effective, he said, to try to be in the present moment, practicing meditation and mindfulness exercises and focusing on your breathing. As long as your hands are clean, touching your face isn't catastrophic. "It's a natural behavior we all do," Dr. Shankman said. "It's not the end of the world.")

20.03.05 NYT, *Are You an Anti-Influencer?*, Alex Stone

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/opinion/harbinger-failure.html> (What is less obvious is that they may also share a fan base — a quirky subgroup of consumers who are systemically drawn to flops and whose reliably contrarian tastes can be used to forecast bad bets in retail sales, real estate and even politics. These people are known as "harbingers of failure." ... Perhaps, Professor Tucker suggests, harbingers are simply on a different wavelength from the rest of us. "I think what we're picking up on is that there are just some people who, for whatever reason, have consistently nonmajority tastes," she says, noting that in addition to buying short-lived products, harbingers buy a lot of niche items. "They like that odd house. That political candidate everyone else finds off-putting. They like Watermelon Oreos." ... But it's the human angle of the harbinger research that most intrigues her. "It resonates with so many people," Professor Tucker says. "Everyone knows that one person. Or they are that person. And for them I've suddenly explained their life.")

20.03.05 FiveThirtyEight, *Why Warren Couldn't Win*, Perry Bacon Jr.,

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-warren-couldnt-win/> (Several of the women who ran for president — Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand, Kamala Harris and Amy Klobuchar, in particular — have said that they faced constant gender-based questions from Democratic voters about their electability. Democrats nominated a woman to take on Trump once, lost, and may have been unwilling to do it again. I don't want to downplay the strengths of Biden or Sanders or ignore the weaknesses of the women and people of color who ran in 2020, but the primary process coming down to two white male candidates¹ probably reflected this view of electability. Biden and Sanders were consistently rated as the most likely to defeat Trump in a general election.)

20.03.04 NYT, *When the Show Must Go On, Even Amid a Coronavirus Outbreak*, Michael Cooper

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/04/arts/music/arts-coronavirus.html> (And in Venice, where the Quartetto Dafne, made up of members of the opera orchestra, played Beethoven and Borodin to rows of empty seats in the rococo auditorium of La Fenice to stream online, it was unsettling to watch the players enter in silence, and bow in silence. (One online audience member held firm to classical music etiquette during the performance, repeatedly writing "Shhhhhh" as other viewers posted comments.) Mr. Ortombina, the company's general manager, said that two weeks of canceled performance had cost €600,000, or around \$669,000. But his biggest fear, he said, was losing the theater's relationship with its audience. "When you close an evening, when it sold out, it is a disaster," he said. "Musically, economically and humanely.")

20.03.03 NPR, *Personal Essay: Coronavirus Lockdown Is A 'Living Hell'*, Anonymous

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/03/03/809965742/personal-essay-from-wuhan-living-in-hell> (When Li Wenliang, one of the doctors who first reported a mysterious SARS-like illness, died of the disease himself, a student commented on the Internet: "It was just the virus that killed him, so we should focus on the epidemics." But then the student's dormitory was appropriated for quarantine patients — and he was shocked and dismayed. This is the lesson these young people are learning. When someone says we can accomplish something but we must pay a price, do not rush to applaud. One day you may become the price that is paid. There is a saying in Chinese that has taken on new meaning in this coronavirus era: "When the stick hits my own head, I finally understand the pain — and why some others once cried out of pain.")

20.03.03 WJH, *The Terror of Teen Drivers: Parents Track Their Kids Without Being in the Car*, Julie Jargon

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-terror-of-teen-drivers-parents-track-their-kids-without-being-in-the-car-115832>

[31401](#)? (One day while James and his wife were on vacation in Arizona and Katie was staying with her grandparents back home in Nebraska, she received a notification on the app that her father had completed a trip—and that he had reached a top speed of 98 miles an hour. “I took a screenshot and texted it to both of them and said, ‘What’s going on?’ ” recalls Katie, 17. Mr. Williams had rented a Mustang convertible near Sedona. “We found a back road and it was beautiful and there was a sunset...” he said. “I wanted to test that sports car, and I got caught.”)

20.03.01 The Atlantic, *The Nuclear Family Was a Mistake*, David Brooks

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/03/the-nuclear-family-was-a-mistake/605536/> (The past several years have seen the rise of new living arrangements that bring nonbiological kin into family or familylike relationships. On the website CoAbode, single mothers can find other single mothers interested in sharing a home. All across the country, you can find co-housing projects, in which groups of adults live as members of an extended family, with separate sleeping quarters and shared communal areas. Common, a real-estate-development company that launched in 2015, operates more than 25 co-housing communities, in six cities, where young singles can live this way. Common also recently teamed up with another developer, Tishman Speyer, to launch Kin, a co-housing community for young parents. Each young family has its own living quarters, but the facilities also have shared play spaces, child-care services, and family-oriented events and outings. ... We’ve left behind the nuclear-family paradigm of 1955. For most people it’s not coming back. Americans are hungering to live in extended and forged families, in ways that are new and ancient at the same time. This is a significant opportunity, a chance to thicken and broaden family relationships, a chance to allow more adults and children to live and grow under the loving gaze of a dozen pairs of eyes, and be caught, when they fall, by a dozen pairs of arms. For decades we have been eating at smaller and smaller tables, with fewer and fewer kin. It’s time to find ways to bring back the big tables.)

20.02.28 LAT, *Searching for a mask? In coronavirus panic, L.A. stores are sold out*, Emmanuel Morgan

<https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2020-02-28/coronavirus-n95-masks-hand-sanitizer-shopping> (Eric Tew of Marina del Rey roamed the aisles of a Ralphs store Thursday searching for snacks. He said he’d bought three 100-count packs of masks and some hand sanitizer, totaling about \$100, awhile ago. He mailed most of the masks to his wife’s family and friends in China, and for himself, he stocked up on preserved food at Costco. Tew said he wanted to feel prepared, even if he overdid it. The virus is “probably not going to be that big of a deal” in Los Angeles, said Tew, 27. “If it did break out, I could just wear a mask and walk back here in the middle of the night. I’m starting to realize that I’ve probably overreacted ... but here I am buying stuff.”)

20.02.06 Politico, *An Unsettling New Theory: There Is No Swing Voter*, Julia Rendleman

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/02/06/rachel-bitecofer-profile-election-forecasting-new-theory-108944> (And today her model tells her the Democrats are a near lock for the presidency in 2020, and are likely to gain House seats and have a decent shot at retaking the Senate. If she’s right, we are now in a post-economy, post-incumbency, post record-while-in-office era of politics. Her analysis, as Bitecofer puts it with characteristic immodesty, amounts to nothing less than “flipping giant paradigms of electoral theory upside down.” Bitecofer’s theory, when you boil it down, is that modern American elections are rarely shaped by voters changing their minds, but rather by shifts in who decides to vote in the first place. To her critics, she’s an extreme apostle of the old saw that “turnout explains everything,” taking a long victory lap after getting lucky one time. She sees things slightly differently: That the last few elections show that American politics really has changed, and other experts have been slow to process what it means. ... And in a view that goes against years of accepted political wisdom that says the choice of a running mate doesn’t much matter, the key she says, to a 2020 Democratic victory will lie less in who is at the top of the ticket than in who gets chosen as veep. A good ticket-mate would be a person of color like Stacey Abrams or Julián Castro, she suggests, someone who can further ignite Democratic partisans who might otherwise stay home. The reason Trump won

in 2016 was not, she says, because of a bunch of disaffected blue-collar former Democrats in the Midwest; it is because a combination of Jill Stein, Gary Johnson and Evan McMullin pulled away more than 6 percent of voters in a state like Michigan. These were anti-Hillary voters, yes—but they were anti-Trump voters especially, and they are likely to come to the Democratic fold this time around if they're given a reason.)

20.01.31 The Atlantic, *The Conservatives Trying to Ditch Fake News*, McKay Coppins

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/01/dispatch-tries-sell-real-news-right/605860/> (French attributes the dearth of serious reporting on the right in part to the “towering presence” of Fox News. “You have one institution that is so incredibly potent as a validator of conservative personalities, and as a pathway to personal prosperity,” he told me. The success of Fox’s primetime model—grievance over substance, shouting over scoops—has shaped a generation of conservative media. And even those who disagree with the network’s approach hesitate to speak up for careerist reasons, French said: “People on the right are very wary of how they evaluate Fox.” ... The Dispatch is betting—somewhat improbably—that conservatives are ready now. Pointing to the success of magazines like The New Yorker, Hayes told me, “You’ll never convince me there’s not a similar audience on the right.”)

20.01.24 New Republic, *Why Tourism Should Die—and Why It Won’t*, Chuck Thompson

<https://newrepublic.com/article/156307/tourism-dieand-wont> (Short of regulations and fuel taxes on a scale that would restructure the entire global market, people probably aren’t going to stop traveling. More likely, as the world becomes ever more distressed by over-tourism—the 145 million annual overseas trips currently taken by Chinese tourists alone is expected to surpass 400 million by 2030—the travel journalists we rely on for hot tips and insider advice will simply conjure new ways of assuaging our guilt. That may serve the interests of their airline underwriters, but it won’t be doing the planet any favors. I take no joy in saying so. I like travel as much as you do, and I’m not stopping either. Where’s the line between hypocrite and addict? I suspect we’re all going to find out sooner than we’d like.)

20.01.23 Slate, *What if Competition Isn’t As “Natural” As We Think?*, John Favini

<https://slate.com/technology/2020/01/darwin-competition-collaboration-evolutionary-biology-climate-change.html> (This lack of agreement isn’t such a bad thing. Leaving the Darwinian consensus behind means a more capacious, diverse, and ultimately more rigorous science. The recent dissensus has opened up more room for important, heterodox voices like Robin Wall Kimmerer, a botanist and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. Kimmerer speaks of plants as highly intelligent beings and teachers, a sharp departure from the reductionist, utilitarian approach to plant and animal life that passed as scientific rigor within the Darwinian framework. Much of the recent research I have highlighted might count as what Kim TallBear, a scholar and enrolled member of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, calls “settler epiphanies”—belated “discoveries” by settlers of Indigenous knowledge that was either ignored or outright suppressed by colonial land appropriation and attempted genocide.)

20.01.23 (19.11.05) Variety, *Hollywood Embraces Recovery: How Industry Insiders Get and Stay Sober*, Cynthia Littleton

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/hollywood-embraces-recovery-how-industry-insiders-get-and-stay-sober> (“There’s been a culture shift in the last 20 years in the growth of the recovery movement,” says John Kelly, director of the Recovery Research Institute at Massachusetts General Hospital and a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. “It also decreases the stigma for a person’s family and friends, which are usually the prime mover in getting people into treatment.” Experts say the culture of the entertainment industry presents unique challenges for those in recovery because so much business is conducted in social settings, at premiere parties and receptions, or over drinks and dinner meetings. Filming on location for months at a time can be hard on actors, other creatives and crew members in any circumstances, let alone those in recovery. Festivals,

conferences, press tours and the globalization of the industry add up to demands to travel and be away from regular routines. Disruption to the norm can be debilitating to addicts and those in recovery. That's why so many people in recovery find that being upfront about addiction in professional settings is crucial. "For every platinum album certification, there's a Champagne toast. For every sold-out arena, there's a Champagne toast," says music manager Michael McDonald, founder of Mick Management and chairman emeritus of MusiCares. McDonald marked 20 years of sobriety in 2019. "I've never hidden my story. Now people just hand me a champagne flute full of club soda, and we get on with it," he says.)

20.01.23 (19.06.12) The Guardian, *Hit the Mute Button: Why Everyone Is Trying to Silence the Outside World*, Richard Godwin

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/hit-the-mute-button-why-everyone-is-trying-to-silence-the-outside-world> (It is generally accepted that our audio environment is becoming more cluttered – even at home, since our microwaves and washing machines are now more likely to bleep at us (and, in some cases, talk to us). But most people do not mute the world because they find it overwhelming or confusing. "It's also that they consider it boring," says Rice. "People will often think that the sounds that they're exposed to aren't worth listening to." ... But who knows what else will be silenced? "The argument is that this is damaging to the quality of public space and to the social fabric – we all just become atomised individuals," says Rice. If we are listening to podcasts or music or white noise all the time, we are removing ourselves from society and the chance to interact, help, experience delight.)

20.01.23 (17.03.08) Atlas Obscura, *Why 40% of Vietnamese People Have the Same Last Name*, Dan Nosowitz <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/why-40-of-vietnamese-people-have-the-same-last-name> (The last name, in Vietnam, is there, but just isn't that important. And when it's not that important, you might as well change it if a new last name might help you in some way. This may or may not be a continuation of the way names were used before the Chinese came—we really don't know—but ever since, Vietnamese people have tended to take on the last name of whoever was in power at the time. It was seen as a way to show loyalty, a notion which required the relatively frequent changing of names with the succession of rulers. After all, you wouldn't want to be sporting the last name of the previous emperor. "This tradition of showing loyalty to a leader by taking the family name is probably the origin of why there are so many Nguyens in Vietnam," says O'Harrow. Guess what the last ruling family in Vietnam was? Yep, the Nguyễn Dynasty, which ruled from 1802 to 1945. It's likely that there were plenty of people with the last name Nguyen before then, as there were never all that many last names in Vietnam to begin with, but that percentage surely shot up during the dynasty's reign.)

20.01.20 NYT, *We Should Have Bought the DVDs*, Veronica Walsingham

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/20/opinion/future-dvds-streaming.html> (I thought I had outsmarted the system, with my measly \$7.99 a month. We all thought we outsmarted the system. But that system outsmarted us all in a way that's irreversible, because we can't go back to cable — it's dying, we killed it — and we're now at the mercy of the streaming services and what they choose to charge us each month. We never outsmarted the entertainment industry when we opted for Netflix subscriptions over cable. Instead, we gave the industry a way to monetize our love of one or two television shows forever.)

20.01.18 NYT, *The Secretive Company That Might End Privacy as We Know It*, Kashmir Hill

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/18/technology/clearview-privacy-facial-recognition.html> (His tiny company, Clearview AI, devised a groundbreaking facial recognition app. You take a picture of a person, upload it and get to see public photos of that person, along with links to where those photos appeared. The system — whose backbone is a database of more than three billion images that Clearview claims to have scraped from Facebook, YouTube, Venmo and millions of other websites — goes far beyond anything ever constructed by

the United States government or Silicon Valley giants. ... But without public scrutiny, more than 600 law enforcement agencies have started using Clearview in the past year, according to the company, which declined to provide a list. The computer code underlying its app, analyzed by The New York Times, includes programming language to pair it with augmented-reality glasses; users would potentially be able to identify every person they saw. The tool could identify activists at a protest or an attractive stranger on the subway, revealing not just their names but where they lived, what they did and whom they knew. And it's not just law enforcement: Clearview has also licensed the app to at least a handful of companies for security purposes. "The weaponization possibilities of this are endless," said Eric Goldman, co-director of the High Tech Law Institute at Santa Clara University. "Imagine a rogue law enforcement officer who wants to stalk potential romantic partners, or a foreign government using this to dig up secrets about people to blackmail them or throw them in jail.")

20.01.16, The Guardian, *The agony of weekend loneliness: 'I won't speak to another human until Monday'*, Paula Coccozza

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jan/16/the-agony-of-weekend-loneliness-i-wont-speak-to-another-human-until-monday> (Liz would like to see these friends at the weekend, too, but when Saturday comes, "it's unsaid – but it's like they've closed the doors to me. Weekends are for couples. It would be unheard of to invite me to a dinner party, because I'm single," she says. "I wake up on a Saturday and feel down. It's a struggle to pull myself out of bed if I have nothing planned." When Monday dawns, "it is always a relief". ... Brown, who sees many clients in their 30s and 40s, thinks this disconnect is "related to those transitional times when your peer group may have moved on to a stage you haven't yet reached". And, of course, may not wish to reach. Mark's friends, like Liz's, are mostly in relationships. "It can happen really fast. All of a sudden, your group isn't there any more. You are second-tier friendship, relegated to week nights. You're not in the couples' dinner party or playdate scene. You start to lack confidence in connecting, so hesitate to suggest things. You assume you are not welcome at the weekend and withdraw ... It becomes a toxic circle." ... To counter this, she keeps herself in a state of perpetual readiness for last-minute invitations. "It's good to be seen as someone who will say yes – because you get asked again. I've been very lucky to be an emergency plus-one in quite a few situations," Sarah says. She is aware that this won't sound lucky to everyone.)

20.01.14 NYT, *She's Harvey Weinstein's Lawyer, and She Thinks #MeToo Is 'Dangerous'*, Jan Ransom <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/nyregion/weinstein-woman-metoo.html> (When it comes to sex crimes cases, Ms. Rotunno has lost only once at trial. She keeps a courtroom sketch from that case taped to a wall in her office. ... She put the teenage girl through a brutal cross-examination, because "her story was not great." Afterward, she asked the prosecutor to pass a message on to the girl: "Tell her I had a job to do. I don't want this to define what happens to her.")

20.01.10 NYT, *Who Signs Up to Fight? Makeup of U.S. Recruits Shows Glaring Disparity*, Dave Phillips <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/10/us/military-enlistment.html> (Today, students growing up in military communities are constantly exposed to the people who serve. Moms pick up their sons from day care in flight suits. Dads attend the fourth-grade holiday party in camouflage. High schools often have Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs in which students wear uniforms to class once a week and can earn credit for learning about science, leadership and fitness through a military framework. Many schools encourage students to take the military's aptitude exam, the ASVAB, in the way students nationwide are pushed to take the SAT. That exposure during school is one of the strongest predictors of enlistment rates, according to a 2018 report by the Institute for Defense Analyses.)

20.01.10 Vox, *Installing air filters in classrooms has surprisingly large educational benefits*, Matthew Yglesias <https://www.vox.com/2020/1/8/21051869/indoor-air-pollution-student-achievement> (An emergency situation

that turned out to be mostly a false alarm led a lot of schools in Los Angeles to install air filters, and something strange happened: Test scores went up. By a lot. And the gains were sustained in the subsequent year rather than fading away. That's what NYU's Michael Gilraine finds in a new working paper titled "Air Filters, Pollution, and Student Achievement" that looks at the surprising consequences of the Aliso Canyon gas leak in 2015. The impact of the air filters is strikingly large given what a simple change we're talking about. The school district didn't reengineer the school buildings or make dramatic education reforms; they just installed \$700 commercially available filters that you could plug into any room in the country. But it's consistent with a growing literature on the cognitive impact of air pollution, which finds that everyone from chess players to baseball umpires to workers in a pear-packing factory suffer deteriorations in performance when the air is more polluted.)

20.01.08 NYT, *Disappointing Results of Major Study Point to Better Ways to Cut Health Care Waste*, Austin Frakt <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/08/upshot/major-study-health-waste.html> ("Directly and systematically reducing wasteful care is hard because the most successful strategies threaten the revenue of dominant health care providers," said Michael McWilliams, a professor at Harvard Medical School and a general internist with Brigham and Women's Hospital. "One person's waste is another's income." This may be why big health systems are resistant to systemic change and prefer patient-focused approaches. Dr. McWilliams and Aaron Schwartz, a resident at Brigham and Women's Hospital, wrote a commentary in the New England Journal of Medicine arguing in favor of a systems view of cost cutting. A focus only on the relatively few high spenders could miss a lot of waste, it said. Even though the rest of the population may use less care than super-utilizers, collectively they could account for as much or more waste. Another concern is that when cuts are made to health spending, patients could receive lower-quality care and might have worse experiences. Cutting waste without harming quality is hard but not impossible. Some Medicare programs and private insurer initiatives in recent years have succeeded in doing so, if only a little. The people-focused approach, on the other hand, is more likely to improve some patients' experience because it involves additional preventive care. This could manifest itself as less pain or anxiety, and more "satisfaction" with care. But saving money this way requires accurate predictions of who is likelier to use a disproportionately large amount of health care. We don't yet know how to reliably do this for enough people to make the approach efficient.)

20.01.08 NYT, *What You Need to Know About 5G in 2020*, Brian X. Chen <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/08/technology/personaltech/5g-mobile-network.html> (Because of the technical limitations of rocky road, we are unlikely to see it deployed nationwide anytime soon (if ever), meaning we won't be getting these incredible speeds in the vast majority of places. Instead, this year our cellular networks will broadly shift to a version of 5G that is less exciting. Let's call this vanilla 5G. Vanilla 5G will have speeds that are only slightly faster than current 4G networks. The main benefit will be a reduction of lag known as latency. For example, when you do a web search on your phone, the results usually won't load immediately; the lag can often last hundreds of milliseconds. In theory, 5G technology will shave this latency down to a few milliseconds. (To be clear, rocky road offers low-latency benefits, too.) AT&T and Verizon say their 5G networks, which will be made up of mostly vanilla 5G and small scoops of rocky road, should be activated nationwide this year. T-Mobile, which put a priority on deploying vanilla 5G over rocky road, said its 5G network was available nationwide last year. In short, the broad shift to 5G won't be mind blowing, but you will probably notice a marked improvement.)

20.01.07 NYT, *Current Job: Award-Winning Chef. Education: University of IHOP.*, Priya Krishna <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/07/dining/chef-chain-restaurant.html> (Ms. Dabney graduated from the New England Culinary Institute. But before that, she learned a lot from the environment at Applebee's. There wasn't a strict hierarchy, she said, because the kitchen wasn't centered on a chef, as in many independent restaurants. "There is this understanding that every person is important to making the restaurant run smoothly,"

she said. “Nobody thought the dishwasher was a lower status than them.” ... “Hot food hot. Cold food cold. Money to the bank. Clean restrooms,” she said. “It’s all still very true and straightforward. I go to our restrooms all the time, and someone is cleaning them every 15 minutes.” ... Suzanne Goin, the chef and co-owner of A.O.C., Lucques and Tavern in Los Angeles, was a hostess at the original location of California Pizza Kitchen in Beverly Hills when she was 20. She said she has had positive experiences with former employees of Houston’s (which is owned by Hillstone), as “there is a real system for managing people,” she said. Ms. Derry, the Dallas chef and restaurateur, said she liked working with people who came from Pappas, a family-friendly chain that started in Houston, because of its rigorous training. “You spend a week on the grill, a week waitressing, a week in financials,” she said. “You know every aspect of that restaurant.”)

20.01.06 NYT, *Fox Host’s ‘America First’ Shift Makes an Exception for Trump’s Iran Strike*, Jennifer Steinhauer <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/06/us/politics/pete-hegseth-trump-fox-news.html> (“I don’t share the concern that President Trump is dragging us into endless war here,” Mr. Hegseth said. “In fact, I hate the term ‘endless war’ as it pertains to Iran.” The transformation of Mr. Hegseth — an Ivy League-educated, decorated Army platoon leader and former ally of Senator John McCain — from fierce advocate of militarism abroad to passionate Trumpist trumpet is a symbol of the Republican Party in the Trump era. ... “When you get caught up in a movement, sometimes you promote things that make emotional sense at the moment but don’t really make any sense overall,” said Wade Zirkle, a Denver businessman and veteran who founded the pro-interventionist Vets for Freedom, then recruited Mr. Hegseth to take over. ... Mr. Hegseth has also earned criticism with some of his Fox commentary supporting Mr. Trump’s more incendiary moments. He defended the president’s comments after the 2017 rally in Charlottesville, Va., during which a white nationalist killed a protester by crashing his car into the crowd. “There’s a reason those people were out there,” he said. “Some of it is outright racism and needs to be condemned. A lot of it, though, is I feel like my country is slipping away and just because I talk about nationalism, not white nationalism, doesn’t mean I’m talking in code, that I’m a racist.” ... “We are in a generational struggle against radical Islam,” he said.)

20.01.03 NYT, *Will There Be a Draft? Young People Worry After Military Strike*, Sarah Mervosh <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/03/us/military-draft-world-war-3.html> (The modern-day military is now an all-volunteer force, with about 1.2 million active-duty troops. To change that, Congress would have to pass a law reinstating the draft, and the president would have to sign it, actions that would likely require broad political support ... But she said there were arguments in favor of a modern-day draft, including the potential to make the military more representative of society. The current all-volunteer force is more likely to recruit people from the working class, she said, with higher percentages of nonwhite Americans serving in uniform. “I don’t know what it means in a democracy that you let some people fight your wars and everybody is not responsible,” she said. “American citizens are not implicated in the consequences — bodily human life, economically — of war, and they should be.”)

20.01.03 (18.11.09) BuzzFeed, *“Girl, Wash Your Face” Is A Massive Best-Seller With A Dark Message*, Laura Turner <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/lauraturner/rachel-hollis-girl-wash-your-face-self-help-book> (Being empowered to let go of my anxiety or self-criticism as a wealthy white woman is certainly helpful to me, and I appreciate that message from Hollis on a certain level. But my anxiety is largely rooted in unrealistic fears, whereas many women don’t have the opportunity to go back to college or own a house from which to be liberated. Hollis’s book is in many ways a return to the kind of second-wave feminism that privileged the liberation of middle-class straight white women from the domestic sphere while at the same time completely ignoring — or actively opposing — the rights and needs of poor and queer and nonwhite women.)

20.01.01 The Atlantic, *Inside Tech’s Fever Dream*, Ismail Muhammad <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/01/review-anna-wiener-uncanny-valley/603058/>

(Complicity is Wiener's theme, and her method: She's an acute observer of tech's shortcomings, but she's especially good at conveying the mind of a subject whose chief desire is to not know too much. Through her story, we begin to perceive how much tech owes its power, and the problems that come with it, to contented ignorance. ... At an industry event, a fellow tech employee confided to Wiener: "We're the government now." In the Valley, the new Masters of the Universe are still dreaming, and Wiener has no illusions that they will wake up.)

19.12.27 BBC, *Mecca 1979: The mosque siege that changed the course of Saudi history*

<https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-50852379> ("Juhayman's actions stopped all modernisation," Nasser al-Huzaimi says. "Let me give you a simple example. One of the things he demanded from the Saudi government was the removal of female presenters from TV. After the Haram incident, no female presenter appeared on TV again." Saudi Arabia remained on this ultra-conservative path for most of the next four decades. Only recently have there been signs of a thaw. In an interview in March 2018, Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, said that before 1979, "We were living a normal life like the rest of the Gulf countries, women were driving cars, there were movie theatres in Saudi Arabia." He was referring above all to the siege of the Grand Mosque.)

19.12.27 Slate, *I Killed My Teenager's Fancy College Dreams. You Should, Too.*, Melody Warnick

<https://slate.com/human-interest/2019/12/college-dreams-say-no-avoid-student-debt.html> (Eventually, our prolonged brainwashing attempts seemed to succeed with Ella. She started talking about how reluctant she was to go into debt for college, like it had been her idea all along. She even thanked us for being upfront about the financial consequences of college. This fall she applied to exactly two universities, in the Venn diagram overlap between "schools we can pay for" and "schools where she actually wants to go." They're not art schools, but both have stellar art programs. Her guidance counselor, whose only focus is getting in and not paying up, thinks she's crazy to limit her options like that, but we're thrilled that the highest tuition at either is around \$16,000. Not chump change, but probably doable. Her applications are in, and she won't know what happens for a while. Just one thing is certain: When Ella graduates, her future will be her own. For that, it's worth keeping a short leash on her present.)

19.12.24 SBNation, *'Uncut Gems' may be the most agonizing, nauseating sports movie ever made*, Louis Bien

<https://www.sbnation.com/2019/12/24/21028750/uncut-gems-review-sports-movie-adam-sandler> (This may be the most accurate sports movie I have ever seen. Whereas a conventional sports movie throws what feels like insurmountable challenges at the protagonists, only to resolve them neatly, in *Uncut Gems*, the outcome is unnecessary. The point is that you've become an emotional hostage. And you don't have to be a degenerate gambler to know the feeling; any sports fan understands, because what is our favorite sports team if not our very own lying, philandering scumbag who we've tethered ourselves to arbitrarily and imbued with unearned loyalty and hope that may never be repaid, and whose feelings we'll never feel reciprocated?)

19.12.24 NYT, *Chinese Restaurants Are Closing. That's a Good Thing, the Owners Say.*, Amelia Nierenberg

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/24/upshot/chinese-restaurants-closing-upward-mobility-second-generation.html> (In the past decade, some members of the second generation have also chosen to take charge of family restaurants. Nom Wah Tea Parlor, a New York dim sum restaurant that opened in 1920, has stayed a family business: first run by the Choy family, then the Tangs. The 41-year-old owner, Wilson Tang, left a career in finance to succeed his uncle in 2011. Initially, his parents balked at his decision. "As immigrants, it's the only thing you can do; if it's not restaurants, it's a laundromat," Mr. Tang said. "For me to choose to go back to owning a restaurant? That was tough for them to accept." Since then, Nom Wah has expanded: to another Manhattan location, to Philadelphia and to Shenzhen, China. On any given night, groups of guests wait for a table outside the Chinatown location for up to an hour, huddled in the bend of Doyers Street.)

19.12.23 Hazlitt, *The Year in Pivoting to Video*, David Roth <https://hazlitt.net/feature/year-pivoting-video> (The first two-thirds of my working life were a bleary hungover skein of unrewarding and luridly meaningless jobs, some of them officially temporary but all of them unofficially so. I was later pulled up into some rewarding but extremely precarious staff editorial gigs, which was much better. For the first time, I cared about the work I did and the people I worked with, but I was invariably pivoted or pushed out of those jobs after a period that did not ever exceed two years, into adrenalized and harrowing jags of freelance freefall. I did not always or even often understand why those jobs kept being eliminated, but I knew just enough to understand that 1) there was probably a reason of some kind, and 2) I would probably disagree with it even beyond the consequences that notional reason visited upon me, but 3) none of it was strictly my fault, or even probably the fault of the superiors who had been tasked with giving me the bad news. There were systemic forces at work, broader strategies and gambits, industry trends to be hedged against or surfed upon. The resulting consequences—the strange new work initiatives or the laying out of new and very different priorities or whatever—landed just as heavily on me as all the older and more obviously preposterous stuff used to. Strange new duties arrived like weather; changes just sort of happened, and kept happening. We organized the newsroom at one of my old workplaces, and what was initially thrilling and even moving about that work—all these talented and confident and ground-down people crowding into a conference room, each revealing with some shame and surprise that the weather had in fact been very bad of late above their cubicles, too, brutally bad for years in some cases—became something stranger once we finally got management to meet with us. We had long debated amongst ourselves, first in bars and then as a bargaining unit, whether the people above us were feckless or actively venal, merely kind of dumb or actually casually cruel. It quickly emerged that they didn't really have anything in mind at all, at least where we were concerned.)

19.12.17 The Atlantic, *The Miseducation of the American Boy*, Peggy Orenstein <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/01/the-miseducation-of-the-american-boy/603046/> (Today many parents are unsure of how to raise a boy, what sort of masculinity to encourage in their sons. But as I learned from talking with boys themselves, the culture of adolescence, which fuses hyperrationality with domination, sexual conquest, and a glorification of male violence, fills the void. Boys routinely confided that they felt denied—by male peers, girlfriends, the media, teachers, coaches, and especially their fathers—the full spectrum of human expression. Rob, an 18-year-old from New Jersey in his freshman year at a North Carolina college, said his father would tell him to “man up” when he was struggling in school or with baseball. “That’s why I never talk to anybody about my problems.” “It’s not like my dad is some alcoholic, emotionally unavailable asshole with a pulse,” said a college sophomore in Southern California. “He’s a normal, loving, charismatic guy who’s not at all intimidating.” But “there’s a block there. There’s a hesitation, even though I don’t like to admit that. A hesitation to talk about ... anything, really.)

19.12.17 The Bulwark, *Trump Is Forever*, Jonathan Last <https://thebulwark.com/trump-is-forever/> (Either a year from now or five years from now, Donald Trump will step away from the presidency. Raise your hand if you think he will retire to Mar-a-Lago and delete his Twitter account. It seems much more likely—maybe inevitable—that once he leaves office, Trump will continue to tweet and call in to cable news shows. Perhaps he will even attend political rallies, which is the part of the job he seems to enjoy most. There is no reason to think—none at all—that he will discontinue his penchant for weighing in on American politics on an hourly basis. There is every reason to think that he will vigorously attack any Republican who was disloyal to him during his administration. Or retroactively criticizes his tenure. Or runs in opposition to one of his preferred candidates. Or jeopardizes any of his many and varied interests. What this means is that there is no way for a Trump-skeptical Republican to simply wait out the Trump years. There will be no “life after Trump” because Trump is going to be the head boss of Republican politics for the rest of his days. ... When you look at Trump’s administration it is clear that he sees the GOP not as a political party which exists as a vehicle to execute

policy visions, but an asset. And assets exist to be controlled and passed down to one's heirs. In such a world, the Republican party is a kingdom and GOP politicians are mere feudal lords who may only set up their own fiefdoms at the pleasure of the sovereign. Or, if you'd prefer a less benign metaphor, the Republican party is now a family-controlled syndicate which will run the business until either a rival gang takes them down or the feds catch up with them.)

19.12.17 FiveThirtyEight, *What Unites Republicans May Be Changing. Same With Democrats*, Perry Bacon Jr. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/what-unites-republicans-may-be-changing-same-with-democrats/> (America is to some extent in a partisan civil war, and we essentially have three competing views on how to end it: A Biden/Bush/Kristol style approach that downplays divisions among America's various identity groups and reaches for more compromises; a Sanders/Warren approach of resetting America along more equal lines; and a Trump/Barr vision that is decidedly Judeo-Christian and favors maintaining traditional norms over upsetting them to expand equality.)

19.12.16 New Yorker, *Hong Kong's Protest Movement and the Fight for the City's Soul*, Jiayang Fan <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/12/16/hong-kongs-protest-movement-and-the-fight-for-the-citys-soul> (The man was what's known as a "parent," one of a loose coalition of older professionals who help ferry protesters around the city and provide supplies and other assistance. He was an academic, and his apartment was filled with genteel clutter—calligraphy scrolls on the wall, rosewood furniture, a grand piano, and sheet music covering every surface. He spoke very softly, as if he were sighing. When I asked where he was from, he embarked on a long answer about his family's origins on the mainland and his studies in the United States. In its complex indeterminacy, it seemed a very Hong Kong response. The professor hadn't met No Name before now, but all summer he'd been giving people shelter, meals, and a place to store equipment. Earlier in the evening, a former student had brought some members of his group to the professor's home. One of them had an injured arm, and the professor called up a physician friend of his to come and tend to the wound. No one dares go to the E.R., the professor said. The protesters don't know the allegiances of the hospital staff, and worry about informers. "I feel so helpless, so this is all I can do," he said.)

19.12.10 (19.02.26) The Atlantic, *The 'Hidden Mechanisms' That Help Those Born Rich to Excel in Elite Jobs*, Daniel Laurison <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-hidden-mechanisms-that-help-those-born-rich-to-excel-in-elite-jobs> (Laurison: I think that a lot of people, on some level what they think they're doing when they sponsor young co-workers is spotting talent—they called it "talent-mapping" in the accounting firm we studied. But a lot of people we talked to were also able to reflect and say, "Part of why I was excited about that person, probably, is because they reminded me of a younger version of myself." The word we use in sociology is homophily—people like people who are like themselves. One of the big ideas of the book, for me, is it's really hard for any given individual in any given situation to fully parse what's actual talent or intelligence or merit, and what's, Gosh, that person reminds me of me, or I feel an affinity for them because we can talk about skiing or our trips to the Bahamas. Part of it is also that what your criteria are for a good worker often comes from what you think makes you a good worker.)

19.12.09 New Yorker, *Blood and Soil in Narendra Modi's India*, Dexter Filkins <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/12/09/blood-and-soil-in-narendra-modis-india> (To many observers, Modi's success stemmed from his willingness to play on profound resentments, which for decades had been considered offensive to voice in polite society. Even though India's Muslims were typically poorer than their fellow-citizens, many Hindus felt that they had been unjustly favored by the central government. In private, Hindus sniped that the Muslims had too many children and that they supported terrorism. The Gandhi-Nehru experiment had made Muslims feel unusually secure in India, and partly as a result there has been very little

radicalization, outside Kashmir; still, many Hindus considered them a constant threat. “Modi became a hero for all the Hindus of India,” Nirjhari Sinha, a scientist in Gujarat who investigated the riots, told me. “That is what people tell me, at parties, at dinners. People genuinely feel that Muslims are terrorists—and it is because of Modi that Muslims are finally under control.” ... “Modi’s biggest support comes from Gujarati-Americans,” she told me. “I said, I want to meet the most influential people who can tell me the Gujarat story—who will tell me the secret sauce of what Mr. Modi has done in the past fifteen years.” ... Amit Shah, Modi’s deputy, told a group of election workers that the Party’s social-media networks were an unstoppable force. “Do you understand what I’m saying?” he said. “We are capable of delivering any message we want to the public—whether sweet or sour, true or fake.” For many, Modi’s reelection suggested that he had uncovered a terrible secret at the heart of Indian society: by deploying vicious sectarian rhetoric, the country’s leader could persuade Hindus to give him nearly unchecked power. ... But we are now reverting to what we always wanted to be, which is to pummel minorities, to push them into a corner, to show them their places, to conquer Kashmir, to ruin the media, and to make corporations servants of the state. And all of this under a heavy resurgence of Hinduism. India is becoming the country it has always wanted to be.”)

19.12.06 (18.10.24) The Cut, *The Best Time to Go to Bed is 8:45*, Katie Heaney

<https://www.thecut.com/2018/10/an-argument-for-going-to-bed-super-early.html> (I know. You’re upset, and probably embarrassed for me. That’s fine. As a teenager it would have bothered me if you thought I was a loser with no social life and a toddler’s sleep schedule, but as a grown adult, I am simply too tired to care. You know how people say “Nothing good happens after 2 a.m.,” or sometimes, “Nothing good happens after midnight”? Too late. I say: Nothing good happens. Haha, no. What I mean is: Nothing good happens after you’ve been up for 16 hours. Sure, you can make yourself stay up well beyond the point at which you start yawning, but then again, why? You’re still letting FOMO rule your life? In 2018? Go to bed!)

19.12.06 Vox, *A former Republican Congress member explains what happened to his party*, David Jolly

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/12/6/20993403/impeachment-hearing-trump-congress-david-jolly>

(I think this is what the party is. I don’t think we will see a reversal the day Trump leaves office. I’m curious who follows Trump because the politics aren’t going to change so dramatically. I don’t think it’s Mike Pence’s party when Trump’s gone. Anyone who wants to win in this party will have to appease the Trumpist base one way or the other. And this whole impeachment saga is showing us that it’s not just Trump and Trumpism, it’s also Congress. I mean, Republicans in Congress right now are tearing at the fabric of the Constitution every bit as much as Donald Trump’s actions, because this is now their responsibility. It’s not their responsibility to defend Trump, but that’s what they’re prioritizing. And they’re undermining the institution of Congress every bit as much as Trump. ... I think the Lindsey Graham we’re seeing today is the real Lindsey Graham. This is a political opportunist who will flop with the winds and do whatever it takes to serve his own self-interest. That’s who he is. ... The Republican Party is in long-term trouble. The demographics of the nation are shifting away from hardcore Republican conservatism and they’re basically doubling down on that while relying on these rigged elements of the system to help them keep power. That’s not a good place to be in. The reason Trump won was because he brought in populism, not conservatism. I don’t see who follows that. Who’s the populist in the Republican Party that comes next? I don’t see one. I think it’s a return to conservatism and largely white male flyover state conservatism, which statistically just isn’t going to put Republicans in office a decade from now.)

19.12.05 NYT, *Working at Equinox: ‘It’s Very Hunger Games’*, David Yaffe-Bellany

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/05/business/equinox-trainers-hunger-games.html> (While the gym offers a well-regarded professional development program, as well as health insurance and other employee benefits that few fitness chains provide, many Equinox trainers, especially beginners, work exhausting schedules. Some say they can spend 70 or 80 hours a week at the gym — many of them unpaid — hustling to recruit

clients, waiting between workouts, planning routines and conducting training sessions. In the gym's draining environment, new trainers frequently last only a few months, unable to cope with the long hours and low starting pay, interviews show. ... "It's very 'Hunger Games'-style," said Alexander Miotti, a trainer who worked at a Los Angeles Equinox until this summer, when he left after a dispute with his managers. "They're like, 'We want you to have a really nice work-life balance.' But at the same time, 'How do you expect to be successful if you're not here for 12 hours a day?'"

19.12.05 NYT, *I Worked for Alex Jones. I Regret It.*, Josh Owens

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/05/magazine/alex-jones-infowars.html> (But it wasn't the politics that initially drew me in. Jones had a way of imbuing the world with mystery, adding a layer of cinematic verisimilitude that caught my attention. Suddenly, I was no longer a bored kid attending an overpriced art school. I was Fox Mulder combing through the X-Files, Rod Serling opening a door to the Twilight Zone, even Rosemary Woodhouse convinced that the neighbors were members of a ritualistic cult. I believed that the world was strategically run by a shadowy, organized cabal, and that Jones was a hero for exposing it. I had my limits. I can't say I ever believed his avowed theory that Sandy Hook was a staged event to push for gun control; to Jones, everything was a "false flag." I didn't believe that Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama smelled like sulfur because of their proximity to hell or that Planned Parenthood was run by "Nazi baby killers." But it was easy to brush off these fever dreams as eccentricities and excesses — not the heart of the Alex Jones operation but mere diversions. Once I started working there, however, it became obvious that one was impossible to separate one from the other. ... Sure, there was a time when I shared his anger. In fact, I was still angry. But this is where we differed: I wasn't angry with others; I was angry with myself. And once I realized that, it was easier to walk away. When I left, I tried to put myself in his shoes, to figure out why he said and did the things he did. At times I saw a different side to Jones, one that was vulnerable, desiring validation and acceptance. Then he would say something so vile and callous it became impossible to look past it.)

19.12.05 (19.02.12) The Atlantic, *How Fancy Water Bottles Became a 21st-Century Status Symbol*, Amanda Mull <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2019/02/luxury-water-bottles/582595/> (When those factors are taken together, it's hard to be surprised that so many \$50 water bottles exist, or that people have snapped them up in droves. On a certain level, a nice water bottle fulfills its promise in the way few things do. They hold water. They stay cold. They look nice on your desk. They don't leave an unsightly sweat ring on your nightstand. For people such as Mongeon, the art teacher, they look like things that are owned by people who know what they're doing. For a lot of people, they spark a little bit of joy in the otherwise mundane routine of work, exercise, and personal hygiene. For a generation with less expendable income than its parents', a nice bottle pays for itself with a month of consistent use and lets you feel like you're being proactive about your health and the environment. A container of any kind, whether it's a rented storage unit or a decorative basket, promises order and control. Marie Kondo's Netflix show about organizing American homes in disarray was a hit for a reason: There's a small amount of serenity in finding the right vessel and filling it with the right thing. Consumer choices might not be an effective solution to structural problems such as pollution, but it's nice to feel like you're making ethical choices. If nothing else, Millennials can buy the best water bottle they can afford and try their best to stay hydrated.)

19.12.03 NYT, *America's Red State Death Trip*, Paul Krugman

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/02/opinion/life-expectancy-united-states.html> (At this point, blue-state residents can expect to live more than four years longer than their red-state counterparts. ... Beyond that, there has been a striking divergence in behavior and lifestyle that must be affecting mortality. For example, the prevalence of obesity has soared all across America since 1990, but obesity rates are significantly higher in red states. ... Conservative figures like William Barr, the attorney general, look at rising mortality in America and attribute it to the collapse of traditional values — a collapse they attribute, in turn, to the evil machinations

of “militant secularists.” The secularist assault on traditional values, Barr claims, lies behind “soaring suicide rates,” rising violence and “a deadly drug epidemic.” But European nations, which are far more secularist than we are, haven’t seen a comparable rise in deaths of despair and an American-style decline in life expectancy. And even within America these evils are concentrated in states that voted for Trump, and have largely bypassed the more secular blue states. So something bad is definitely happening to American society. But the conservative diagnosis of that problem is wrong — dead wrong.)

19.11.29 WaPo, *We need a major redesign of life*, Laura Carstensen

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/we-need-a-major-redesign-of-life/2019/11/29/a63daab2-1086-11ea-9cd7-a1becbc82f5e_story.html (We agreed that longevity demands rethinking of all stages of life, not just old age. To thrive in an age of rapid knowledge transfer, children not only need reading, math and computer literacy, but they also need to learn to think creatively and not hold on to “facts” too tightly. They’ll need to find joy in unlearning and relearning. Teens could take breaks from high school and take internships in workplaces that intrigue them. Education wouldn’t end in youth but rather be ever-present and take many forms outside of classrooms, from micro-degrees to traveling the world. Work, too, must change. There’s every reason to expect more zigzagging in and out of the labor force — especially by employees who are caring for young children or elderly parents — and more participation by workers over 60. There is good reason to think we will work longer, but we can improve work quality with shorter workweeks, flexible scheduling and frequent “retirements.” Financing longevity requires major rethinking. Rather than saving ever-larger pots of money for the end of life, we could pool risks in new ways. Generations may share wealth earlier than traditional bequests; we can start savings accounts at birth and allow young adults to work earlier so that compound interest can work in their favor. Maintaining physical fitness from the beginning to end of life will be paramount. Getting children outside, encouraging sports, reducing the time we sit, and spending more time walking and moving will greatly improve individual lives.)

19.11.28 (19.04.01) LAT, *I’ll never be a regular at Koreatown’s OB Bear, but I’m glad to be a guest*, Frank Shyong <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ob-bear-koreatown-dodgers-20180401-htmstory.html> (But Park did understand why I feel this way. OB Bear has always been a Korean hangout, and that’s important to the owners and the staff, he said. It was founded in 1988, the last year that the Dodgers won the World Series — or, for Park, the year that the Olympics were held in South Korea. Their regulars are a close circle of first-generation immigrants, said Park, who has worked there for two decades. Many of them do business with the bar. Their electrician comes in twice a week, as does their repairman and their contractor. Lately he’s been seeing the sons and daughters of regulars bring in their non-Korean friends. For the owner’s son, Justin Lee, OB Bear is a tight-knit community that has shaped his Korean American identity. Lee was educated in largely white schools, but he grew up playing on the bar’s floors. In many ways, he said, the bar taught him Korean customs — to use formal language with more conservative older customers, to accept a customer’s money with two hands, and to immediately bring older women water for tea.)

19.11.28 NYT, *Modern Black Friday Work Force: Postal Clerk, Influencer, Robot*, Michael Corkery

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/28/business/retail-workers-black-friday.html> (“At one time, they thought the internet was actually going to kill the Postal Service, but it’s been very helpful because of the way people order packages online now,” he said. Mr. Wilson’s post office will operate four or five service windows — up from its typical two — between Thanksgiving weekend and Dec. 24, he said. Sending packages to Amazon is a shift from handling letters but Mr. Wilson is not sentimental about it. “I don’t really miss it at all,” he said. “You just adjust to what the change is.”)

19.11.27 NYT, *Why I Left ‘Knives Out’ With Emotional Whiplash*, Monica Castillo

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/27/opinion/knives-out-movie.html> (After viewing “Knives Out,” I became

visibly upset as I tried to explain to a group of mostly white friends that I felt as though I had seen an entirely different movie from the one they were raving about. I've been in some of the situations Marta endures — being asked to prove my citizenship, feeling unsafe speaking Spanish — and the movie brought up so many of these unpleasant memories repeatedly to little narrative effect. Instead of enjoying the twists and turns of an entertaining film, I left the theater with emotional whiplash caused by what felt like empty virtue signaling. ... The problem with using shock or repetition to drive the point home is that it can signal to those who are meant to feel visible that the creator doesn't actually have them in mind. That alienation can make us feel like outsiders, but we're in the audience, just like you, and this art can be made for us, too.)

19.11.27 LAT, *I am not afraid of Thanksgiving dinner, I just hate it*, Mary McNamara

<https://www.latimes.com/food/story/2019-11-27/thanksgiving-dinner-tyranny> (I hate Thanksgiving dinner because I am the adult child of an alcoholic and it is the event I most associate with the emotional damage that implies. I can make Thanksgiving blindfolded because I started doing it when I was 9 or 10. ... Over the years I have acknowledged and silenced many voices in my head that told me I could fix this by doing that, but way down deep, in the dark inner recesses of my neurosis, there's a gleaming, steaming Thanksgiving dinner. "You could do it," that dinner whispers. "You should do it. And then everything will be all right." So I don't really hate Thanksgiving; I hate my own unquenchable desire to shun help, appoint myself fixer-in-charge and then kill myself attempting some version of perfection that doesn't fix the imperfect things in life anyway.)

19.11.27, NYT, *After 240 Years and 7 Generations, Forced to Sell the Family Farm*, Corey Kilgannon

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/27/nyregion/hull-o-farm-catskills.html> ("If Frank stops working, he feels he's letting his relatives down and that the whole family line is broken," Ms. Hull said. "I know it doesn't make sense because they're dead, but you feel like you have a commitment to carry on what every one of them has done successfully in the past." Mr. Hull nodded and said: "It's your heritage and you hate to give it up. I'm stubborn. I don't like to say uncle.")

19.11.26 WaPo, *E-books at libraries are a huge hit, leading to long waits, reader hacks and worried publishers*, Heather Kelly

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2019/11/26/e-books-libraries-are-huge-hit-leading-long-waits-read-er-hacks-worried-publishers> (Library e-book waits, now often longer than for hard copies, have prompted some to take their memberships to a new extreme, collecting library cards or card numbers to enable them to find the rarest or most popular books, with the shortest wait. ... A library typically pays between \$40 and \$60 to license a new e-book adult title, which it can then loan out to one patron at a time, mimicking how physical loans work. Each publisher offers different payment models. Under one, a library only has an e-book for two years or 52 checkouts, whichever comes first. Another agreement covers 26 checkouts per book. ... "It's a tremendous amount of work for our collection librarians to manage the e-book collection, as titles are expiring every day and they have to decide to repurchase or to let it go," said Jennifer Tormey, who manages technical services at the Des Moines Public Library. ... Librarians say the patrons most likely to be hurt by Macmillan's rule are people like D.V. Thorn, a voracious reader who is unable to leave their house and is mostly bed-bound due to disabilities. Thorn has read and listened to around 800 books so far this year through e-lending apps, and uses multiple area library accounts for the shortest hold times.)

19.11.25 Vox, *HGTV's most famous couple turned their hometown into a shopping destination. Will more places follow suit?*, Amy McCarthy

<https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2019/11/25/20974660/chip-joanna-gaines-magnolia-waco-hgtv-fixer-upper> (Both Joanna Gaines and Ree Drummond hawk a specific brand of good ol' days nostalgia for a past that never really existed, and they are both really good at what they do. By making it look so simple, all homemade biscuits and perfectly-clean white walls, it's easy enough for Gaines and Drummond to sell the products that

they endorse to women. Their message of easy, breezy farm life is seductive, communicated in rustic serving platters and cozy blankets — by the end of my trip, the only thing standing between me and a set of bottle-brush Christmas trees in muted earth tones was a line for the check-out that looked to be about 20 people deep.)

19.11.25 Slate, “*What Does Your Husband Think of the Book?*”, Taffy Brodesser-Akner <https://slate.com/human-interest/2019/11/taffy-brodesser-akner-divorce-husband-novel.html> (This goes into my calculus about marriage as well, though. I have a witness for my life, someone who knows the answers to the questions I haven’t considered; someone who forgives me for all the sins I don’t even know I’m committing. There are other questions that come up in these readings, and they are about whether we’re all doomed. They are about whether my book is too grim. But I don’t see how. There’s my husband in the corner, who’s married to someone always wondering just how solid the ground beneath her feet is, and who always reassures her that it’s good. There’s my ring on my finger. There are all my friends, rising up from the ashes of their old marriages and seeking out new bodies to bond to. What is more romantic—more optimistic and life-affirming—than the fact that we know how all of this might end and still we continue to try?)

19.11.24 WaPo, *How workaholics drive inequality*, Robert J. Samuelson https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/how-workaholics-drive-inequality/2019/11/24/49c9862e-0d67-11ea-bd9d-c628fd48b3a0_story.html (The opportunities were strongest among a minority of workers who could take advantage of digital technologies. About 75 percent of Americans use the Internet, report Leamer and Fuentes. But only about 16 percent of full-time workers over 25 have advanced degrees, while 26 percent have bachelor’s degrees, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. ... The present trends, if continued, do not bode well for the future. If the labor force splits between well-paid workaholics and everyone else, there is bound to be a backlash — there already is — among people who feel they’re working hard but can’t find the results in their paychecks. But remember: There is a conflict between the flexibility and freedom that we want and the greater inequality that we don’t.)

19.11.24 Nat Rev, *Who’s in Charge Here?*, Kevin Williamson <https://www.nationalreview.com/2019/11/donald-trump-presidency-whos-in-charge-here/> (The Trump administration’s foreign-policy operation is at odds with itself. ... The Trump administration cannot even get itself aligned with the Trump administration, and the great negotiator cannot even come to an agreement with the people who work for him. And that is on President Trump, not on the “deep state” or Democrats or the “swamp” or anybody else. In that sense, Trump’s fundamental problem is not that he has exerted too much influence over U.S. foreign policy, but too little. Those who angrily insist that it is the president and not those meddling bureaucratic who is in charge of foreign policy are begging the question. Who is in charge here? Donald Trump is supposed to be, but it is far from obvious that he is.)

19.11.24 (18.06.18) Scientific American, *Could Multiple Personality Disorder Explain Life, the Universe and Everything?*, Bernardo Kastrup <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/could-multiple-personality-disorder-explain-life-the-universe-and-everything> (And here is where dissociation comes in. We know empirically from DID that consciousness can give rise to many operationally distinct centers of concurrent experience, each with its own personality and sense of identity. Therefore, if something analogous to DID happens at a universal level, the one universal consciousness could, as a result, give rise to many alters with private inner lives like yours and ours. As such, we may all be alters—dissociated personalities—of universal consciousness. Moreover, as we’ve seen earlier, there is something dissociative processes look like in the brain of a patient with DID. So, if some form of universal-level DID happens, the alters of universal consciousness must also have an extrinsic appearance. We posit that this appearance is life itself: metabolizing organisms are simply what universal-level dissociative

processes look like. Idealism is a tantalizing view of the nature of reality, in that it elegantly circumvents two arguably insoluble problems: the hard problem of consciousness and the combination problem. Insofar as dissociation offers a path to explaining how, under idealism, one universal consciousness can become many individual minds, we may now have at our disposal an unprecedentedly coherent and empirically grounded way of making sense of life, the universe and everything.)

19.11.23, WaPo, *When a deep red town's only grocery closed, city hall opened its own store. Just don't call it 'socialism.'*, Antonia Noori Farzan
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/11/22/baldwin-florida-food-desert-city-owned-grocery-store/> (By definition, a collectively owned, government-run enterprise like the Baldwin Market is inherently socialist. But Lynch, who has a nonpartisan position but governs a town where 68 percent of residents voted for Donald Trump in 2016, doesn't see it that way. From his point of view, the town is just doing what it's supposed to do: providing services to residents who already pay enough in taxes. "We take the water out of the ground, and we pump it to your house and charge you," he told The Post. "So what's the difference with a grocery store?" ... What's promising, he and others agree, is that communities struggling to draw a grocery store have another alternative they can consider. Matt Bruenig, the founder of the People's Policy Project, a socialist think tank, likens it to having a "public option" for health care. "The idea that a municipality should have to beg private companies to provide basic goods and services to its people is absurd," he said. "And being able to say 'we will just do it ourselves' is very powerful.")

19.11.22 NYT, *The Real Cost of Tweeting About My Kids*, Agnes Callard
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/22/opinion/sunday/social-media-kids.html> (The immense appeal of this free-form socializing lies in the way it makes one a master of one's own time — but it cannot happen without a place. All that data has to sit somewhere so that people can freely access it whenever they wish. Data storage is the loss of control by which we secure social control: Facebook is our faithless mistress's leaky inbox. When we alienate our identities as text data, and put that data "out there" to be read by anyone who wanders by, we are putting ourselves into the interpretive hands of those who have no bonds or obligations or agreements with us, people with whom we are, quite literally, prevented from seeing "eye to eye." People we cannot trust.)

19.11.22 NYT, *The Life and Death of the Local Hardware Store*, Tim Wu
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/22/opinion/sunday/small-business-economy.html> (Here we can see how an ideology of convenience is reshaping the economy. Ordering things like tape or bolts online is rarely cheaper or faster than popping down to the local hardware store — not to mention the wasteful packaging — but many of us do it anyhow. Clicking on a product from the comfort of your couch seems more convenient — and that impression of ease can have more influence on our behavior than better service, quicker acquisition and lower prices. Even more damaging than the competition from Amazon, according to Mr. Feygin, was a huge rent increase. He says he faced a near-doubling of rent, from about \$6,000 to \$10,800 per month, for his 600 square feet. Property taxes, which are tied to property values, also rose sharply. It was too much. Competition from Amazon and a rent increase might seem like distinct phenomena, but they are two sides of the same coin. Both reflect the transformative consolidation and centralization of the American economy since the 1990s, which have made the economy less open to individual entrepreneurship. Amazon represents the increasing monopolization of retail; the high rents are a symptom of the enormous concentration of wealth in a handful of coastal cities like New York, San Francisco and Washington. Both phenomena contribute to the same regrettable outcome: In today's economy, returns on investment have shifted away from the individuals like Mr. Feygin who take personal risks. Instead, wealth is being routed to large middlemen, national monopolies, property owners and shareholders.)

19.11.22 WaPo, *Trump's GOP defenders cannot be shamed. It's time to try this instead*, Greg Sargent
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/11/22/trumps-gop-defenders-cannot-be-shamed-its-time-democrats-try-this-instead/> (Rather, the point is we need a much more fundamental change in our underlying treatment of the moment. We need to approach it from the premise that Trump's defenders are not "gettable" because they are accomplices in the whole scheme -- and forthrightly describe what's happening in kind.)

19.11.22 Business Insider, *I paid \$300 an hour for the VIP experience at Disneyland, and it made me realize how wealth has transformed the American Dream*, Christopher Varelas
<https://www.insider.com/how-money-became-dangerous-wealth-changed-american-dream> (The price for "special consideration" at Stanford is said to be \$25 million. "While a donation does not guarantee your son or daughter admission," goes the typical line, "it does ensure that the admissions office will pay close attention to his or her application." Students who are admitted with the help of a large gift now have a name: development admits. While upsetting, these are perfectly legal ways to grease the skids.)

19.11.20 NYT, *Frozen in Place: Americans Are Moving at the Lowest Rate on Record*, Sabrina Tavernise
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/20/us/american-workers-moving-states-.html> (Just 9.8 percent of Americans moved in the year ending in March, according to the newly released data. That was the smallest share since the Census Bureau started tracking it in 1947, and the first time it had fallen below 10 percent, said William Frey, senior demographer at the Brookings Institution. ... One result has been a geographic unevenness. Decades ago, less wealthy parts of the country tended to be the ones that attracted the most new residents, because lower rents and wages there drew in businesses, and people were more likely to move to where jobs were. But the economy is now less flexible, with prosperity clustered in larger cities and with businesses and people moving less. "It used to be that poorer places grew faster, but that's gone," said Jay Shambaugh, an economics professor at George Washington University. "This is a really different economy than it used to be. It's one where places that struggle continue to struggle.")

19.11.19 NYT, *The Divide in Yakima Is the Divide in America*, Dionne Searcey
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/19/us/politics/yakima-washington-racial-differences-2020-elections.html> (Ms. Guthridge is a white minority in the mostly Latino district. She has lived in her house for seven years, and shares it with a Chihuahua-Yorkie mix named Miss Topsy Two. An American flag is propped up out front, and the yard is surrounded by a chain-link fence that she sometimes padlocks shut. She said the neighborhood was rough when she first moved in, but lately, things have been calmer. Her Spanish-speaking neighbors bring her plates of food when they barbecue. With her push for better lighting and new curb cuts, Ms. Gutiérrez has made the neighborhood safer. Ms. Guthridge said she regrets yelling the taunt. "I want to forget that. I really didn't mean that," she said. "I've done quite a bit of growing up since then. I understand people more. And I am real sorry.")

19.11.19 NYT, *They're Blue Collar, and They Think Biden Is an Average Joe*, Katie Glueck
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/19/us/politics/joe-biden-working-class.html> (In dozens of interviews, from parades and union rallies to black churches and political picnics, working-class Democrats who support Mr. Biden explained their views in practical terms: they know and trust the Scranton native from his long tenure as a Delaware senator and as Barack Obama's vice president, they find his incremental policy proposals realistic and they think he can win. "I liked what him and Barack did together," said Doris Stuekerjuergen, who worked at a fireplace factory and attended an October event with Mr. Biden in this small rural community of West Point. "Hopefully he leads us back to where we were. The world we live in now is pretty scary." ... Mr. Schaitberger said these voters want to feel "that they are connected with someone who wants to be president of the United States but isn't, if you will, looking down on them or preaching down to them.")

19.11.18 NYT, *'No One Believes Anything': Voters Worn Out by a Fog of Political News*, Sabrina Tavernise <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/18/us/polls-media-fake-news.html> (There is a transgressive thrill in strong leaders thumbing their nose at the facts. "We slightly miss the point if we don't understand how much pleasure their supporters derive from this," he said. "Did he really say that? You can't stop watching him. It's partly about power. But it's also anarchic, and there's a weird freedom in that." Mr. Trump's approach does not appeal to everyone, though, even in his own party. "I do not support this brand of politics — any time there is any type of controversy, you just flatly deny it and you do it over and over until people are exhausted and move on," said Mr. Memory, the computer programmer. Mr. Memory, a registered Republican, said that was why he did not vote for Mr. Trump.)

19.11.18 The Guardian, *'Your throat hurts. Your brain hurts': the secret life of the audiobook star, Tim Dowling* <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/nov/16/throat-hurts-brain-hurts-secret-life-of-audiobook-stars-tim-dowling> (Above all, a celebrity may not be prepared for what an exhausting experience recording is. Williams says, until you've voiced an audiobook, you can't understand "how utterly poleaxed you feel by the end of the day. Your throat hurts. Your back hurts. Your legs hurt. Your brain hurts." Everyone I speak to agrees that it's also a lonely business, listening to your own voice all day, with only the occasional interruption from someone telling you you've made a mistake.)

19.11.16 Vox, *With impeachment, America's epistemic crisis has arrived*, David Roberts <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/11/16/20964281/impeachment-hearings-trump-america-epistemic-crisis> (The machine was primed and waiting for someone like Trump. Now, with his erratic and indefensible conduct, he is accelerating the breach, pushing the right into ever-more cult-like behavior, principles laid aside one after another in service of power. That is what a tribalist like Trump wants: for communication and compromise across tribal lines to become impossible, so that loyalty becomes the only measure and everything is reduced to pure struggle for dominance. If he makes it through impeachment unscathed, he and the right will have learned once and for all that facts and evidence have no hold on them. Both "sides" have free rein to choose the facts and evidence that suit them. Only power matters.)

19.11.12 The Atlantic, *How America Ends*, Yoni Appelbaum <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/12/how-america-ends/600757/> (Whether the American political system today can endure without fracturing further, Daniel Ziblatt's research suggests, may depend on the choices the center-right now makes. If the center-right decides to accept some electoral defeats and then seeks to gain adherents via argumentation and attraction—and, crucially, eschews making racial heritage its organizing principle—then the GOP can remain vibrant. Its fissures will heal and its prospects will improve, as did those of the Democratic Party in the 1920s, after Wilson. Democracy will be maintained. But if the center-right, surveying demographic upheaval and finding the prospect of electoral losses intolerable, casts its lot with Trumpism and a far right rooted in ethno-nationalism, then it is doomed to an ever smaller proportion of voters, and risks revisiting the ugliest chapters of our history. ... The stakes in this battle on the right are much higher than the next election. If Republican voters can't be convinced that democratic elections will continue to offer them a viable path to victory, that they can thrive within a diversifying nation, and that even in defeat their basic rights will be protected, then Trumpism will extend long after Trump leaves office—and our democracy will suffer for it.)

19.11.12 NYT, *Where Civility Is a Motto, a School Integration Fight Turns Bitter*, Dana Goldstein <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/12/us/howard-county-school-redistricting.html> (After a protest last month outside the Board of Education headquarters, parents streamed into the meeting room and stepped up one after another to the microphone. There had already been half a dozen similar meetings, with over 500 speakers, the overwhelming majority of them in opposition. They were Democrats, they said, consultants to

social justice nonprofits, teachers, veterans' advocates. They compared the freedom to choose a public school to the freedom to choose an abortion. If the redistricting plan moved forward, they said, students might die in car crashes driving to campuses further away. They might turn to suicide because of the increased stress of longer travel times. ... The strength of the opposition has caused some Wilde Lake families to question whether redistricting is a good idea, recalling the skepticism that communities of color sometimes have toward integration as white resistance persists over decades. Amaiya Sancho, a Wilde Lake junior, had the sense that "a majority" of her classmates did not want River Hill students bused to Wilde Lake. She wrestled with the pros and cons of the plan. "Diversity is something that is important to me," she said. "But I don't want people in our school who feel like they don't want to be around a group of kids because of the way they look or how much money they have.")

19.11.11 Vanity Fair, "You're Essentially a Prisoner": Why Do Dubai's Princesses Keep Trying to Escape?, Vanessa Grigoriadis <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2019/11/why-do-dubais-princesses-keep-trying-to-escape> (In Dubai's royal family, for women, life may be stricter. "You have the fancy title of being a princess, and of course you have people waiting on you [hand and foot], but you're essentially a prisoner," says an Arab dissident. "You're not supposed to socialize. You don't have a normal life." Though some women in Dubai's royal family are educated abroad and have public profiles, others simply bear children, spend their monthly stipend, and remain quiet. "If you want to be in favor, you buy into what the king does. If you're not, you're pushed aside and nobody really cares about you—you're not a high-profile monarchy anyway," says a source with knowledge of Dubai's royals.)

19.11.11 The Bulwark, *The Alt-Right Turns on the GOP Establishment*, Matthew Sheffield <https://thebulwark.com/the-alt-right-turns-on-the-gop-establishment/> (After almost two years in the wilderness and with numerous activists facing lawsuits, arrests, and removal from the mainstream internet, white nationalist activists have regained their energy by focusing on undermining the new, Trumpian conservative establishment. Fuentes and his allies are portraying themselves as "true conservatives" who are fighting against a corrupt and secular GOP elite that cares more about billionaires and Israel than the millions of white Christians who voted for them. Even Pepe, who once served as the alt-right's amphibian mascot, has been replaced with Groyper, an obese cartoon frog that has also become the term by which Fuentes fans refer to themselves.)

19.11.10 LAT, *'Go back to California': Wave of newcomers fuels backlash in Boise*, Maria L. La Ganga <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-11-10/go-back-to-california-wave-of-newcomers-fuels-backlash-in-boise> (Newcomers are moving here for a better quality of life, but "the very thing they're leaving in — we know where — Seattle, California, Austin," they're bringing to Boise, she said. "What I'd like to see is what can we do for the people that already live here that have been here for a long time." ... "It's really, really hard to swallow," he said, "when somebody sells their house in California for \$700,000, comes here, buys any house they want in cash and still has money in the bank. "Their kids get to go to college," he continued. "They drive nice cars. And they get to enjoy everything we built over the years. We don't get to enjoy it, because we're working 40 hours a week and doing craft shows and doing yard sales.")

19.11.09 WaPo, *'I'm gonna lose everything': A farm family struggles to recover after rising debt pushes a husband to suicide*, Annie Gowen <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/11/09/im-gonna-lose-everything/?arc404=true> ("I feel like it's Dad telling you guys to have a good day at school," she said. On the way in, she stopped to take photos of the kids posed in front of the rock carved with a verse from Proverbs outside the school's front door, a school tradition. She walked Kolbe to his new classroom and headed to the gym, where the kids, their parents and teachers would gather for an opening assembly. It was empty except for a small ensemble of musicians with keyboards

and an electric guitar practicing the morning's song program, a Christian pop song called "Reckless Love." She sat down alone under gold and black sports banners, alone in the bleachers, and shut her eyes, letting the music wash over her. Then she started to cry, her shoulders shaking as she tried to hold back powerful sobs.)

19.11.07 The Bulwark, The Future of Rural Republicans, Matthew Stokes

<https://thebulwark.com/the-future-of-rural-republicans/> (Republican candidates romanticize our rural heritage in myriad ways; in some districts, getting elected all but requires driving a truck or toting a gun in your ads. Yet rural America is bleeding population. According to a recent analysis, more than a third of rural counties are "experiencing protracted and significant population loss." And when rural communities produce high-quality students, those students rarely come back home. After several years in a college town or urban core spent earning a postgraduate degree in law, medicine, or some other professional field, rural America, where a craft beer or housemade pasta is nowhere to be found, loses a great deal of its appeal. The romance of the Wendell Berry novels, which I love, hardly reflects reality. As Judy Garland once sang, "How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm, after they've seen Pa-ree?" ... A national popular vote would drastically alter that equilibrium, rendering rural states less influential than they already are. It would be unfair to a significant number of Americans, effectively rendering them second-class citizens. ... If Republicans are to survive after the Trump years come to an end, they must expand their voter base beyond rural areas and back into the suburbs. And not just suburbs alone; the GOP must make inroads among the self-sorted cognitive elite that is slowly but surely slipping out of its coalition. The best way to do that is by rejecting the politics of cultural resentment and embracing market-oriented solutions to problems like trade, health care, education, and retirement.)

19.11.06 NYT, Wait a Minute. How Can They Afford That When I Can't?, Alina Tugend

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/06/your-money/financial-security-envy.html> ("Sharon (not her real name), who lives in Westchester County, N.Y., has relatives who have paid her children's full college tuition and give the family additional help. She doesn't like sharing that with people, "a little bit because I'm protecting the image of my husband that he rolls with the big boys," she said. "And I also feel really lucky and it doesn't feel fair. I'm not comfortable, but I'm thrilled we have it." ... I identify with that feeling. My parents contributed to our sons' university tuition and while I may mention it when discussing college costs, I certainly don't highlight it. I'd rather be seen as someone disciplined and savvy enough to sock away hundreds of thousands of dollars for eight years of college than as someone relying on parental assistance. So I am part of the problem.)

19.11.06 Vox, What the right fears about Warren's wealth tax, Zack Beauchamp

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/11/6/20950010/elizabeth-warren-wealth-tax-conservatives> (To my mind, Warren's wealth tax is justifiable precisely because it weakens the power of a particular minority. ... The extreme concentration of income in the hands of a few people gives them outsized ability to shape political discourse through campaign contributions, super PACs, setting up ideologically friendly political nonprofits, and the like. But simply regulating these forms of buying influence isn't enough; it's often easy for the super-rich to get around regulations designed to keep their dollars out of politics. The billionaire penchant for stealth politics suggests a more radical conclusion may be necessary.)

19.11.05 Eater, The Rise (and Stall) of the Boba Generation, Jenny Zhang

<https://www.eater.com/2019/11/5/20942192/bubble-tea-boba-asian-american-diaspora> ("Asian-American expressions of longing for the boba shops of one's youth are not just about the physical space, or the drink, or the companionship; they're as much about the time, however fleeting, spent within the bubble of comfort and belonging. It's about missing the period of your life when you could afford to let bubble tea occupy such a large part of it. ... While bubble tea itself is neither inherently political nor bad, per se, some Asian Americans are critical of the dominant strain of Asian-American politics, called "boba liberalism," that the drink has come to represent in certain circles. Boba liberalism — as defined by Twitter user @diaspora_is_red, said to be among

the first to coin the term — is the “substanceless trend-chasing spectacle” that is mainstream Asian-American liberalism, derided as shallow, consumerist-capitalist, and robbed of meaning.)

19.11.04 Vox, *The rot at the heart of American democracy*, Daniel Ziblatt

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/11/4/20898605/america-democracy-populism-republicans-daniel-ziblatt> (Previously, the leadership of both parties looked pretty similar — mostly white, mostly Christian. But beginning after 1965, though not really until the 1980s, you have one diverse party — whites and all sorts of people — and another party, the Republican Party, which is now almost 90 percent white. These stark ethnic divides provide the raw materials for people who want to exploit them for political purposes, to take advantage of them. So that’s a deep structural condition that has really amplified our polarization problem.)

19.11.04 (17.05.25) Texas Monthly, *Welcome to the Green Machine*, John Nova Lomax

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/welcome-to-the-green-machine> (And Private John Henry Lomax was not the same rail-thin kid who had left Houston ten weeks before. This young man stood tall and had a barrel chest and square, athletic shoulders. The tears came welling up from my chest and out of my eyes as I hugged this chiseled specimen who called me Dad. This young man in camo had a voice that rumbled with confidence. He had a been-there-done-that look in his eye. For the first time in many years, he walked as if he had a direction to go in. He leaned forward, swung his elbows, swaggered like a bulldog.)

19.11.03 Slate, *The Passive-Aggressive Email Tactic That All Office Workers Abhor*, Alison Green

<https://slate.com/human-interest/2019/11/email-cc-field-boss-passive-aggressive.html> (The cc field does have a place. It’s perfectly acceptable to copy people you want to keep in the loop even though they’re not the primary recipient of your email. The problems start when the cc field is used more pointedly than that. Employees who copy their recipients’ managers because they think it will get their message taken more seriously or handled more quickly often end up being perceived as saying, “I don’t trust you to take care of this on your own unless you know your manager is watching.”)

19.11.02 NYT, *The Korean Secret to Happiness and Success: With “nunchi,” all you need is your eyes, your ears and a quiet mind.*, Euny Hong <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/02/opinion/sunday/nunchi.html> (The great thing about nunchi is you don’t need to be rich, privileged, or even in a good mood to employ it. In fact, Koreans say that nunchi is “the secret weapon of the disadvantaged.” It’s especially useful to women and minorities in the workplace who, like me, are tired of being given contradictory feedback — that they are either leaning out or leaning in too much. Nunchi exists so that the embattled can focus on changing the circumstances within their control. You don’t need to be the loudest in order to present your ideas or ask for a raise; you just need to have the best timing. ... Nunchi is also helpful for those who suffer social anxiety, like me. Anxiety often comes from fear of judgment, and there’s no better antidote than focusing on the room as if you were raptly watching a play. ... A Korean education is a nunchi education: In my day, students were not allowed to ask questions during class. Teachers gave students intentionally vague information about everything from what school supplies to bring to where exams were taking place. Working out these mysteries on your own by using your nunchi was part of your education.)

19.10.31 WaPo, *Think you’re anonymous online? A third of popular websites are ‘fingerprinting’ you.*, Geoffrey Fowler

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2019/10/31/think-youre-anonymous-online-third-popular-websites-are-fingerprinting-you/> (Apple iPhones, iPads and Macs running the company’s Safari browser are among the hardest to fingerprint. That is, in part, because Apple has a relatively limited product line and those devices tend to be standardized — so they look more similar to fingerprinting software (compared to the zillions of variations in Android phones and Windows laptops out there). It’s a kind of online herd immunity. Apple’s Safari

also has been tackling fingerprinting directly by reducing the amount of information it shares, such as a list of built-in fonts (instead of custom ones). Safari also asks you for permission before handing over information about your device orientation and motion, two more potential data points for fingerprinters. You don't have to adjust any settings to turn these protections on — they're the default. However, most people in the world do not own Apple devices. Everyone else should consider the Firefox browser, which I've recommended before because of its aggressive default protection from tracker cookies. It's in the final stages of adding some default fingerprinting protections, too, based around blocking traffic from known fingerprinting addresses — which, it acknowledges, fixes only part of the problem. You can turn on an early version of these protections now by going to the "Custom" tab under privacy and security settings.)

19.10.31 WaPo, *Long-awaited cystic fibrosis drug could turn deadly disease into a manageable condition*, Carolyn Johnson

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2019/10/31/long-awaited-cystic-fibrosis-drug-could-turn-deadly-disease-into-manageable-condition/> (There are more than 1,700 gene mutations that can cause the protein to malfunction, but in the most common mutation, the protein is misfolded and can't reach the right spot in the cell — and even if it does reach that spot, it doesn't work properly. The new combination therapy includes one drug that corrects the misfolded protein and two that activate the correctly folded protein when it reaches the right spot in the cell.)

19.10.31 NYT, *Tales From the Teenage Cancel Culture*, Sanam Yar

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/31/style/cancel-culture.html> (That classmate, who is white, had done things in the past that Neelam described as problematic, like casually using racist slurs — not name-calling — among friends. After class, she decided he was "canceled," at least to her. Her decision didn't stay private; she told a friend that week that she had canceled him. She told her mother too. She said that this meant she would avoid speaking or engaging with him in the future, that she didn't care to hear what he had to say, because he wouldn't change his mind and was beyond reason. "When it comes to cancel culture, it's a way to take away someone's power and call out the individual for being problematic in a situation," Neelam said. "I don't think it's being sensitive. I think it's just having a sense of being observant and aware of what's going on around you.")

19.10.29 Politico, *Dear GOP, Some Scary Advice on How to Survive Your Impeachment Nightmare*, Charlie Sykes <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/10/29/gop-advice-impeachment-nightmare-trump-229885>

(Short term, breaking with Trump will spark a nasty blowback. But imagine for a moment a post-Trumpian Republican Party freed from the baggage of Trumpist corruption. The choice is between a party inextricably tied to Trump, with all of his crudity, dishonesty, lawlessness and arrogance, and a party that has shown that it is capable of being a principled defender of constitutional norms. At the end of this process, the simple narrative is likely to be that the president has abused his power, broken the law and sold out his country. You have an opportunity to hold him accountable by doing your constitutional duty. History will want to know whether you got scared and shirked it.)

19.10.25 LAT, *Freelancers fear California's new gig worker law will wipe them out*, Michael Hiltzik

<https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2019-10-25/hiltzik-freelance-writers-gig-worker-law> (Although every employer located in California is subject to the law, freelancers fear that AB 5 will discourage more employers from out of state from hiring Californians to avoid the paperwork and legal liabilities implicit in the law. ... "If I'm a publisher from out of state," says David Swanson, a San Diego writer who is the outgoing president of the Society of American Travel Writers, "and I have a choice of hiring a writer from California to do a job, or somebody from Colorado or Texas or Canada or India — and I'd have no chance of being sued — who do you think I'm going to hire? AB 5 simply makes it unattractive to hire writers from California.")

19.10.24 OneZero, *The Human Cost of Your Smartphone*, Aimee Pearcy

<https://onezero.medium.com/the-human-cost-of-your-smartphone-d583a2b6f356> (At the beginning of 2019, there were more than 5.1 billion unique mobile phone users in the world. But very little is disclosed about how mobile phones are made, particularly the suffering that takes place at the beginning of the supply chain. Starting advertisements with clips of young children coughing and spluttering wouldn't be very glamorous. Instead, electronics companies do everything they can to cover up all the links between their supply chains and the horrific human rights abuses. There are more than 40 different chemical elements in a mobile phone. Many of these elements have shady sourcing practices. The human rights issues surrounding cobalt especially are so dubious that the metal is often referred to as "the blood diamond of batteries.")

19.10.23 NYT, *One Family Built Forever 21, and Fueled Its Collapse*, Sapna Mayeshwari

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/23/business/forever-21-bankruptcy-chang-family.html> (But Forever 21 made its biggest mistakes in real estate. In the years before and after the recession, the company expanded aggressively and decided to open huge flagship stores, setting up in cavernous spaces once occupied by Mervyn's, the bankrupt department store, as well as Borders, Sears and Saks. Its former head of real estate told Bloomberg Businessweek in 2011 that "having really big stores has always been Mr. Chang's dream." The stores became hard to fill with new merchandise, then turn over, however, and saddled Forever 21 with long leases just as technology was beginning to wreak havoc on American malls. Seven of the leases at the old Mervyn's stores were not set to expire until 2027 or 2028, which is longer than a typical lease, according to internal documents obtained by The Times ... "Forever 21 has basically been a one-trick pony," Mr. Cohen said. "The founder and his wife did remarkably well until the business got too big for them to continue to do remarkably well by themselves.")

19.10.23 NYT, *Inside the Nordstrom Dynasty*, Jonah Bromwich

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/23/style/nordstrom-family-department-stores.html> (This is exemplified in a new type of store called a Nordstrom Local, where no clothes are sold. They are strange little places that offer, along with the free shipping and returns the company is known for, the chance for customers to do errands that are best accomplished in person. Such as: tailoring, styling and, at the Nordstrom Local on the Upper East Side, stroller and car-seat cleaning by something called a "tot squad." Nordstrom Locals started two years ago in Los Angeles. Customers seem to like them. Analysts see them as the future.)

19.10.23 The Atlantic, *Mitt Romney, It's Time*, Sarah Longwell

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/10/mitt-romney-versus-trump/600508/> (We already know, from The Atlantic's McKay Coppins, that Romney is "taking the prospect of a Senate trial seriously—he's reviewing The Federalist Papers, brushing up on parliamentary procedure, and staying open to the idea that the president may need to be evicted from the Oval Office." He's not up for reelection until 2024, which gives him the maximum amount of leeway to make difficult votes. Even then, he represents Utah, a deep-red state where Trump's approval rating has been underwater for much of his presidency. And that's all assuming that Romney would even want to run for another six-year term at age 77. This all points to Romney as the perfect person to overcome the collective-action problem—he has more stature and political capital than anyone else in the Senate, but he also has the least to lose.)

19.10.23 (18.06.25) Nautilus, *When It's Good to Be Antisocial*, Silvia Golumbeanu

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/when-it-s-good-to-be-antisocial> (It also turns out that, even in a highly coordinated hive, antisocial individuals persist. And they appear to be tolerated by other bees in the colony. If a few loners find themselves in a new situation where solitary behavior is advantageous—say the growing season is short and bees need to get up and go without dividing tasks—an asocial species could arise. Changes in host plants can also lead social bees to revert to solitary behavior. Depending on the bee's

environment and needs, specializing on one plant is usually more beneficial in a hive context, where the whole activity of the hive can be coordinated around a constant resource. Solitary bees are usually generalists—they buzz along from plant species to plant species.)

19.10.23 Vox, *Pumpkin spice has taken over Trader Joe's. Here's why.*, Dan Nosowitz

<https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2019/10/23/20919817/trader-joes-pumpkin-spice> (Trader Joe's makes it a point to not really stock anything that would be unfamiliar, and thus threatening, to most Americans, including the white boomers who were raised on a more limited variety of foods than newer generations. They sell frozen, microwavable pad Thai, not dried shrimp or tamarind paste. It's a fine line to walk, and Trader Joe's is vigilant about finding that balance of something unusual enough that you could only find it at Trader Joe's, but not so unusual that you don't know exactly what it is and what it will taste like. Pumpkin spice is the perfect vehicle for this sort of experimentation. The individual spices within the pumpkin spice blend can be used for all kinds of things, but in the United States, those flavors — cinnamon, nutmeg, clove — are deeply associated with desserts and with the fall season.)

19.10.23 CJR, *Dropshipping journalism*, Daniel Tovrov https://www.cjr.org/special_report/newsweek.php/ ("The owners see media as a profitable thing, but it's profitable because they've found an exploitable workforce. There are so many young, earnest, hungry writers who will work for so little," says Sydney Pereira, who covered climate change for Newsweek until March of last year. "We're digging the owners out of debt at the expense of our mental health.)

19.10.21 NYT, *Coddling of 'Gold-Spoon' Children Shakes South Korea's Political Elite*, Choe Sang Hun <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/21/world/asia/south-korea-cho-kuk-gold-spoon-elite.html> (The paper, published by a team of university researchers in the Korean Journal of Pathology in 2009, listed as its lead author the daughter of a professor, Cho Kuk, who would go on to become justice minister under Mr. Moon. But in August, a local newspaper revealed that the daughter's achievement had come after only a two-week internship with the team while she was still a high school student. The revelation infuriated South Korean students, who saw it as all the proof they needed to demand that Mr. Cho be fired, and they declared Mr. Moon's promise to create "a world without privilege" a lie. The scandal has exploded into the biggest embarrassment of Mr. Moon's presidency as he has struggled with an ailing economy and a lack of opportunity for many young people. It has particularly fueled outrage about the "gold spoon" children of the elite, who glide into top-flight universities and cushy jobs, leaving their "dirt spoon" peers to struggle in South Korea's hobbled economy.)

19.10.21 NYT, *As Homelessness Surges in California, So Does a Backlash*, Thomas Fuller

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/21/us/california-homeless-backlash.html> ("I think those of us in the service-provider community always knew we weren't going to solve the problem," said Mr. Maceri of the People Concern. "But I think the expectation was we were going to make a significant dent. So on the one hand, the message is we have all these resources to quote-unquote solve this problem. And what the general public sees is, it's not getting solved, it's not getting better, it's getting worse." ... Ms. Kosarian and others cite city estimates that half of the homeless people in San Francisco have substance abuse issues, and say the crisis is being misdiagnosed as purely a lack of housing. Mayor London Breed announced this month that San Francisco would begin enforcing a state law that makes it easier to force mentally ill people off the streets.)

19.10.19 LAT, *Will Mitt Romney fulfill a Mormon 'prophecy' and save the Constitution?*, Judith Freeman

<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2019-10-19/mitt-romney-white-horse-prophecy-mormon-joseph-smith> ("One day," we were told, "the Constitution of the United States will hang by a thread and a Mormon, or group of Mormons, will save the nation." This was not a casual statement. It was repeated over and over, year after

year, in Mormon congregations across the land; it wasn't only Mitt and I who heard it. It didn't matter if you grew up like Mitt, the privileged son of the governor of Michigan; or like me, the daughter of a shoe salesman in Ogden, Utah; or like my friend Rae, the child of ranchers moving sheep around the West. This is what we were all taught — that one day the U.S. Constitution, revered by Mormons as a document inspired by God, would become so deeply endangered and torn asunder that it would also tear the nation apart, and it would be up to Mormons in powerful positions to save us. This prediction had a name, the White Horse Prophecy, and it was supposedly uttered by the founding prophet of the church, Joseph Smith, in 1843, words he was said to have pronounced while he stood before a copy of the apocalyptic painting "Death on a Pale Horse" by the artist Benjamin West.)

19.10.19 LAT, *They came to L.A. to chase a Hollywood dream. Two weeks later, they were homeless*, Nita Lelyveld

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-10-19/they-arrived-with-a-hollywood-dream-two-weeks-later-they-were-homeless-sleeping-on-hard-pavement> ("At the end of the day, there are the people who go inside and the people who stay outside. No matter what I think of myself, I couldn't think of myself as better than another person on the street because we were on the street," Bri told me. "Some homeless people are really mad at the people who go inside.")

19.10.18 NYT, *The Crisis of the Republican Party*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/18/opinion/trump-impeachment-republicans.html> (The Republican Party is again confronting a crisis of conscience, one that has been gathering force ever since Donald Trump captured the party's nomination in 2016. Afraid of his political influence, and delighted with his largely conservative agenda, party leaders have compromised again and again, swallowing their criticisms and tacitly if not openly endorsing presidential behavior they would have excoriated in a Democrat. Compromise by compromise, Donald Trump has hammered away at what Republicans once saw as foundational virtues: decency, honesty, responsibility. He has asked them to substitute loyalty to him for their patriotism itself.)

19.10.17 PBS, *'He lied.' Ohio voters struggle after Trump promised jobs*, Daniel Bush

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/economy/he-lied-ohio-voters-struggle-after-trump-promised-jobs> (O'Hara and other union officials blamed the Trump administration for rolling back the fuel efficiency standards put in place by President Barack Obama as part of his push to reduce carbon emissions. O'Hara argued that the decision to end the Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency standards, known as CAFE, incentivized General Motors to stop making the Cruze, which is more fuel efficient than GM's larger cars.)

19.10.17 The Bulwark, *Are the President's Advisers on Strike?*, Robert Tracinski

<https://thebulwark.com/are-the-presidents-advisers-on-strike/> (Imagine this situation from the perspective of a highly qualified professional expert, the kind of person who is there to help the president make informed decisions, implement them smoothly, and communicate them in a sober way. ... You're tired of the fact that the president never listens to you but does listen to random noisemakers on the Internet. You are ashamed that our allies are paying in blood for it. So at some point, you're going to get fed up, and you're going to stop even trying to make Trump look good. You're going to decide that if the president wants to write a letter that makes him sound like a not especially bright toddler, he can go ahead and do it. You're going to lift up the curtain and let everybody see what he is really like.)

19.10.17 NYT, *Why Don't Rich People Just Stop Working?*, Alex Williams

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/17/style/rich-people-things.html> ("Once they have no financial need to work — are 'post-economic,' as some say in San Francisco — they have trouble shifting into lower gears," Mr. Ferriss wrote. "They're like drag racers who now have to learn to navigate the turns and intersections of

neighborhoods at 30 miles per hour.” “Without ambitious projects to fill space,” he added, “there is often a void that makes some of the bigger questions hard to avoid. The things you neglected are no longer drowned out by noise; they are the signal. It’s like facing the Ghost of Christmas Past.” ... Even so, the isolation that often accompanies extreme wealth can provide an emotional impulse to keep on earning, long after material comforts have been met, said T. Byram Karasu, an emeritus professor of psychiatry at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx who said he has worked with numerous high earners in his private practice. Apex entrepreneurs and financiers, after all, are often “adrenaline-fueled, transgressive people,” Dr. Karasu said. “They tend to have laser-focused digital brains, are always in transactional mode, and the bigger they get, the lonelier they are, because they do not belong.” Dr. Berglas, a onetime member of the Harvard Medical School faculty in psychology, said: “If you can’t relate to people, you presume that the failure to have rewarding relationships is because of jealousy — your house is three-X your neighbors’, and they look at your brand-new Corvette and drool. It’s a compensatory mechanism — ‘I might not have a ton of friends, but I can do anything I want and I’m the most powerful S.O.B. there is.’”)

19.10.16 The Conversation, *Why white married women are more likely to vote for conservative parties*, Leah Ruppanner

<https://theconversation.com/why-white-married-women-are-more-likely-to-vote-for-conservative-parties-124783> (Only 18% of married white women reported their futures were strongly connected to other women compared to 38% of single and 30% of divorced white women. The patterns are similar for Latina women. This means for these two racial groups, heterosexual marriage leads them to feel less connected to other women. Marriage is shown to shift couples’ attitudes, making them more similar to each other over the course of marriage. But, the shift is not even. Rather, women become more conservative and see themselves as less connected to other women over the duration of the marriage. Single women, on the other hand, are more supportive of feminist issues than married women, with feminist attitudes intensifying for women who rely more heavily on their own earnings. Essentially, the institution of marriage traditionalises women’s attitudes and, as our study shows, this is pronounced for white women.)

19.10.13 NYT, *How ‘White Guilt’ in the Age of Trump Shapes the Democratic Primary*, Astead W. Herndon <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/13/us/politics/democratic-candidates-racism.html> (Black friends said they were followed around department stores, so Mr. Olsen, who is white, became a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He thought that white Americans were scared of the country’s growing Latino population, so he joined the League of United Latin American Citizens. He now registers voters weekly, including with the League of Women Voters, to atone for his “white privilege,” he said. “I try to have my bases covered,” said Mr. Olsen, 50, who wore a N.A.A.C.P. T-shirt to a campaign rally for Senator Kamala Harris here last week. “It just hurts my heart that white people are afraid of the country’s growing Hispanic population. And I just can’t allow that to continue.” White liberals — voters like Mr. Olsen — are thinking more explicitly about race than they did even a decade ago, according to new research and polling. In one survey, an overwhelming majority said that racial discrimination affects the lives of black people. They embrace terms like “structural racism” and “white privilege.”)

19.10.13 HuffPo, *The ‘Glass Floor’ Is Keeping America’s Richest Idiots At The Top*, Michael Hobbes https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-glass-floor-is-keeping-americas-richest-idiots-at-the-top_n_5d9fb1c9e4b06ddfc516e076 (“Having a college degree is most beneficial to the kids who aren’t that smart,” Reeves said. Intelligent kids will have thousands of opportunities to demonstrate their skills. Less-talented kids, on the other hand, have to rely on credentials that make them seem intelligent — high SAT scores, top-tier diplomas and corporate internships. As elites take over selective colleges, invest more in test-prep courses and reserve entry-level jobs for their peers, they will continue to monopolize these credentials for themselves ... “The greater the inequality, the greater the impact on opportunity,” Fishkin said. “There’s a self-fulfilling class

anxiety among the middle- and upper-middle class because they sense that the spaces are scarce now. There are fewer secure jobs. And the scarcer they are, the more valuable they are.” And though it may be understandable for wealthy parents to use their power to insulate their children from downward mobility, the broader effect of this trend could be severe. According to Reeves, dozens of studies have estimated the negative effects of failing to tap into the talents of low-income students. Far fewer, however, have considered the drag on the gross domestic product caused by unintelligent CEOs and Ivy League HR staffers hiring people just like themselves.)

19.10.12 (18.09.02) ESPN, *The jaw-dropping story behind an NFL coach's search for his family*, Jonathan Bartlett http://www.espn.com/espn/feature/story/_/id/24505521/the-jaw-dropping-story-nfl-coach-search-family (She hesitated but decided McCullough had a right to know. "Your father's name is Sherman Smith," Briggs told him. McCullough, leaning against a wall in the hallway, felt as though he might pass out.)

19.10.11 Vox, *Thich Nhat Hanh's final mindfulness lesson: how to die peacefully*, Eliza Barclay <https://www.vox.com/2019/3/11/18196457/thich-nhat-hanh-health-mindfulness-plum-village> (There is dying in the sense of letting this body go, letting go of feelings, emotions, these things we call our identity, and practicing to let those go. The trouble is, we don't let ourselves die day by day. Instead, we carry ideas about each other and ourselves. Sometimes it's good, but sometimes it's detrimental to our growth. We brand ourselves and imprison ourselves to an idea. Letting go is a practice not only when you reach 90. It's one of the highest practices. This can move you toward equanimity, a state of freedom, a form of peace. Waking up each day as a rebirth, now that is a practice. In the historical dimension, we practice to accept that we will get to a point where the body will be limited and we will be sick. There is birth, old age, sickness, and death. How will we deal with it?)

19.10.10 The Atlantic, *Why You Never See Your Friends Anymore*, Judith Shulevitz <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/11/why-dont-i-see-you-anymore/598336/> (Reform is possible, however. In Seattle, New York City, and San Francisco, “predictive scheduling” laws (also called “fair workweek” laws) require employers to give employees adequate notice of their schedules and to pay employees a penalty if they don't. Then there's “right to disconnect” legislation, which mandates that employers negotiate a specific period when workers don't have to answer emails or texts off the clock. France and Italy have passed such laws. It's a cliché among political philosophers that if you want to create the conditions for tyranny, you sever the bonds of intimate relationships and local community. “Totalitarian movements are mass organizations of atomized, isolated individuals,” Hannah Arendt famously wrote in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. She focused on the role of terror in breaking down social and family ties in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union under Stalin. But we don't need a secret police to turn us into atomized, isolated souls. All it takes is for us to stand by while unbridled capitalism rips apart the temporal preserves that used to let us cultivate the seeds of civil society and nurture the sadly fragile shoots of affection, affinity, and solidarity.)

19.10.10 New Yorker, *Is Amazon Unstoppable?: Politicians want to rein in the retail giant. But Jeff Bezos, the master of cutthroat capitalism, is ready to fight back*, Charles DuHigg <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/10/21/is-amazon-unstoppable> (“He doesn't think companies have obligations to employees beyond paying wages while they work.” Bezos's close acquaintance agrees: “There's an empathy gap there, something that makes it hard for him to see his obligations to other people. Seattle is filled with businesspeople—Gates and the Costco founders and the Boeing leadership—who have invested in this city. But the one time Amazon could have pitched in, on the homelessness tax, instead of taking the lead Jeff threatened to leave. It's how he sees the world.” ... Elizabeth Warren, one of the most forceful critics of the tech industry, has said that, if she wins the Presidency, she intends to break up Amazon,

Facebook, and Google. She has proposed making it illegal for companies such as Amazon to own online marketplaces and at the same time to sell goods on those platforms. “Amazon crushes small companies,” Warren wrote, in a plan for expanding online competition. If she is elected, she said, “small businesses would have a fair shot to sell their products on Amazon without the fear of Amazon pushing them out of business.”)

19.10.10 Vox, *Trump’s resistance to the impeachment inquiry is a genuine constitutional crisis*, Ian Millhiser <https://www.vox.com/2019/10/10/20906172/trump-congressional-subpoenas-constitutional-crisis-impeachment> (As anyone familiar with the musical Hamilton can tell you, the nation’s leaders split into two political parties almost immediately after the Constitution was ratified. The framers, in other words, built our government on the assumption that lawmakers could rally together during times of crisis, rather than dividing into teams and digging in for partisan advantage. Polarized political parties simply are not compatible with a system that requires two-thirds of the Senate to remove a president — at least, if you don’t want a system where the president is immune from impeachment. That’s likely to leave the question of whether Trump will face consequences for lawless behavior to the voters — which is ultimately where it rests in any democracy. A well-designed constitution can mitigate the risk that a corrupt executive will hold onto power but it can’t prevent the voters from repeatedly electing such a leader.)

19.10.08 NYT, *Silicon Valley Is Trying Out a New Mantra: Make a Profit*, Erin Griffith <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/08/technology/silicon-valley-startup-profit.html> (The moves all point to a new gospel that is starting to spread in start-up land. For the last decade, young tech companies were fueled by a wave of venture capital-funded excess, which encouraged fast growth above all else. But now some investors and start-ups are beginning to rethink that mantra and instead invoke turning a profit and generating “positive unit economics” as their new priorities. The nascent change is being driven by the stumbles of some high-profile “unicorns” — the start-ups that were valued at \$1 billion and above in the private markets — just as they reached the stock market.)

19.10.08 Vox, *What’s wrong with a President Pence?*, Jane Coaston <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/10/8/20903433/pence-trump-impeachment-conservatives> (It’s obvious Pence and Trump are more different than alike as personalities, with Pence as the “establishment” choice to some. But to many conservatives, that’s a good thing. They’re convinced that the real lesson of 2016 is that an aggressive fighter like Trump makes a superior politician to more strait-laced Republicans like Mitt Romney. And that makes Trump look like a far better option than Pence, no matter what. “Trump encapsulates this mentality — a mentality that refuses to be subdued and easily swept away to the proverbial ash heap of history,” Hammer said. “And it is unclear at best if Pence could provide the same.” The idea that Trump is a bulwark against the excesses of the left, or, as Dreher told me, a “kind of katechon — a force that holds back something much worse,” is a common sentiment among conservative voters, if not among elected members of the Republican Party. While Trump might be, in their view, uncouth, unfair, even immoral and a hindrance to the growth of the conservative movement, they view the left as the real threat, a threat only Trump has seemed able to stand up against. And to many Trump-supportive conservatives, the impulse to fight on Trump’s behalf against his critics on the left and in the media is intimately tied to their own sense that they themselves are constantly targeted in unfair ways by those same forces.)

19.10.08 Vox, *The biggest lie tech people tell themselves — and the rest of us*, Rose Eveleth <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/10/1/20887003/tech-technology-evolution-natural-inevitable-ethics> (Imagine you’re taking an online business class — the kind where you watch video lectures and then answer questions at the end. But this isn’t a normal class, and you’re not just watching the lectures: They’re watching you back. Every time the facial recognition system decides that you look bored, distracted, or tuned out, it makes a note. And after each lecture, it only asks you about content from those moments. This isn’t a

hypothetical system; it's a real one deployed by a company called Nestor. And if you don't like the sound of it, you're not alone. Neither do the actual students. When I asked the man behind the system, French inventor Marcel Saucet, how the students in these classes feel about being watched, he admitted that they didn't like it. They felt violated and surveilled, he said, but he shrugged off any implication that it was his fault. "Everybody is doing this," he told me. "It's really early and shocking, but we cannot go against natural laws of evolution.")

19.10.05 NYT, *The 'Never Trump' Coalition That Decided Eh, Never Mind, He's Fine*, Jeremy W. Peters <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/05/us/politics/never-trumper-republicans.html> ("I endorsed Rick Santorum in 2012. And Mike Huckabee," said Penny Young Nance, who signed the statement in 2016 of anti-abortion activists opposing Mr. Trump. "But at the end of the day, I'm not sure those guys I love and admire would have had the guts to do what Trump has done," she added. Among the other considerations of "late adopters," as Ms. Nance called herself, is how Mr. Trump relentlessly and savagely attacks the left and its leaders. "American women want a street fighter," she said, "and this is the guy who puts the knife in his teeth and swims the moat." She called Mr. Trump "a gutsy New Yorker," resisting the urge to use a less polite term that Mr. Trump might have used himself. "I could use a different word, but I won't.")

19.10.04 The Hedgehog Review, *Falling*, William McPherson <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/falling> (My money wasn't working hard enough to finance my adventures, which did, after all, come with a price. I wanted to explore and write about eastern Europe after the fall of the Wall, which I did for several years. It was truly a great adventure, it changed my life, and it was a lot more interesting than thinking about what it cost, which was a lot. There'd always been enough money. I assumed there always would be. (I think this is called denial.) ... I'd acted like one of those people who win the lottery and squander it on houses, cars, family, and Caribbean cruises. But I hadn't won the lottery; I'd fallen under the spell of magical thinking. In my opinion, I didn't squander the money, either; I just spent it a little too enthusiastically—not on Caribbean cruises but on exploring the aftermath of the fall of Communism in eastern Europe. I don't regret it. When my writing was bringing in a little money I had a Keogh plan, and when I was at the Post a 401(k) account. I'd made a little money in real estate and received a couple of modest but nice inheritances, which together, and with Social Security and the pension, would have given me enough income to live on, had I not felt I'd lost the ability to continue writing and had I forgone, or at least spent more modestly on, my work in Europe and related activities, avoided the margin account, and so on.)

19.10.03 NYT, *Why Trump Voters Stick With Him*, David Brooks <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/03/opinion/trump-voters.html> (You think that because you have the kind of jobs that allow you to follow Twitter all day. I don't have that luxury. So all that passing nonsense seems far away. I have to deal with the actual realities of life. One, mass immigration is changing my town, region and state. Two, the cultural liberalism you preach but don't practice is leading to the breakdown of families up and down my block. Children out of wedlock. Young men with no dad when they're young and no wife in their life when they're grown. Third, an Ivy League elite running government and the economy for itself and shutting out those of us who actually make things with our hands. Fourth, China is replacing us.)

19.10.03 NYT, *She Was Raped by a Classmate. She Still Had to Go to School With Him.*, Andrea Salcedo <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/03/nyregion/niagara-wheatfield-rape.html> (Under Title IX, the high school should have started an independent investigation into Taylor's case as soon as her mother notified administrators that Mr. Dowdy had been charged, regardless of whether there was an active criminal inquiry, education experts said. The school should have also taken steps to address possible threats to Taylor by changing class schedules, assigning a school employee to monitor Mr. Dowdy to ensure that he and Taylor did not cross paths, or having an employee escort her to class, the experts said. If such steps failed to keep her safe, they said, the school should have adopted more stringent measures, like having Mr. Dowdy take

classes online or be home schooled. Shiwali Patel, director of Justice for Student Survivors and senior counsel at the National Women's Law Center in Washington, said the Niagara Wheatfield district's response was not surprising. "This is a pretty unfortunately widespread issue of schools not taking the steps they are supposed to under the law," Ms. Patel said.)

19.10.02 Axios, *How Americans really see success*, Stef Knight

<https://www.axios.com/americans-view-success-versus-society-fame-5c1e3a12-444e-438d-8906-ccfb5beec2c7.html> (How Americans believe our society measures success — namely, fame — is totally different than how people define success in their own lives, according to a new Gallup/Populace survey of more than 5,000 Americans given first to Axios ... "Being famous" was the top answer for what respondents thought mattered according to society's view of success. But that was the last answer for what individuals felt was important to achieve to be successful in their own lives Parenthood was the most common achievement for individuals' views success, but ranked at 33 out of 76 when people were asked about things society considers important for success ... Having an advanced degree was something respondents valued both in terms of how society judged them and how they judged themselves. Having a purpose in life, a couple of close friends and regularly seeing family were all important components to how people judged their own success — but so was not having to worry about money.)

19.10.02 Recode, *Silicon Valley billionaires' strange new respect for Elizabeth Warren*, Theodore Schleifer

<https://www.vox.com/recode/2019/10/2/20894388/silicon-valley-donors-elizabeth-warren-big-tech-mark-zuckerberg> ("The clarity of her plans and message is the way folks in tech are used to talking about tackling problems," said Nabeel Hyatt, an early investor in companies like Discord and Postmates. "Even if you disagree on some things, there is just a craving for competency, for someone who will do a job well." ... Above all else, Silicon Valley leaders value in a candidate what they value in their C-suites: intense competency. Analysts have widely praised Warren for running one of 2020's most effective campaigns, and fundraisers say that has endeared her to donors who aren't predisposed to like her but who admire her execution. Warren last month began overtaking Joe Biden in some key early-state polls, mirroring the slow embrace Warren has found in Silicon Valley. "People just respect success," said one Silicon Valley fundraiser aligned with a different candidate. "There's a flight to quality.")

19.10.01 (16.04.15) Texas Monthly, *Unfriendly Climate*, Sonia Smith

<https://www.texasmonthly.com/articles/katharine-hayhoe-lubbock-climate-change-evangelist/> (Texas leads the nation in wind generation; turbines produced a full 10 percent of the state's power in 2015. By 2030, that number is forecast to jump to 37 percent. One night last September, supply of wind power was so plentiful and demand was so low that the spot price of electricity went negative for a few hours. Solar installation has lagged behind, but when it ramps up, there's enough capacity just in the area a hundred miles square** between Plainview and Amarillo to light the entire United States, as Hayhoe likes to point out. In Pecos County alone, companies have plans to invest \$1 billion in large-scale solar energy farms. "Texas understands energy. Energy is a Texas thing," Hayhoe told me. "We have the land we need to do this, as well as the technology and entrepreneurial spirit. I wish that the whole state could see that this is an opportunity for a better future.")

19.10.01 NYT, *This Is the Moment Rachel Maddow Has Been Waiting For*, Amanda Hess

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/01/magazine/rachel-maddow-trump.html> (Maddow essentially delivers an essay every night before moving into interviews and shorter blocks of analyses, all of which she writes with the help of a team of producers. She has called herself "the hermit of Rockefeller Center": While other personalities stalk the halls, seeking influence over network politics, she is holed up in her office writing, pausing only to conduct the daily production meeting, where she and her staff map out the day's show... After

her show one evening, Maddow and I shared a car to Raoul's, a French bistro in SoHo. She shimmied into a brown leather booth and lamented the time suck of her dumb hurt ankle. Between writing her book, making her show and reporting to physical therapy, she had no time to herself. "I'm realizing now — 10, 11 years into this — that it's fine to work long days," she told me. "But it's not good for you to work incessant long days, five days a week, 50 weeks a year for 10 years.")

19.10.01 The Atlantic, *When the Culture War Comes for the Kids*, George Packer

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/10/when-the-culture-war-comes-for-the-kids/596668/> (The middle-school scramble subjected 10- and 11-year-olds to the dictates of meritocracy and democracy at the same time: a furiously competitive contest and a heavy-handed ideology. The two systems don't coexist so much as drive children simultaneously toward opposite extremes, realms that are equally inhospitable to the delicate, complex organism of a child's mind. If there's a relation between the systems, I came to think, it's this: Wokeness prettifies the success race, making contestants feel better about the heartless world into which they're pushing their children. Constantly checking your privilege is one way of not having to give it up.)

19.09.30 New Yorker, *How to Beat Trump, According to Experts on Middle-School Bullies*, Lizzie Widdicombe

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/how-to-beat-trump-according-to-experts-on-middle-school-bullies> (When tangling with Trump, Juvonen said, the most important thing to know is "it's less about content and more about power." This goes double for the brainier candidates, like Warren, who might be tempted to pick apart Trump's arguments. "We can't worry about the intellectual arguments here, which is really sad," she said. "First and foremost, you have to shift the power dynamics." She went on, "One of the best strategies for kids who get bullied is to use self-deprecating humor." This defuses the bully's insults, and, potentially, helps the nerdy kid seem a tiny bit subversive. Plus, telling jokes could throw an antagonist off balance. "Bullies have very vulnerable egos," she said. "What gets them angry the most is when someone makes fun of them." ... In the end, however, the experts warned that, to thoroughly dislodge a bully from the top of a social pecking order, you have to address the toxic forces that got him there in the first place. "You have to work on the culture as a whole," Fagell said. Juvonen said that it's about everyone else: the teachers who turned a blind eye to aggressive behavior, the kind students who were too timid to speak up, and the henchmen who egged the bully on, hoping that it would increase their own social status.)

19.09.30 New York Mag, *The Sun Sets on We*, Reeves Wiedeman

<http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2019/09/what-happened-at-we-why-wework-postponed-its-ipo.html> (While WeWork's summer of discontent was trying for Neumann and other executives directly involved in the IPO process, the hangover of its failure was now settling in with the rank and file. A person who joined the company last year said it had felt like arriving at the height of a wild party, only to stay too late and have the lights suddenly turn on. "Disillusionment is how I'd describe it," the employee said of the current mood. While some WeWorkers were trying to feel energized by the chance to remake the company in a post-Neumannian image, many more were scanning the exits, worried that what had been a résumé distinction just several months ago might now be a black mark against them. "What's getting missed is the huge effort people made to grow this company," one former executive told me, of the many thousands of employees who had come in and out — Neumann had expressed a desire to turn over 20 percent of his staff annually — building the company at the breakneck speed Neumann and his investors demanded. "Thousands of people who worked tirelessly, because there's no other way to do it there, are going to end up screwed financially because they took lower income to have more equity that has disintegrated," the executive said. Two former executives told me they had no plans to purchase the large stock options they were owed, despite Neumann promising one of them that the options would be worth several million dollars. Several employees said they had already used savings to purchase their options, and were now worried that doing so could turn out to be financially ruinous. There remains at least one WeWorker who has done well by his shares. Well before the IPO process even

began, Adam Neumann had already cashed out well over \$700 million in WeWork stock through a combination of stock sales and loans, according to the Wall Street Journal. Neumann is no longer CEO, but he still has his role on WeWork's board, the homes in Gramercy and the Hamptons, plus a townhouse in the Village, a 60-acre estate in Westchester County, and a \$21-million residence in the Bay Area complete with room shaped like a guitar. Neumann had a spectacularly embarrassing summer, but setting aside whatever lawsuits or investigations that could emerge, he's set for life. Really, no one played the post-recession economy as perfectly as Neumann did: fill acres of empty commercial real estate with armies of freelancers, tell everyone you're raising global consciousness, and walk away a billionaire. In his final town hall as CEO, Neumann argued that WeWork had "played the private market game to perfection." He was speaking about the company he would soon no longer run, but he might as well have been talking about himself.)

19.09.30 NYT, *What's the Matter With Republicans?*, Peter Wehner

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/30/opinion/republicans-trump-impeachment.html> ("It's easier to stay with the tribe," this individual told me. "It's easier to stay with the team." Even when the leader of the team is thoroughly corrupt. All of this is tied to the psychology of accommodation. As a conservative-leaning clinical psychologist I know explained to me, when new experiences don't fit into an existing schema — Mr. Trump becoming the leader of the party that insisted on the necessity of good character in the Oval Office when Bill Clinton was president, for example — cognitive accommodation occurs. When the accommodation involves compromising one's sense of integrity, the tensions are reduced when others join in the effort. This creates a powerful sense of cohesion, harmony and group think. The greater the compromise, the more fierce the justification for it — and the greater the need to denounce those who call them out for their compromise. "In response," this person said to me, "an 'us versus them' mentality emerges, sometimes quite viciously." "What used to be a sense of belonging," I was told, "devolves into primitive tribalism, absolute adherence to the leader over adherence to a code of ethics.")

19.09.29 Politico, *Did Republicans Lose Orange County for Good?*, Andrew Desiderio

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/09/29/republicans-orange-county-california-228110> (But for the Democrats now commanding the electoral high ground in Orange County, there is a belief that the disintegrating Republican party cannot reform around a single issue like the economy; there are too many other factors working against it, and most of them are exacerbated by the presence of Trump at the top of the ticket. "I didn't think Trump would get elected, and I thought he would potentially cause the demise of the Republican Party as we know it," Rouda added. "I was wrong in one sense—he got elected. But I may still be right in the other sense, that the Republican Party as we know it may not exist after the Trump era." Cisneros concurs with his fellow ex-Republican, both of whom will be the Democrats' anchors here in 2020 as the party defends its majority. "If the [Republican] party continues to go down that route, I don't see how it could survive," Cisneros said of his former political affiliation. "I certainly don't see how it could survive here in California. It's going to continue to get smaller and smaller." He added, somewhat optimistically: "I always like to think that what happens in California eventually happens throughout the rest of the country.")

19.09.27 Vox, *Impeach him, anyway: The case for impeachment, even if it can't oust Trump*, Ezra Klein

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/9/27/20885360/impeach-donald-trump-ukraine> ("I think we have seen the total collapse of this very basic obligation of Congress under the weight of partisan polarization — particularly on the right — and it is dramatic," says Julian Zelizer, a presidential historian at Princeton University. "Trump has exposed it rather than triggered it.")

19.09.27 NYT, *The White-Collar Job Apocalypse That Didn't Happen*, Ben Casselman

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/27/business/economy/jobs-offshoring.html> (A widely covered 2007 study by Alan S. Blinder, a Princeton economist and former Clinton administration official, estimated that a quarter or

more of jobs were vulnerable within the next decade. But many companies discovered that labor savings were offset by other factors: time differences, language barriers, legal hurdles and the simple challenge of coordinating work half a world away. In some cases, companies decided they were better off moving jobs to less expensive parts of the United States rather than out of the country. "Where in retrospect I missed the boat is in thinking that the gigantic gap in labor costs between here and India would push it to India rather than to South Dakota," Mr. Blinder said in a recent interview. "There were other aspects of the costs to moving the activities that we weren't thinking about very much back then when people were worrying about offshoring." ... The new study found that in the jobs that Mr. Blinder identified as easily offshored, a growing share of workers were now working from home. Mr. Ozimek said he suspected that many more were working in satellite offices or for outside contractors, rather than at a company's main location. In other words, technology like cloud computing and videoconferencing has enabled these jobs to be done remotely, just not quite as remotely as Mr. Blinder and many others assumed.)

19.09.26 Wired, *Why Are Rich People So Mean?*, Christopher Ryan

<https://www.wired.com/story/why-are-rich-people-so-mean/> ("We've been finding in our own laboratory research that small psychological interventions, small changes to people's values, small nudges in certain directions, can restore levels of egalitarianism and empathy," said Piff. "For instance, reminding people of the benefits of cooperation, or the advantages of community, cause wealthier individuals to be just as egalitarian as poor people." In one study, they showed subjects a short video—just 46 seconds long—about childhood poverty. They then checked the subjects' willingness to help a stranger presented to them in the lab who appeared to be in distress. An hour after watching the video, rich people were as willing to lend a hand as were poor subjects. Piff believes these results suggest that "these differences are not innate or categorical, but are malleable to slight changes in people's values, and little nudges of compassion and bumps of empathy.")

19.09.25 The Atlantic, *The Most Dangerous Way to Lose Yourself*, James Hamblin

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2019/09/identity-fusion-trump-allegiance/598699/> (Swann gradually developed the concept and deemed it "identity fusion." Along with a collaborator named Angel Gómez, he defined it in 2009 as when someone's "personal and social identities become functionally equivalent." The border between self and other, as Swann sees it, "become[s] porous." The phenomenon is sometimes described as a visceral feeling of oneness with a group or person, and sometimes as an expansion of the self. "When people are fused, your personal identity is now subsumed under something larger," says Jack Dovidio, a psychology professor at Yale. One way researchers test for fusion is to ask people to draw a circle that represents themselves, and a circle that represents another person (or group). Usually people draw overlapping circles, Dovidio explains. In fusion, people draw themselves entirely inside the other circle. "This isn't the normal way most people think about identity," says Jonas Kunst, a psychology researcher at the University of Oslo. In disagreements over politics, for example, many people believe they can change someone else's mind with a thoughtful-enough argument. Typically that's the case; people are willing to challenge their group identities, if reluctantly. In fusion, though, a perceived challenge to the group's ideology is a challenge to the self. Arguments about climate change, for example, might not actually be about climate change, and instead about people protecting their basic sense of order and consistency.)

19.09.20 NYT, *Why Republicans Play Dirty: They fear that if they stick to the rules, they will lose everything. Their behavior is a threat to democratic stability*, Steven Levitsky & Daniel Ziblatt

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/opinion/republicans-democracy-play-dirty.html> (Why is the Republican Party playing dirty? Republican leaders are not driven by an intrinsic or ideological contempt for democracy. They are driven by fear. ... When party leaders fear they cannot win future elections, or that defeat poses an existential threat to themselves or their constituents, the stakes rise. Their time horizons shorten. They throw

tomorrow to the wind and seek to win at any cost today. In short, desperation leads politicians to play dirty. ... Republicans appear to be in the grip of a similar panic today. Their medium-term electoral prospects are dim. For one, they remain an overwhelmingly white Christian party in an increasingly diverse society. ... The problem runs deeper than electoral math, however. Much of the Republican base views defeat as catastrophic. White Christians are losing more than an electoral majority; their once-dominant status in American society is eroding. Half a century ago, white Protestant men occupied nearly all our country's high-status positions: They made up nearly all the elected officials, business leaders and media figures. Those days are over, but the loss of a group's social status can feel deeply threatening. Many rank-and-file Republicans believe that the country they grew up in is being taken away from them. Slogans like "take our country back" and "make America great again" reflect this sense of peril.)

19.09.19 The Atlantic, *Why Some People Become Lifelong Readers*, Joe Pinsker
<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/09/love-reading-books-leisure-pleasure/598315/> (Paul also advised that parents seed books throughout the house, not stash them "preciously in your own bedroom, away from everyone else, or in one [specific] area of the house." It may seem expensive to assemble a large home library, but Paul points out that it's cheap to buy used books and free to borrow lots of them. "You don't need a lot of money to fill your home with books ... [and] it's very hard to have a bored child when there are always books around," she said. At one point in our interview, Russo referred to reading as a "private pleasure-delivery system," which seems like a key way to think about getting kids to read: There are, as so many parents are all too aware, loads of benefits to being able to read in terms of later-in-life outcomes, but the focus should be on helping kids discover the intrinsic value in it, in the moment. After that, other good things will come.)

19.09.19 The Daily Beast, *Just How Good Is the Impossible Burger for You or the Planet?*, Jay Michaelson
<https://www.thedailybeast.com/just-how-good-is-the-burger-kings-impossible-burger-for-you-or-the-planet> (Meanwhile, the health benefits of plant-based burgers are, at best, unclear. There's no question that Impossible products are heavily processed, beginning with genetically modified soybeans and continuing with an intensive process that likely removes a lot of the nutrients along the way. Do those costs outweigh the health benefits of reducing one's meat intake? It may depend on quantity. "What is healthy and not healthy is really complicated," Chandler said. "Eating lots of fried things and processed things all the time is not healthy, but eating them sparingly, as a treat, is fine.")

19.09.17 NYT, *Young People Are Going to Save Us All From Office Life*, Claire Cain Miller
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/17/style/generation-z-millennials-work-life-balance.html> (Jonathan Wong, 36, worked 80-hour weeks in management consulting when he became a father. His son would cry every time he saw his roller bag packed for another work trip, he said, and it was hard to take a break even to FaceTime his son before bedtime. So he moved to a job at RAND Corporation, the nonprofit policy research group — and took a 30 percent pay cut. "I can bring my kid to preschool every morning," he said. "If the overwork problem will ever be solved, guys need to be part of the solution.")

19.09.17 NYT, *Something Special Is Happening in Rural America: There is a "brain gain" afoot that suggests a national homecoming to less bustling spaces*, Sarah Smarsh
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/17/opinion/rural-america.html> (I grew up in and wrote a memoir about a place that by many measures during my Reagan-era childhood and Clinton-era adolescence was indeed "dying." American readers love a tale of escape from such places, populated by characters who exemplify addiction, abuse, bad decision-making. My memoir instead seeks, through historical facts and cultural analysis, to reveal the immense public forces of policy and socioeconomics that shaped my family's behaviors, opportunities and outcomes. I wrote affectionately yet unsparingly from that area, where I still

choose to reside. In the year since it was published, this less-common narrative has prompted thousands of people to find me at speaking events and book signings. They tell me this: Our stories are different but the same. I know the world you wrote about — it's deep in me, and I care about it. From Seattle to Charlottesville, they come bearing homegrown tomatoes (that's "maters" to us), fresh loaves of bread, small-town yearbooks, landscape photography, original paintings of big skies. They cry as they relate their own stories of departure, return, longing. These aren't just white people lamenting the loss of the family wheat farm. They are black women missing their families in the rural South, Muslim women organizing workers in meatpacking towns on the plains, young gay men hoping to return to their small-town roots. This is the rural America I know and love — a place rife with problems, yes, but containing diversity, vibrancy and cross-cultural camaraderie.)

19.09.15 NYT, *Counter Service Tipping: Who Gives?*, Seth Kugel

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/15/travel/ipad-tipping-gratuity.html> (In cafes, 48.5 percent of customers left tips, and for fast casual restaurants, it was 46.5 percent. The average tip for both was around 17 percent ... In other words, we are still at a point where it's up to you to decide where you stand along the generous to stingy spectrum, and know you are in good company. (Or at least in some kind of company.)

19.09.13 Vox, *The case for ditching the city and moving to the country*, Christopher Ingraham

<https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2019/9/13/20861387/city-vs-country-christopher-ingraham-book> (Race is lurking behind every social story, and I honestly don't know how it would've been if I were a black reporter. Or if, conversely, the place I ended up visiting ended up being someplace in Alabama with a very high African American population. It's hard to do a counterfactual on that. I mention in the book that I see a lot less overt racism here the way that I did in upstate New York. You don't see a lot of Confederate flags or symbols that have white pride connotations. The Trump thing is very complicated, though. I do believe that not all Trump voters are racist, but that in order to vote for Trump, you have to be okay with his racism on some level or another. You have to be able to rationalize it away. Because we are fairly privileged — we are white and middle class — a lot of his policy decisions don't affect us. It's not a life or death thing the way it is for many non-white people. I don't have to confront my neighbor about his voting record if I don't want to. And so I try to be empathetic about that, both in regards to my neighbors here and in regards to people elsewhere who are like, "I can't imagine living someplace where most people would vote for a guy who's locking up kids on the Southern border. I just couldn't do that.")

19.09.12 Politico, *'Why Are You Pissing In Our Face?': Inside Warren's War With the Obama Team*, Alex Thompson

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/09/12/warren-obama-2020-228068> ("When I raised it with Tim, he reassured me that they'd done the calculations and it was all going to work out. And what he meant was the survival of the banks," Warren says, recalling a meeting in the Treasury building in the fall of 2009. "He says 'We've foamed the runway -- enough that the big banks can land.' And the fact that millions of families were losing their homes, that millions of people lost their jobs, you know, savings, just wasn't part of that calculation." ... "Financial crises are not morality plays," says Summers. "Senator Warren was right and made a huge contribution by pushing for the CFPB but the idea that once crisis took hold you could resolve it from the bottom up was unrealistic and would have been catastrophic if attempted.")

19.09.11 Pocket, *The Case for Being Good Enough*, Brad Stulberg

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-case-for-being-good-enough> (Being perfect every once in a while and internalizing it as an ongoing expectation is a surefire way to lose motivation, experience anxiety, and burn out. Setting perfect as an ongoing bar rarely leads to your best performance — and certainly not to your best life. ... Good enough is a lot more probable than great. Good enough is a lot less angstful than great. And, the reality is that good enough over and over again is precisely how you become great to begin with.)

19.09.08 WaPo, *As plantations talk more honestly about slavery, some visitors are pushing back*, Hannah Knowles

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2019/09/08/plantations-are-talking-more-about-slavery-grappling-with-visitors-who-talk-back/> ("For someone like myself, going to Monticello is like an Elvis fan going to Graceland," one review from July reads. "Then to have the tour guide essentially make constant reference to what a bad person he really was just ruined it for me." ... The Thomas Jefferson Heritage Society is a staunch opponent of Monticello's decision to tell visitors Jefferson fathered children with Sally Hemings, after years of fierce disagreement over the strength of the evidence. John Works, a Jefferson descendant and president of the society, believes Monticello has overemphasized slavery at the expense of Jefferson's accomplishments. "There's a limit to the appeal, I think, of the slavery message," he said.)

19.09.08 Politico, *The Shocking Paper Predicting the End of Democracy: Human brains aren't built for self-rule, says Shawn Rosenberg. That's more evident than ever.*, Rick

Shenkman <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/09/08/shawn-rosenberg-democracy-228045>

(Rosenberg's theory is that over the next few decades, the number of large Western-style democracies around the globe will continue to shrink, and those that remain will become shells of themselves. Taking democracy's place, Rosenberg says, will be right-wing populist governments that offer voters simple answers to complicated questions ... And therein lies the core of his argument: Democracy is hard work and requires a lot from those who participate in it. It requires people to respect those with different views from theirs and people who don't look like them. It asks citizens to be able to sift through large amounts of information and process the good from the bad, the true from the false. It requires thoughtfulness, discipline and logic. Unfortunately, evolution did not favor the exercise of these qualities in the context of a modern mass democracy ... The irony is that more democracy—ushered in by social media and the Internet, where information flows more freely than ever before—is what has unmoored our politics, and is leading us towards authoritarianism. Rosenberg argues that the elites have traditionally prevented society from becoming a totally unfettered democracy; their "oligarchic 'democratic' authority" or "democratic control" has until now kept the authoritarian impulses of the populace in check.)

19.09.03 LinkedIn, *It's Later Than You Think*, J.R. Storment

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/its-later-than-you-think-j-r-storment?> (Many have asked what they can do to help. Hug your kids. Don't work too late. A lot of the things you are likely spending your time on you'll regret once you no longer have the time. I'm guessing you have 1:1 meetings on the books with a lot of people you work with. Do you have them regularly scheduled with your kids? If there's any lesson to take away from this, it's to remind others (and myself) not to miss out on the things that matter.)

19.09.03 NYT, *Is Dying at Home Overrated?: A palliative care physician struggles with the complex realities of dying at home, and the unintended consequences of making it a societal priority.*, Richard Leiter,

M.D. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/03/well/live/is-dying-at-home-overrated.html> (Unless a family has the significant resources necessary to hire aides or nurses, informal caregivers become responsible for nearly everything — from feeding to bathing to toileting. These tasks often get harder as the dying person weakens. In my experience, most family members want to care for their loved ones at home, but many are unaware of caregiving's physical and emotional toll. And the length of time a patient spends in hospice care is difficult to predict, sometimes requiring caregivers to take significant time away from work or other family members. Complicating matters, I frequently detect ambivalence in patients who tell me they want to die at home. Some are comforted by the reliability of the nursing care and easier accessibility of IV medications in the hospital. For others, dying at home may not be their top priority. Parents may want to protect their young children's physical space from death. Similarly, one patient's wife told me through tears that their adult son had died

suddenly in their home a few years earlier; she could not bear the thought of watching her husband die in the same place.)

19.08.26 Inc., *Are You Emotionally Intelligent? Here's How to Know for Sure*, Travis Bradberry
<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/are-you-emotionally-intelligent-here-s-how-to-know-for-sure> (It doesn't matter if they're introverted or extroverted, emotionally intelligent people are curious about everyone around them. This curiosity is the product of empathy, one of the most significant gateways to a high EQ. The more you care about other people and what they're going through, the more curiosity you're going to have about them. Emotionally intelligent people are flexible and are constantly adapting. They know that fear of change is paralyzing and a major threat to their success and happiness. They look for change that is lurking just around the corner, and they form a plan of action should these changes occur.)

19.08.26 The Atlantic, *Why Schools Are Banning Yoga*, Alia Wong
<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/why-schools-are-banning-yoga> (In the Cobb County case, some parents felt that the school was using a double standard in allowing yoga classes yet banning other forms of religious practice in schools. "No prayer in schools. Some don't even say the Pledge [of Allegiance], yet they're pushing ideology on our students," one mother, Susan Jaramillo, told a journalist for the area's NBC affiliate. "Some of those things are religious practices that we don't want our children doing in our schools." Yet the school's principal, who did end up apologizing for and revising the yoga curriculum, argued that much of the parents' criticism rested on false assumptions about the program—a parent cited by The Washington Post worried, for instance, that the school was promoting a "Far East mystical religion with crystals and chants to be practiced under the guise of stress release meditation." In reality, school-based yoga typically focuses on physical exercise or on relaxation and mindfulness. Some schools integrate it via in-classroom lessons that have kids engage in a few exercises at their desk during short breaks throughout the day. Other schools adopt yoga as an in- or after-school elective, while some incorporate it into regular PE classes.)

19.08.25 NBC News, *'A deep and boiling anger': NBC/WSJ poll finds a pessimistic America despite current economic satisfaction*
<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/meet-the-press/deep-boiling-anger-nbc-wsj-poll-finds-pessimistic-america-despite-n1045916> ("Four years ago, we uncovered a deep and boiling anger across the country engulfing our political system," said Democratic pollster Jeff Horwitt of Hart Research Associates, which conducted this survey in partnership with the Republican firm Public Opinion Strategies. "Four years later, with a very different political leader in place, that anger remains at the same level.")

19.08.16 NYT, *Momofuku's Secret Sauce: A 30-Year-Old C.E.O.*, Elizabeth Dunn
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/16/business/momofuku-ceo-marguerite-mariscal.html> (After reviewing the new guidebooks, Ms. Mariscal had a meeting with Mr. Chang — rapid-fire status updates on new business opportunities — and then led a town-hall-style forum, a chance for the company's 50 corporate employees to raise questions and concerns. Momofuku has been on a growth tear, and Ms. Mariscal was concerned that the pace of expansion had begun to wear on everyone. Today, though, the mood seemed buoyant. Fuku, the company's fast-casual fried chicken chain, had catered a spread of sandwiches, wraps, waffle fries and salads, and people sat cross-legged on the floor with plates on their laps. A television rolled video of a campfire. "We can all agree that the number of restaurants we've opened this year has been very taxing, for everyone in this room," Ms. Mariscal said. At one point, the company was opening a new restaurant every year or two; since taking capital in 2016 from RSE Ventures, the private investment fund, the size of the restaurant portfolio has more than doubled. Bar Wayo is Momofuku's 15th location, not including outposts of Fuku, and it is the company's sixth opening in just over a year. Momofuku said its restaurant revenue is approaching \$100 million per year.)

19.08.15 The Atlantic, *How Loneliness Begets Loneliness*, Olga Khazan

<https://getpocket.com/explore/item/how-loneliness-begets-loneliness> (A lack of social connections can spark inflammation and changes in the immune system, so lonely people are far more likely to die prematurely. Loneliness is more dangerous than obesity, and it's about as deadly as smoking. The threat is considered so serious that England has created an entire "Campaign to End Loneliness." But in a cruel twist, the loneliest among us are set up to get lonelier still. People with few social connections experience brain changes that cause them to be more likely to view human faces as threatening, making it harder for them to bond with others.)

19.08.14 Bloomberg, *WeWork IPO Shows It's the Most Magical Unicorn*, Shira Ovide

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-08-14/wework-ipo-shows-it-s-the-most-magical-unicorn> (And there are red flags about how WeWork is structured and operated. I am not joking when I say that the typically rote IPO filing section about transactions involving a company's CEO or other insiders is astonishing for WeWork. A glimpse at those disclosures: Rebekah Neumann — the CEO's wife and a company co-founder — is one of two or three people who would pick a successor if Adam Neumann dies or is incapacitated. It has already been reported that Neumann has personally owned at least parts of a handful of office buildings that WeWork leases and that he has taken out hundreds of millions of dollars in loans secured, in part, by his holdings of WeWork stock. And as previously reported, WeWork recently created a complex partnership structure that pays out profits to Neumann and others in a setup that minimizes their individual tax payments.)

19.08.13 The Guardian, *Danish bank launches world's first negative interest rate mortgage*, Patrick Collinson
<https://www.theguardian.com/money/2019/aug/13/danish-bank-launches-worlds-first-negative-interest-rate-mortgage> (In recognition of how puzzling the new mortgage is for customers, the bank's FAQ is littered with questions and statements such as *Hvordan kan det lade sig gøre?* (How is that possible?) and *Ja, du læste rigtigt* (Yes, you read that right). The mortgage is possible because Denmark, as well as Sweden and Switzerland, has seen rates in money markets drop to levels that turn banking upside-down. Høegh said Jyske Bank is able to go into money markets and borrow from institutional investors at a negative rate, and is simply passing this on to its customers. But the flipside is that savers will see nothing paid in interest on their deposits — and may also suffer as they go negative.)

19.08.08 WaPo, *I can no longer justify being a part of Trump's 'Complacent State.' So I'm resigning.*, Chuck Park

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/i-can-no-longer-justify-being-a-part-of-trumps-complacent-state-so-i-m-resigning/2019/08/08/fed849e4-af14-11e9-8e77-03b30bc29f64_story.html (Every day, we refuse visas based on administration priorities. We recite administration talking points on border security, immigration and trade. We plan travel itineraries, book meetings and literally hold doors open for the appointees who push Trump's toxic agenda around the world. So when I read a recent New York Times op-ed calling for the public shaming of the "midlevel functionaries who make the system run," I squirmed in my seat. We rank-and-file, like the Justice Department lawyer who recently endured public scrutiny for defending the administration's terrible treatment of detained children, don't like to be called out. And when we are, we shrink behind a standard argument — that we are career officials serving nonpartisan institutions. ... I'm ashamed of how long it took me to make this decision. My excuse might be disappointing, if familiar to many of my colleagues: I let career perks silence my conscience. I let free housing, the countdown to a pension and the prestige of representing a powerful nation overseas distract me from ideals that once seemed so clear to me. I can't do that anymore.)

19.08.02 The Guardian, *The party of white men? Will Hurd's exit exposes Republicans' diversity problem*, Tom McCarthy <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/aug/02/republican-party-trump-will-hurd-diversity> ("Hurd leaving is basically an admission that he doesn't think the GOP is going to change," tweeted New York Times columnist Jamelle Bouie. "And as non-whites leave the party, what's left of the guardrails keeping the party from explicit full white nationalist erode even further." ... "The GOP understands that it's hit a low point as far as its ability to represent the American public," Albert Eisenberg, a spokesman for Catalyst PAC, a pro-diversity Republican group, told the Capitol hill publication Roll Call in May. "Our brand is really toxic.")

19.07.26 (accessed) Nautilus, *Is Consciousness Fractal?*, Jordana Cepelewicz <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/is-consciousness-fractal> (That may be why, for instance, we tend to gaze out the window to refresh ourselves when we're tired or having trouble focusing at work. Or why patients recover more quickly when their hospital room has a natural view, and why art that takes nature as its subject helps lower anxiety and stress levels. Take a widely read study published in 1984 by Roger Ulrich, an architecture professor who focuses on healthcare design. He and his team examined the medical records of patients recovering from a type of gallbladder surgery in a hospital located in a Pennsylvania suburb. They found, after controlling for other influences, that patients in rooms with a window overlooking leafy trees recovered on average one day faster, suffered from fewer postsurgical complications, and took less pain medication than patients whose window opened up on a brick wall. "The parts of the brain that recognize a beautiful view are very rich in endorphins, a feel-good, anti-pain molecule," says Esther Sternberg, an immunologist and the founding director of the University of Arizona Institute on Place and Wellbeing.)

19.07.25 The Atlantic, *Soon There Will Be Unlimited Hair*, James Hamblin <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2019/07/hair-for-all/594826/> ("It's a huge breakthrough," he says. "There are many other factors that have to be worked out, but this certainly is really exciting." At least for the people who can afford it. A head of hair has long been among the few things money can't buy—a system beyond the control of rich and poor alike. Creating new hair for a person, follicle by follicle, in bespoke 3-D printed scaffolds, stands to be exorbitantly expensive. Though as technological develops costs should decline, hair regeneration will not likely be widely affordable. Even a wealthy country like the U.S. struggles to provide basic medical care for tens of millions of citizens. Balding could become "optional," but only for the people with the means to make it so.)

19.07.24 Bloomberg, *The Logic Behind the Bonds That Eat Your Money*, John Ainger <https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2019-negative-yield-debt/> (The U.S. has never had negative rates on conventional Treasuries, but it's come close. Two-year yields touched 0.14% in 2011 and stayed very low until the Federal Reserve started hiking rates at the end of 2015. Now, amid worries about the economy, the Fed is expected to go back to cutting rates this month. With 10-year Treasuries paying about 2%, negative seems a long way off—the price of the bond would have to rise about 20%. But the minus sign has become so commonplace in so much of the world, nothing seems impossible. Says Scott Thiel, chief fixed-income strategist at BlackRock Inc.: "There's no chapter in your bond math book on this.")

19.07.22 NYT, *The Airport Lounge Is Much Improved, if You Can Squeeze In*, Julie Weed <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/22/business/airport-lounges-alaska-airlines-seattle.html> (Lounges are following wellness trends as well. Healthier food, quiet relaxation areas and even short spa treatments are starting to pop up. These are generally free of charge. The travel and food writer Jodi Ettenberg, who writes the blog Legal Nomads, has celiac disease and has noticed that some lounges have started carrying and labeling gluten-free foods for diners with allergies and other restrictions. Designers are paying more attention to family travel, and some are creating playroom spaces. These seem to be as much for small children who need to romp as they are to keep noise levels down for other travelers.)

19.07.19 WSJ, *The New Ways Your Boss Is Spying on You*, Sarah Krouse

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-new-ways-your-boss-is-spying-on-you-11563528604>? (“Your employer controls your livelihood and if they say ‘give me this data’, it’s very hard to say no,” Mr. Waber says. ... Humanyze shifted its focus to Bluetooth badges that can track a worker’s movements throughout the office and found success. It pairs that data with information on the frequency of their emails to help companies measure staff collaboration and productivity.)

19.07.19 NYT, *Safe Deposit Boxes Aren’t Safe*, Stacy Cowley

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/19/business/safe-deposit-box-theft.html> (Banks increasingly regard safe deposit boxes as more of a headache than they’re worth. They’re expensive to build, complicated to maintain and not very lucrative. The four largest American banks — JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Wells Fargo and Citigroup — rarely install them in new branches. Capital One stopped renting out new boxes in 2016. A dwindling number of customers wanted them, a bank spokeswoman said. ... Wells Fargo’s safe-deposit-box contract caps the bank’s liability at \$500. Citigroup limits it to 500 times the box’s annual rent, while JPMorgan Chase has a \$25,000 ceiling on its liability. Banks typically argue — and courts have in many cases agreed — that customers are bound by the bank’s most-current terms, even if they leased their box years or even decades earlier. ... “My impression about safe deposit boxes was that it was like you were putting things in Fort Knox,” he said. “Nothing could happen to it.” He doesn’t think that anymore.)

19.07.11 The Atlantic, *The Slackification of the American Home*, Taylor Lorenz

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2019/07/families-slack-asana/593584/> (Parents are finding project-management platforms such as Trello, Asana, and Jira, in addition to Slack, a workplace communication tool (its slogan is “Where work happens”), particularly useful in their personal lives. In other words, confronted with relentless busyness, some modern households attire starting to run more like offices ... After she and her husband arrive at a decision as parents, it’s not uncommon for one of them to send an email recap, something along the lines of “As per our earlier conversation, we have decided that the children will be enrolled in tennis camp over the summer. Please let me know if you want to follow up on this.” She acknowledges that such a note is “more like an email I think most people send at their jobs,” but says it helps minimize miscommunication and confusion about the many things she and her husband are juggling.)

19.06.29 (accessed) 2019.02.24 LAT, *Forty years later, Iran’s Islamic Revolution still casts a shadow over ‘Tehrangles’*, Melissa Etehad

<https://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-ln-iranian-revolution-anniversary-20190224-story.html> (On a recent afternoon in Tehrangeles, 36-year-old Shahab Vahdat took a drag from a shisha, a water pipe also known as hookah, as Persian music blared in the background of Naab Cafe. His family fled Tehran on a cold, snowy day in 1985, when he was 3. His parents placed him in the back of a pickup truck and crossed the border into Pakistan. Vahdat, who now works at a marketing agency, said his family left Iran because in the years after the revolution, they no longer felt safe because of their Jewish faith. Vahdat, who has spent most of his adult life in Los Angeles, strongly identifies with his Iranian heritage. Aside from Tehrangeles’ Persian restaurants, Iranian memorabilia shops and annual Nowruz celebrations, Vahdat values living in Westwood since it has helped keep him rooted in Persian culture. “I’m half in one space and half in the other space,” he said.)

19.06.05 Vox, *David French vs. Sohrab Ahmari and the battle dividing conservatives, explained*, Jane Coaston

<https://www.vox.com/2019/6/5/18637391/david-french-sohrab-ahmari-conservatism-libertarians-divide> (The war of words among conservatives over the French-Ahmari debate, while somewhat baffling on its face, is evidence of a larger fight that’s taking place among conservatives — one that’s seemingly about myriad

different policy areas, from social media companies and government regulation to economic policy. But it's really about something much more fundamental: the end of "fusionism" within the conservative movement. After decades of cordial friendship among different right-leaning factions, started in opposition to what the Heritage Foundation termed "hegemonic liberalism," libertarians like national Libertarian Party Chair Nicholas Sarwark think the "conservative-libertarian fusion is pretty much dead," as Sarwark told me in an interview. ... Should conservatism support a limited government, even if that puts nuclear families at risk? Should conservatism support free markets, even if that means people can readily buy pornography that saps their moral virtue? What would conservative victory, real, true victory, look like? Who would lose if Ahmari conservatism or Carlsonian conservatism or any of the conservatisms won? What kind of moral compromises should conservatives make to win a cultural or political battle? Should conservatism aim to persuade liberals or inoculate conservatives against liberalism? Should conservatism care what private citizens do in their bedrooms or boardrooms or places of worship? The debate over libertarianism and conservatism, and over Ahmari and French, isn't just about what conservatives believe. It's about what conservatism is.)

19.05.26 (accessed) 18.11.01 NYT, *What Makes Superstar Conductor Gustavo Dudamel So Good?*, Brian Phillips <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/01/magazine/gustavo-dudamel-los-angeles-philharmonic.html> (Dudamel's jean jacket was draped over his seat back. His sneakers, dangling above the floor, tapped on the stool's chrome ring. He insisted on moving the chorus closer to the orchestra — moving them onstage, out of the audience seats, a change that demanded a serious reconfiguration of the planned arrangement of forces. Then he addressed the musicians. When Rousseau was a young man, he said, he loved to talk more than to listen. But as Rousseau grew older, he came to understand that listening was sometimes more important. "It is so important here, this concept," he said. "It's not about not playing — I'm not telling you not to play. But if you aren't willing to do this kind of listening-playing, then you'll never be able to do this. We'll never have the space of the — the magic of that uniqueness. It's not about where the singers are. They could be here in front, and I'm sure we would still have this problem. It's about finding the way to be in the service of this" — he tapped the score — "and how it asks us to create that for the singers. So please." He raised the baton, a levare. On his downbeat the orchestra began to play. The winds came in first, with a fey, lilting figure, light but energetic, like the sound of water splashing in a fountain. Then a quartet began to sing. They had rehearsed this number a dozen times over the course of the week, but now something had changed. The violins began to double the singers, while the winds played extravagant swirls around them. The effect was astonishing. Where the chorus had sounded diluted, it was now vividly alive and present in the music. By the time Dudamel finished his adjustments, one of the singers had called out to him: "Thank you!" The way Dudamel looks at it, he's not a ruler; he's more like an ally of the players. He is on hand to offer his thoughts, help them sound their best. Cooperation gets better results. Musicians, he thinks, are like everyone else. Music is supposed to feel good. Doesn't everyone do their best when they feel good?)

19.02.25 NYT, *Koreans in Japan Embrace the North as the World Shuns It*, Motoko Rich <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/25/world/asia/korea-japan-diaspora.html> (With each generation, the family's link to North Korea fades. One granddaughter, Misa An, 22, visited the Oshimas recently and browsed his photos from North Korea. "Do they have cellphones?" she asked. "Do they go out to eat?" Ms. An said her grandfather never spoke much about the family's history. But at a birthday celebration two years ago, she recalled, he talked about his parents, how they came to Japan and later left, and how he remained. "He decided to stay behind and live alone," she said. "And because of that, we are now all here.")

19.02.25 NYT, *2019 Is a Sensitive Year for China. Xi Is Nervous.*, Chris Buckley <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/25/world/asia/china-xi-warnings.html> (China's leader, Xi Jinping, abruptly summoned hundreds of officials to Beijing recently, forcing some to reschedule long-planned local assemblies. The meeting seemed orchestrated to convey anxious urgency. The Communist Party, Mr. Xi told the officials,

faces major risks on all fronts and must batten down the hatches. Whether dealing with foreign policy, trade, unemployment, or property prices, he declared, officials would be held responsible if they slipped up and let dangers spiral into real threats. “Globally, sources of turmoil and points of risk are multiplying,” he told the gathering in January at the Central Party School. At home, he added, “the party is at risk from indolence, incompetence and of becoming divorced from the public.” The speech was one of Mr. Xi’s starkest warnings since he came to power in 2012, and has been echoed at hundreds of local party meetings nationwide. It underscores how slowing growth and China’s grinding trade fight with the United States have magnified the party leadership’s chronic fears of social unrest. Trade talks in Washington between American and Chinese officials ended last week without an official agreement, although President Trump delayed a deadline to increase tariffs on Chinese goods, saying that negotiators were making progress. “Beijing is confronting significant pressure from the international community over its political and business practices that only adds to its difficulties in dealing with its domestic issues,” said Elizabeth C. Economy, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York who wrote “The Third Revolution,” a study of Mr. Xi.)

19.02.25 NYT, *How Lindsey Graham Went From Trump Skeptic to Trump Sidekick*, Mark Leibovich
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/25/magazine/lindsey-graham-what-happened-trump.html> (“Well, O.K., from my point of view, if you know anything about me, it’d be odd not to do this,” he said. I asked what “this” was. “‘This,’” Graham said, “is to try to be relevant.” Politics, he explained, was the art of what works and what brings desired outcomes. “I’ve got an opportunity up here working with the president to get some really good outcomes for the country,” he told me. An outcome of particular interest to Graham, at the moment, is getting re-elected to a fourth Senate term in South Carolina, where Trump owns commanding approval numbers, especially among the hard-core Republicans who in the past questioned Graham’s devotion to their conservative cause. Sure, Graham allowed, you might emphasize some things more than others when you’re trying to appeal to the party base. “You just showcase your issues, right?” he said. ... In acknowledging this, Graham was speaking to me as a fellow creature of Washington, fully versed in the election-year “showcasing” he is now engaged in — one of the “people who are so smart” that he derided the day before. “If you don’t want to get re-elected, you’re in the wrong business,” he said. ... “Relevance,” Graham said, returning to the word as if it were a mantra. “That was John McCain’s word.” ... Trump is an entertainer and an agitator, which Graham says he can relate to, in a way. “The point with Trump is, he’s in on the joke,” Graham said. I asked Graham if he is in on the joke, too. “Oh, 100 percent, 100 percent.” He laughed. “Oh, people have no idea.” I asked him to explain the joke to me. “If you could go to dinner with us. ... ” he said, shaking his head.)

19.02.01 The Atlantic, *The White Flight From Football*, Alana Senuels
<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2019/02/football-white-flight-racial-divide/581623/> (Research suggests that tackle football can cause long-term brain injury, and as a result, many parents are telling their kids they can’t play. In the 2017–18 school year, 6.6 percent fewer high-school athletes participated in 11-player tackle football than in the 2008–09 school year, according to the National Federation of State High School Associations. Yet not all parents are holding back their kids from tackle football at equal rates, which is creating a troubling racial divide. Kids in mostly white upper-income communities in the Northeast, Midwest, and West are leaving football for other sports such as lacrosse or baseball. But black kids in lower-income communities without a lot of other sports available are still flocking to football.)

19.01.31 BBC, *Why some Japanese pensioners want to go to jail*
<https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-47033704> (Toshio represents a striking trend in Japanese crime. In a remarkably law-abiding society, a rapidly growing proportion of crimes is carried about by over-65s. In 1997 this age group accounted for about one in 20 convictions but 20 years later the figure had grown to more than one in five - a rate that far outstrips the growth of the over-65s as a proportion of the population (though they

now make up more than a quarter of the total). ... "Among the elderly who commit crimes a number have this turning point in their middle life. There is some trigger. They lose a wife or children and they just can't cope with that... Usually people don't commit crime if they have people to look after them and provide them with support." Toshio's story about being driven to crime as a result of poverty is just an "excuse", Kanichi Yamada suggests. The core of the problem is his loneliness. And one factor that may have prompted him to reoffend, he speculates, was the promise of company in jail.)

19.01.30 NYT, *Can China Turn the Middle of Nowhere Into the Center of the World Economy?*, Ben Mauk <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/01/29/magazine/china-globalization-kazakhstan.html> (The national railway company of Kazakhstan owns 51 percent of Khorgos Gateway. The remaining 49 percent is split between two Chinese state-owned companies. Khamzin viewed China's participation not as economic imperialism but as proof of the port's likelihood of success. The Chinese, he explained, "are the kind of people that if they saw no commercial opportunity, they wouldn't invest here." Such arrangements are less one-sided in Kazakhstan than in some of the more debt-strapped B.R.I. countries, so it's very unlikely that what happened in Sri Lanka will happen here. But Chinese investments have in all likelihood muffled Kazakhstan's response to the crackdown in Xinjiang. ... China is said to be spending billions of dollars building up its side of Khorgos. By contrast, Kazakhstan's share of the I.C.B.C. is mostly a dream of the future. Projects like a constellation of luxury hotels, a sports complex and a Disneyland-style theme park called Happy Land Khorgos have languished for lack of funding. Fields of rubble and stalled construction projects are scattered among the few small retail buildings and the yurt-shaped gift shops that are the Kazakh side's most distinctive feature.)

19.01.29 The Guardian, *White gold: the unstoppable rise of alternative milks*, Oliver Franklin-Wallis <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2019/jan/29/white-gold-the-unstoppable-rise-of-alternative-milks-oat-soy-rice-coconut-plant> (Plant milks received a boost from their association with clean eating, a craze that has also had the effect of linking dairy with negative health issues. Clean eating, advocated by a fresh-skinned, glossy crop of wellness bloggers and Instagram celebrities, argued for the elimination of any foods deemed overly processed, allergenic, or otherwise "unnatural": gluten, caffeine, meat and dairy. Its proponents blamed lactose intolerance as the cause of a range of ailments, including acne, eczema, lethargy, joint pain and a variety of digestive issues. And, as the clean eaters warned their readers off dairy, they sent them into the willing arms of plant milk startups. A steady supply of attractive millennial influencers filled their Instagram feeds with appetising shots of peanut-milk Thai curries and gluten-free beetroot bread. (According to industry analysts, one of the keys to the plant-based trend is that it looks appetising on Instagram.) The clean eaters did what years of vegan campaigning never could. Suddenly, giving up milk wasn't just a health issue. It was part of living your best and most beautiful life. ... Consumers have also caught on that the actual almond content of most almond milks is minuscule. Both Silk and Alpro contain just 2% almonds. "It's actually a water-based emulsion that you're adding oils, a lot of sugar and gums to, and then just adding a couple of nuts on top," Elmhurst's Cheryl Mitchell said. "As a business model, it's great – any time you can sell water, right? That's essentially what they're doing." The industry insiders I spoke to agreed that almond's moment is over. Right now the real growth is in coconut, and in oat.)

19.01.29 New Yorker, *Kamala Harris's Choices*, Tyler Comrie <https://www.newyorker.com/news/the-political-scene/kamala-harriss-choices/amp> (When politicians tell their own stories, they often emphasize the hardscrabble parts, even if those took place long ago. Harris, winningly, does not. Raised for accomplishment, she achieved success quickly, and she suggests, in glimpses, a comfortable personal life. She does not just cook beef stew but Alice Waters's recipe. Her engagement—to Doug Emhoff, the Los Angeles-based managing partner of a law firm, whom she married in 2014—takes place between a professional trip to Mexico and a personal one to Florence. Harris describes her frustration

when her husband, who is white, is relaxed on the customs line while she is on edge and prepared, recalling all the times her brown-skinned mother was followed around a department store with suspicion.)

19.01.26 NYT, *A Frat Boy and a Gentleman*, Alexandra Robbins

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/26/opinion/sunday/fraternity-sexual-assault-college.html> (During a fraternity party at a West Coast college in 2016, a drunk boy and an equally drunk girl went into a bedroom. Two freshmen noticed them go upstairs. They rounded up several other students and found the couple. One student, flanked by the rest as backup, said to the boy: “Hey, dude? You can’t do this.” Another student offered to walk the girl home. The students who thwarted a potential crisis were neither women nor members of a sexual assault awareness group; they were freshman members of the fraternity that hosted the party. They had been counseled by their chapter president, who told me this story, that it was their mission to prevent sexual assaults and to treat women right. Americans demonize fraternities as bastions of toxic masculinity where young men go to indulge their worst impulses. Universities have cracked down: Since November 2017, more than a dozen have suspended all fraternity events. But I spent more than two years interviewing fraternity members nationwide for a book about what college students think it means to “be a man,” and what I learned was often heartening. Contrary to negative headlines and popular opinion, many fraternities are encouraging brothers to defy stereotypical hypermasculine standards and to simply be good people.)

19.01.25 The Guardian, *The business of kidnapping: inside the secret world of hostage negotiation*, Joel Simon

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2019/jan/25/business-of-kidnapping-inside-the-secret-world-of-hostage-negotiation-ransom-insurance> (When K&R insurance first came on the market, the policyholders were left on their own to negotiate with the kidnappers. But in the mid-1970s, an insurance broker named Julian Radcliffe came up with an idea that would revolutionise the industry. Along with a few colleagues, Radcliffe convinced their company to set up a subsidiary focused on hostage response. The subsidiary, which they named Control Risks, would hire security experts – mostly former military and police – to handle negotiations. The cost of hiring the consultant was included in the policy and borne by the insurance company. In 1982, Control Risks became an independent company. ... Over the past few decades, the K&R insurance business has grown. More than 75% of Fortune 500 companies have K&R insurance policies. Today two insurers – Hiscox in the UK and AIG in the US – dominate the market, and there are also many security firms that specialise in kidnap response. Hostage negotiation has become something of an industry, with conferences, conventions and shared strategies. More than 97% of kidnappings handled by professional negotiators are successfully resolved through the payment of ransom, according to several different security consultants with access to internal industry data. A small percentage of hostages escape, and a very few are rescued through high-risk operations. Less than 1% are killed.)

19.01.25 The Bulwark, *Darwin Is Coming for the GOP*, Rachael Larimore

<https://thebulwark.com/darwin-is-coming-for-the-gop/> (Older Republicans are everyone’s cranky uncle at Thanksgiving.)

1901.24 CNN, *How to solve the world’s plastics problem: Bring back the milk man*, Danielle Wiener-Bronner

<https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2019/01/business/loop-reusable-packaging-mission-ahead/index.html> (Szaky asked companies to think differently about who owns their packaging. Today, companies sell consumers both the product and the package it comes in. Ultimately, it’s up to the customer — and also the municipality where they live — whether an empty bottle gets recycled or tossed in a landfill. Under the current system, the fate of the bottle is out of the manufacturer’s hands, so companies aim to produce the cheapest possible packages, Szaky said. But what if, instead, the manufacturer retained ownership of the bottle by collecting and reusing

it? The company could count it as a longer-term asset on its balance sheet and depreciate it over time. Under that system, the manufacturer would be incentivized to invest more resources in an elegant, durable design, Szaky argued. At Szaky's pitch meetings, some important subtext went unsaid. The plastic waste that ends up in landfills and oceans has the logos of the world's biggest brands all over it. He had specifically targeted companies that were featured on a Greenpeace list of worst plastics polluters, because he knew they had a potential public relations crisis on their hands. "I don't have to rub this in their face," Szaky said, because the companies are "painfully" aware of their reputations.)

19.01.24 WaPo, *'This is your fault': GOP senators clash over shutdown inside private luncheon*, Sean Sullivan https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/this-is-your-fault-gop-senators-clash-over-shutdown-inside-private-luncheon/2019/01/24/cde0ca22-2045-11e9-8b59-0a28f2191131_story.html ("This is your fault," Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) told Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) at one point, according to two Republicans who attended the lunch and witnessed the exchange. "Are you suggesting I'm enjoying this?" McConnell snapped back, according to the people who attended the lunch. ... The outbursts highlighted the toll the shutdown has taken on Republican lawmakers, who are dealing with growing concerns from constituents and blame from Democrats, all while facing pressure from conservatives to stand with Trump in his demand for money to build a wall on the border with Mexico.)

19.01.24 NYT, *A Rival Who Can Flummox Trump: A Powerful Woman Named Nancy Pelosi*, Sheryl Stolberg <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/24/us/politics/trump-nancy-pelosi.html> (Ms. Pelosi's allies have been celebrating. During a closed-door meeting of Democrats, Representative James E. Clyburn of South Carolina, the No. 3. Democrat, introduced Ms. Pelosi by quoting from the ancient Chinese military treatise, Sun Tzu's "The Art of War," according to a Democratic aide in the room. "Victorious warriors win first and then go to war, while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win," Mr. Clyburn said. Turning to Ms. Pelosi, he said, "Thank you for winning for us. Now let's go to war.")

19.01.21 WaPo, *Senate Republicans all but surrender to Trump on wall despite shutdown's toll*, Seung Min Kim https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/senate-republicans-all-but-surrender-to-trump-on-wall-despite-shutdown-toll/2019/01/20/dc3efb96-1b56-11e9-a804-c35766b9f234_story.html ("I'm ready to vote for anything that the president agrees to sign," added Sen. John Barrasso (Wyo.), the third-ranking Senate Republican. "And once we get that, I'm a 'yes' vote." The posture is a stark turnaround from a month ago, when Senate Republicans voted unanimously to fund the federal government without satisfying Trump's wall request. It also stands in contrast to the first two years of the Trump administration, when Republicans controlled all levers of government yet failed to deliver on the wall. Few in the GOP matched Trump's enthusiasm for a wall that he repeatedly promised Mexico would finance. Throughout the dozens of interviews with The Washington Post, only six Republican senators were willing to say they would support reopening the government without wall money and without the president's approval being a precondition. Some Republicans, such as Sens. Cory Gardner (Colo.), Susan Collins (Maine) and Lisa Murkowski (Alaska), have made it clear almost since the shutdown began that they would back spending legislation to end the impasse, even without border wall funding. "Just a few weeks ago, they had no qualms in saying, 'yeah, let's move [a stopgap funding measure] until the eighth of February' with nothing. They didn't ask for anything with that and they were good with that then," Murkowski said of her Republican colleagues. "And now we're not good with it?")

19.01.18 The Bulwark, *Trump, Cohen, and Buzzfeed: Is This the Big One?*, Andrew Egger <https://thebulwark.com/trump-cohen-and-buzzfeed-is-this-the-big-one/> (Because if true, the allegations in the new report render the legal debate between the Mariotti view and the Barr-Wisenberg view moot. If this Buzzfeed report is accurate, and there is hard evidence to show that Trump ordered Cohen to commit perjury

by lying to Congress, that would be obstruction, open and shut. BuzzFeed's anonymous sources suggest there is indeed hard evidence. "The special counsel's office," the report states, "learned about Trump's directive for Cohen to lie to Congress through interviews with multiple witnesses from the Trump Organization and internal company emails, text messages, and a cache of other documents." The importance of these allegations simply cannot be overstated: If this is true, and Mueller can prove it, that's the whole ball game.)

19.01.18 Nat Rev, *Against the White Male Theory of History*, Christian Alejandro Gonzalez
<https://www.nationalreview.com/2019/01/white-male-theory-of-history-wrong-oversimplification/> (What is needed is a total rejection of the racial obsessions of the far Right and the radical Left, i.e., a rejection of all conceptions of history that make race the fundamental and omnipresent unit of analysis, at the expense of nuance, precision, and ultimately truth. Peering back through thousands of years of history and lumping people into an unchanging (insofar as it caused good or evil) category of "white" actually reifies that category; it ignores that whiteness has not always been the operative and determinant causal factor behind the actions of people with light skin. Indeed, if the sole operative identity we have for analyzing history is "white males," how are we to explain (for example) the European wars of religion, or the Napoleonic wars, or the existence of white abolitionists, or all the various things that caused "white people" to ferociously disagree and go to war with one other? We can't, because by using an inappropriate historical lens, a relatively recent identity category is extended far beyond helpful applicability. Instead, to really grasp the events of history, we must introduce other categories into our analysis — Catholic and Huguenot, British and French, serf and lord, middle class and aristocrat, conservative and liberal, and so forth. The error to be avoided, then, is the essentializing of "the white race," a rhetorical move that functions mainly to turn "whites" into abstractions capable only of great good or great evil. White chauvinists and white-bashers must face the fact that white people are neither inherently more evil nor more capable of greatness than any other "race." The right-wing and the left-wing White Male Theories of History are wrong morally and historically — and for that reason they should be categorically rejected.)

19.01.17 Nat Rev, *A New Report Accuses Trump of Suborning Perjury, the Gravest Allegation Yet*, David French
<https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/report-accuses-donald-trump-of-suborning-perjury-like-clinton-and-nixon/> (If Trump "directed" Cohen — his own attorney — to lie, he faces very real legal jeopardy. In fact, Trump's alleged misconduct now tracks the alleged misconduct of Bill Clinton and Richard Nixon. In his articles of impeachment (Nixon resigned before he could be impeached), Nixon was accused of, among other things: ... Again, we don't have confirmation of these claims, but they are very troubling indeed. And let's recall, the alleged order to lie was about the immensely important matter of a presidential candidate's reported desire to secure an extremely lucrative business deal from arguably our nation's chief geopolitical foe — a foe that was even then attempting to interfere with an American presidential election. This is a serious matter. It's vital that we learn promptly whether this report is supported by meaningful evidence. If Robert Mueller has the goods, we need to see them. Soon.)

19.01.17 Cook, *Trump Is Unifying Democrats Instead of Consolidating His Base*, Amy Walter
<https://www.cookpolitical.com/analysis/national/national-politics/trump-unifying-democrats-instead-consolidating-his-base> (By this point, it's pretty clear that the president and the GOP are in a very deep hole. The wall hasn't become more popular. The majority of the public blames the shutdown on Trump. A CNN poll found that just 66 percent of Republicans agree that building the wall will help solve the crisis on the border — not exactly a ringing endorsement. But, what should worry Trump the most - and could be more problematic in the long run - was this finding in the Quinnipiac poll: When asked who they trusted more on border security, Democrats in Congress were ahead of Trump by 5 points (49 to 44 percent). In other words, not only is Trump

losing the argument on the wall and the shutdown, but he's also losing on the issue of safety and security. That's losing the battle AND losing the war.)

19.01.17 NYT, *Kamala Harris Was Not a 'Progressive Prosecutor'*, Lara Bazelon

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/17/opinion/kamala-harris-criminal-justice.html> (Time after time, when progressives urged her to embrace criminal justice reforms as a district attorney and then the state's attorney general, Ms. Harris opposed them or stayed silent. Most troubling, Ms. Harris fought tooth and nail to uphold wrongful convictions that had been secured through official misconduct that included evidence tampering, false testimony and the suppression of crucial information by prosecutors. ... But if Kamala Harris wants people who care about dismantling mass incarceration and correcting miscarriages of justice to vote for her, she needs to radically break with her past. A good first step would be to apologize to the wrongfully convicted people she has fought to keep in prison and to do what she can to make sure they get justice. She should start with George Gage.)

19.01.16 The Atlantic, *'Intensive' Parenting Is Now the Norm in America*, Joe Pinsker

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2019/01/intensive-helicopter-parenting-inequality/580528/> (Supervised, enriching playtime. Frequent conversations about thoughts and feelings. Patient, well-reasoned explanations of household rules. And extracurriculars. Lots and lots of extracurriculars. These are the oft-stereotyped hallmarks of a parenting style that has been common in upper-middle-class households for at least a generation. But according to a recent survey, this child-rearing philosophy now has a much broader appeal, one that holds across race and class. The survey, which polled roughly 3,600 parents of children ages 8 to 10 who were demographically and economically representative of the national population, found evidence that hands-on parenting is not just what the well-off practice—it's what everyone aspires to.)

19.01.16 NYT, *White House Redefines Who Is Essential to Get Parts of Government Moving Again*, Katie Rogers

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/16/us/politics/white-house-essential-shutdown.html> (Gregory O'Duden, the general counsel of the National Treasury Employees Union, which has sued the administration on behalf of 70,000 of the I.R.S.'s work force of 80,000, accused administration officials of manipulating laws to keep Americans happy and score political points. "A law that was intended to be a narrow exception they're treating as a wide open path for them to run through," Mr. O'Duden said. The White House, he said, "has concocted what we think is an untenable rationale that will require tens of thousands of employees to come back and not be paid." Former administration officials who have examined the same sets of rules in previous shutdowns — and landed on different interpretations — are puzzled by the White House's actions. John A. Koskinen, who retired as I.R.S. commissioner in 2017, questioned whether the efforts violated the Antideficiency Act, which prohibits the government from spending money for any reason that Congress has not appropriated. He suggested that the Office of Management and Budget was using a loose interpretation of government regulations that say unfunded government operations could only continue during a shutdown if needed to "protect life and property." "What they're doing is trying to eliminate as much of the backlash against the shutdown as they can," said Mr. Koskinen, who was the point person at the budget office during the 1995 shutdown. "There's nothing wrong with that, theoretically, as long as you're doing it according to what is legal.")

19.01.16 The Atlantic, *What People Actually Say Before They Die*, Michael Erard

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2019/01/how-do-people-communicate-before-death/580303/> (Many people die in such silence, particularly if they have advanced dementia or Alzheimer's that robbed them of language years earlier. For those who do speak, it seems their vernacular is often banal. From a doctor I heard that people often say, "Oh fuck, oh fuck." Often it's the names of wives, husbands, children. "A nurse from the hospice told me that the last words of dying men often resembled each other," wrote Hajo

Schumacher in a September essay in *Der Spiegel*. “Almost everyone is calling for ‘Mommy’ or ‘Mama’ with the last breath.” ... Delirium strikes people of all ages after surgery and is also common at the end of life, a frequent sign of dehydration and over-sedation. Delirium is so frequent then, wrote the New Zealand psychiatrist Sandy McLeod, that “it may even be regarded as exceptional for patients to remain mentally clear throughout the final stages of malignant illness.” ... “Famous last words” are the cornerstone of a romantic vision of death—one that falsely promises a final burst of lucidity and meaning before a person passes. “The process of dying is still very profound, but it’s a very different kind of profoundness,” says Bob Parker, the chief compliance officer of the home health agency Intrepid USA. “Last words—it doesn’t happen like the movies. That’s not how patients die.” We are beginning to understand that final interactions, if they happen at all, will look and sound very different.)

19.01.16 WaPo, *‘She wields the knife’: Pelosi moves to belittle and undercut Trump in shutdown fight*, Paul Kane

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/she-wields-the-knife-pelosi-moves-to-belittle-and-undercut-trump-in-shutdown-fight/2019/01/16/e6861fbc-19b0-11e9-88fe-f9f77a3bcb6c_story.html (White House aides said Trump respects Pelosi, and he has suggested they strike a deal on infrastructure. He often brings up Pelosi’s Catholic faith. Before one meeting last year, he asked her to pray, and at a meeting earlier this year, he said that the Vatican had a wall and that she was a “good Catholic,” according to someone familiar with the exchange. ... But for now, at least, Pelosi has kept her members united, in part with stealth moves like Wednesday’s State of the Union letter. She kept her plans a secret from most of her own leadership team, though she gave a heads-up to Schumer. The two have been working in sync, talking five to six times a day during the shutdown. Pelosi asked Schumer to trek across the Capitol Wednesday morning to attend the House caucus meeting and show his support for the plan, which he did.)

19.01.16 WaPo, *I have become a Marie Kondo disciple. I am proud and ashamed.*, Christine Emba

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/01/16/konmari-me-all-you-need-is-love-well-organized-home/> (Wellness crazes are common and well-documented, but this manifestation seems like a particular sign of our times. The KonMari method emphasizes order, in a year — or span of years — that hasn’t seen very much of it. And there’s its fixation on lessening consumption, grown more compelling as the potential for climate disaster becomes more real every day. But it’s also deeply humane. Joy and kindness call to us, and they are at the heart of Kondo’s philosophy. The key to deciding what to keep or discard is to take each object in hand and ask “does this spark joy?” If it does, it can stay. And if it doesn’t, you thank it sincerely and let it go. For Kondo, the question is unironic and extremely personal. It calls for inwardness and quiet contemplation, two things that are rarely celebrated in our too-performative world. And even the acts of keeping and discarding are infused with sensitivity. Properly folding your socks is an act of love, for them and for yourself. Even the shabbiest sweater played a role in your life; respect it for that reason, even if it’s time for it to leave your home.)

19.01.16 NYT, *Government Shutdown Shakes Stability of Jobs That Are Often the Best Around*, Natalie

Kitroeff <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/16/business/economy/federal-workers-shutdown.html> (Ms. Bloomfield would take stability over a six-figure salary in the private sector any day. Her brother earns much more than she does in technical support in Austin, Tex. But he’s had to switch employers multiple times in the last 20 years because of corporate restructuring and layoffs. “Even though he makes a high wage, he has to live with this uncertainty,” she said. “We don’t have that stress.” Steve Fosse, a revenue agent with the I.R.S., isn’t sure whether that trade-off is worth it anymore. The first person in his family to graduate from college, Mr. Fosse, 39, took a job with the government because it offered reliability. “I wanted the benefits and the guaranteed paychecks,” he said.)

19.01.16 NYT, *In a West Wing in Transition, Trump Tries to Stand Firm on the Shutdown*, Maggie Haberman <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/16/us/politics/trump-shutdown-west-wing-shake-up.html> ("We are getting crushed!" Mr. Trump told his acting chief of staff, Mick Mulvaney, after watching some recent coverage of the shutdown, according to one person familiar with the conversation. "Why can't we get a deal?" ... Mr. Trump has told them he believes over time the country will not remember the shutdown, but it will remember that he staged a fight over his insistence that the southern border be protected. He wants Democrats to come back to the table agreeing with his position on a wall, and he does not understand why they have not. ... Some of his fellow Republicans are wondering if there is actually a plan on how to achieve that deal. "The White House and its allies have to have a sense of clarity and a sense of achievement on this, and in order to get there you really do have to have a much broader strategy from the beginning," said Kevin Madden, a Republican strategist. "This has largely been driven by a reaction to the latest 30 minutes of a cable news cycle.")

19.01.16 FiveThirtyEight, *Party Unity Hasn't Cracked Under The Weight Of The Shutdown*, Perry Bacon Jr. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/party-unity-hasnt-cracked-under-the-weight-of-the-shutdown/> (Congressional Republicans. The decision to continue to tightly ally with Trump, while not surprising, doesn't seem particularly smart for Republicans in the House and Senate. The wall is not popular outside of the president's base — and that base is not big enough for the GOP to do well in 2020. Trump might lose in 2020, but at least the wall is something he campaigned on and seems to care about deeply. I'm not predicting voters will recall this shutdown in November 2020. But it seems unwise for congressional Republicans to basically allow the party's strategy to be directed by Trump. Maybe this wall issue is an aberration, and Republicans will distance themselves more from the president over the next two years. But Trump's culture war politics resulted in a very narrow electoral victory in 2016 and a resounding defeat in 2018. Congressional Republicans could treat the wall and Trump's broader immigration approach like they have the president's Russia stances, which the GOP has largely rejected. Instead, so far, congressional Republicans have linked themselves to a strategy that polls suggest is politically toxic. ... The wall and the shutdown have become a test of their loyalty to Trump — and it's harder to compromise on loyalty than on dollars and cents. If the next two years are various loyalty tests, it will be virtually impossible for any congressional Democrat to vote for something Trump backs (the Democratic base hates, hates him) — or any Republican to vote against it.)

19.01.16 Business Insider, *A controversial startup that charges \$8,000 to fill your veins with young blood to defeat aging now claims to be up and running in 5 cities across the US*, Erin Brodwin <https://www.businessinsider.com/young-blood-transfusions-open-accepting-paypal-payments-cities-ambrosia-2019-1> (In a January interview with Business Insider, Alkahest CEO Karoly Nikolich described some observed cognitive boons in the older study participants, as tested by a standard screening tool called the Mini-Mental State Examination. Those benefits included an improved sense of self and recognition of one's environment and location, he said. ... Karmazin said "many" of the roughly 150 people who've received the treatment have noted benefits that include renewed focus, better memory and sleep, and improved appearance and muscle tone. But it's tough to quantify these benefits before the study findings are made public. There's also the possibility that simply traveling to a lab in Monterey and paying to enroll in the study could have made patients feel better.)

19.01.15 WaPo, *Why would William Barr take this job? The answer should alarm Trump.*, Dana Milbank https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-would-william-barr-take-this-job-the-answer-should-alarm-trump/2019/01/15/be6966ba-190d-11e9-8813-cb9dec761e73_story.html ("You seem like a rational person," Sen. Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.) told Barr. "Why do you want this job?" Indeed, he's joining a president famous for chewing up once-respected figures and sending them packing in disgrace and humiliation. Trump reportedly referred to Sessions as "Mr. Magoo" and "mentally retarded" and demeaned him publicly. Barr's answer to Durbin should have sent chills down the presidential spine as he munched on leftover Big Macs at the White

House. The rule of law, Barr said, “is the heartbeat of this country,” and he vowed to “protect the independence and the reputation of the department.” Trump’s treatment of subordinates “might give me pause if I was 45 or 50 years old, but it doesn’t give me pause right now,” Barr continued. He added, “I will not be bullied into doing anything I think is wrong.” Barr spent decades building his reputation. Why would he throw it away now by becoming the guy who buried the Mueller report?)

19.01.15 WaPo, *Beto O’Rourke’s immigration plan: No wall but no specifics*, Jenna Johnson
https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/beto-orourkes-immigration-plan-no-wall-but-no-specifics/2019/01/15/f6e36fac-15ea-11e9-90a8-136fa44b80ba_story.html (When it comes to many of the biggest policy issues facing the country today, O’Rourke’s default stance is to call for a debate — even on issues related to the border and immigration, which he has heavily emphasized in videos posted to Facebook and Instagram over the past month. O’Rourke’s approach reflects how he is likely to handle issues should he launch a presidential campaign. Beyond a few mainstream Democratic stances — including closing private immigration prisons, allowing undocumented immigrants to become citizens and modernizing the work visa system — O’Rourke insists the thorny immigration answers will come from everyday Americans. It’s an approach that puts off specifics that might define him or narrow his appeal in a presidential race — but O’Rourke says he is being open-minded, as he wishes more politicians would be.)

19.01.15 Nat Rev, *Gillette Joins the Fight against ‘Toxic Masculinity’*, Ben Shapiro
<https://www.nationalreview.com/2019/01/gillette-commercial-toxic-masculinity-debate/> (In other words, more and more young boys lack male influence altogether. This isn’t to suggest that toxic male influence doesn’t exist — of course it does. But that toxic male influence has always been generated by peers rather than parents. For decades, we’ve known that the vast majority of criminals grew up without a father in the home — as of 1987, 70 percent of inmates grew up in a one-parent home. The Center for Children and Families has reported that 70 percent of “gang members, high school dropouts, teen suicides, teen pregnancies, and teen substance abusers come from single mother homes.” If you want to raise a generation of men who will treat women well, act as protectors rather than victimizers, and become the bedrock for a stable society, you need more masculinity, not less. In fact, a recent study from Stanford, Harvard, and the Census Bureau found that high levels of father presence in local communities may matter even more than having a father in the home directly; the study explained, “black boys who grow up in areas with high father presence are also significantly less likely to be incarcerated.” We’ve maligned masculinity as a society because men are likely to do the greatest harm to others. The vast majority of violent criminality comes from males; the vast majority of sexual misconduct comes from males. But we’ve made a mistake in blaming the presence of males for that issue. It’s a massive mistake to blame “toxic masculinity” rather than recognizing that toxic masculinity is often the result of a dearth of genuine masculinity — the kind of masculinity that leads men to stick around and father their children in the first place. The alternative to masculine presence is no masculine presence — and lack of masculine presence leads to toxic masculinity, deprived men acting out of hurt and anger.)

19.01.15 WaPo, *Can immigration save the U.S. from its birthrate crisis?*, Megan McArdle
https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/can-immigration-save-the-us-from-its-birthrate-crisis/2019/01/15/2c546262-1907-11e9-8813-cb9dec761e73_story.html (Societies preparing for an aging population ought to be running surpluses to pay down debt and planning for much longer working lives. But almost no one seems ready to do that. Instead, three alternatives are generally proposed: raising birthrates through family subsidies; boosting innovation to offset workforce decline with higher productivity; and replenishing the population through immigration. Unfortunately, there’s little evidence that “family policy” has more than a marginal impact on total lifetime fertility. Sociologist Brad Wilcox, who oversees the National Marriage Project at the University of Virginia, notes that even “krybbe”-to-“grav” Nordic welfare states have failed to keep birthrates above replacement. And while technological innovation can certainly make the most of existing

workers, it's unlikely to fully offset workforce decline. After a certain point, aging populations tend to innovate less, because older people are generally more risk-averse and less creative than younger ones. That leaves immigration. Even the hardest of immigration hard-liners might reconsider their position if the alternative were working to age 90. But the exigencies of an aging population are likely to force immigration advocates to do some rethinking, too. The idea that Social Security and Medicare can be saved by importing younger workers turns out to have some complications. ... An immigration solution to the United States' demographic challenge would probably mean a very different immigration policy, something like the points system used by countries such as Canada and Australia, which selects for migrants reasonably fluent in English and likely to be net tax contributors. Family reunification, which reinforces the United States' historical bias in favor of low-skill migration, might well have to be curtailed.)

19.01.15 NYT, *Republicans, Racism and Steve King*, Frank Bruni

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/15/opinion/republicans-racism-steve-king.html> (Trump's own racist behavior and remarks — including, in the run-up to the midterm elections, his proud embrace of the term “nationalist” — have emboldened the Steve Kings of the world. Many Republicans recognize that. And despite all the pride that they have swallowed since Trump's ascent and all the principles that they have betrayed, many of them yearn to make a stand or at least a statement against white nationalism, for the sake of their party's long-term survival and, yes, for the country. They also want to say and do something right at a moment of so much wrong — wrong that they have abetted and must answer for. The government is shut down. The president fields understandable questions about whether he's a Russian agent. With his ignorance and arrogance, he seems to be hauling the country to the brink of a disastrous international crisis. He degrades his office daily. And most of them mutely watch. They quiver in the face of the president's wrath. So they're taking on King instead of taking on Trump. It's safer. That's what this is really about: the sacrifice of one wretched bigot to atone for the indulgence of another; an opportunity for moral preening after so much moral surrender. This has less to do with courage than with convenience.)

19.01.15 Vox, *Democrats aren't saying no to physical barriers on the border. They are saying no to Trump.*, Tara Golshan

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/1/15/18177566/democrats-trump-wall-shutdown> (When Pelosi says Democrats will never vote for “the wall,” she is not saying that Democrats will forever oppose funding physical barriers on the southern border. After all, between 2007 and 2015, Customs and Border Protection spent \$2.3 billion building and maintaining 654 miles of physical barriers on the southern border, which Democrats supported, and Democrats have voted for funding as recently as 2018. As one top Democratic aide said, they would support physical barriers again, if it “makes sense.” What Pelosi is saying is that Trump doesn't get to shut down the government as a way to fulfill a campaign promise — especially one that carries the baggage of his anti-immigration platform. That's where Trump and Republicans misunderstand Pelosi and Democrats' position on the government shutdown and border wall fight. On Friday, Trump told reporters that Democrats can call the wall whatever they like, as long as they give him the money to build it. “This is where I ask the Democrats to come back to Washington and to vote for money for the wall, the barrier, whatever you want to call it is okay with me,” Trump said. “They can name it whatever they [want]. Name it ‘peaches.’” But semantics are not the same as symbolism. As long as Trump's “wall” — the campaign rallying cry — is the centerpiece of the White House's border security demand, don't expect Democrats to engage.)

19.01.15 WaPo, *What did they do with Lindsey Graham?*, Kathleen Parker

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/what-did-they-do-with-lindsey-graham/2019/01/15/c9909e62-1914-11e9-88fe-f9f77a3bcb6c_story.html (It isn't unusual for politicians to tweak their language or style, to soften or toughen rhetoric as one's audience pleases. Still, there's something almost comical about Graham's toughening stances and head-snapping reversals. It's as though his body has been occupied by someone else, his inner Terminator liberated at last — in part, perhaps, because he's no longer John McCain's

wingman. He's Maverick now. Whatever else he intends, Graham has always known how to play the media and keep himself in the headlines. This may explain his and Trump's recent comity, which can be traced to a lunch in March 2017 when the two found common ground in, among other things, an affection for playing golf. They are also both showmen and may share some mutual respect. Both love to be center stage, and both seem to have a similar knack for giving people what they want. The president and the apprentice.)

19.01.14 Politico, *McConnell tightens grip with Senate GOP amid shutdown fallout*, Daniel DePetrìs
<https://www.politico.com/story/2019/01/14/mitch-mcconnell-senate-republicans-government-shutdown-1100085> (A handful of Senate Republicans are expressing frustration with their party's handling of the ongoing government shutdown. But Mitch McConnell is a long way from facing any sort of rebellion. The Senate GOP leader is standing firm in his resolve to not move a muscle on any government funding bill that doesn't have the president's approval ahead of time. That's earned him scorn among Democrats given that he endorsed a funding bill that didn't include the president's much-sought after border wall funding increases of more than \$5 billion in December. But aside from some rank-and-file Republicans like Susan Collins (R-Maine), Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) and Cory Gardner (R-Colo.) who say Congress should again pass spending bills that don't provide additional wall funding, McConnell's allies say he's facing little pressure to change his stance as the longest shutdown in history lingers ever longer. "They're going to do what they need to do and advocate for what they believe their constituents want," said Sen. John Cornyn of Texas, who served as McConnell's deputy for six years. "But I don't think that should be confused with what Sen. McConnell's calculus is, which is: not to go through this effort of passing something the president won't sign and then going through a potential veto override and all the conflict that would cause." ... Yet at the same time McConnell has much more to think about politically than just opening up the government and continuing on with business as usual. Funding the government without a border security increase would amount to all-out war on Trump by undercutting one of his chief political goals, risking ire from the GOP base for McConnell, Gardner and other Senate Republicans up for reelection in 2020. And it would turn into a brutal intraparty fight between the Senate GOP and a president that most Republicans say the Senate can't win. They do not believe there are the votes to override the president, even though the Senate passed a spending bill without new border wall money in December.)

19.01.12 NYT, *The Joy of Being a Woman in Her 70s*, Mary Pipher
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/12/opinion/sunday/women-older-happiness.html> (The only constant in our lives is change. But if we are growing in wisdom and empathy, we can take the long view. We've lived through seven decades of our country's history, from Truman to Trump. I knew my great-grandmother, and if I live long enough, will meet my great-grandchildren. I will have known seven generations of family. I see where I belong in a long line of Scotch-Irish ancestors. I am alive today only because thousands of generations of resilient homo sapiens managed to procreate and raise their children. I come from, we all come from, resilient stock, or we wouldn't be here. By the time we are 70, we have all had more tragedy and more bliss in our lives than we could have foreseen. If we are wise, we realize that we are but one drop in the great river we call life and that it has been a miracle and a privilege to be alive.)

19.01.12 AP News, *Pence's pickle: How to bargain when no one speaks for Trump*, Jill Colvin
<https://apnews.com/c894fb5ca317440e9109c53116d385ed> (The vice president has been one of the administration's most visible emissaries during the shutdown fight, meeting with lawmakers, sitting for interviews and leading staff-level talks. But he's been repeatedly — and very publicly — undermined and contradicted by his boss, who's demanding billions from Congress to build a wall along the southern border. Lawmakers and aides in both parties say it's become increasingly clear that, in this White House, no one speaks for the president but himself, leaving Pence in an all-but-impossible position as he tries to negotiate on Trump's behalf. "He doesn't really have the authority to make a deal," said Republican Rep. Mike Simpson of

Idaho, who worked alongside Pence back when Pence was a member of Congress. He said legislators respect the vice president even if he is just “the messenger.” But he adds: “Trump is the one who’s going to say ‘yes’ or ‘no.’” ... Pence, said the Idaho Republican, is “a relayer. We need to have a negotiator ... someone who has the authority to go in and negotiate. And then someone who has the ability to go to Trump and say this is the best we can do.”)

19.01.11 NYT, *What if Cities Are No Longer the Land of Opportunity for Low-Skilled Workers?*, Emily Badger <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/11/upshot/big-cities-low-skilled-workers-wages.html> (“People have lamented, ‘Well, all these areas that lost manufacturing, why don’t those workers just get up and go somewhere else?’” said Mr. Autor, who looked at wage data from the census and American Community Survey and recently presented the findings at the annual meeting of the American Economic Association. “It’s just not at all obvious what that place is. It’s less obvious to me now than it was a month ago.” ... Mr. Autor attributes the declining urban wage premium in this chart to the disappearance of “middle-skill jobs” in production but also in clerical, administrative and sales work. Many of these jobs have gone overseas. Others have been automated out of existence. This kind of work, he argues, was historically clustered in cities (meaning the entire labor market around cities, within commuting zones). And because of that, workers with limited skills could find better opportunities by moving there. Now, the urban jobs available to people with no college education — as servers, cleaners, security guards, home health aides — are basically the same kind as those available in smaller towns and rural communities. The flip side of all of this is that moving to the densest urban areas remains a good bet for college-educated workers. Cities offer them very different kinds of jobs than small towns do. They can enjoy much higher wages for their skills there (in addition to all the amenities big cities provide). Other research Mr. Autor is conducting with Juliette Fournier, an M.I.T. doctoral student, suggests that the densest urban counties have become so appealing to prime-age workers that they’re now less likely to move away at life stages when previous generations have retreated to the suburbs, like when children arrive.)

19.01.10 Outside, *Is Sunscreen the New Margarine?*, Rowan Jacobsen <https://www.outsideonline.com/2380751/sunscreen-sun-exposure-skin-cancer-science> (Wouldn’t all those rays also raise rates of skin cancer? Yes, but skin cancer kills surprisingly few people: less than 3 per 100,000 in the U.S. each year. For every person who dies of skin cancer, more than 100 die from cardiovascular diseases. People don’t realize this because several different diseases are lumped together under the term “skin cancer.” The most common by far are basal-cell carcinomas and squamous-cell carcinomas, which are almost never fatal. In fact, says Weller, “When I diagnose a basal-cell skin cancer in a patient, the first thing I say is congratulations, because you’re walking out of my office with a longer life expectancy than when you walked in.” That’s probably because people who get carcinomas, which are strongly linked to sun exposure, tend to be healthy types that are outside getting plenty of exercise and sunlight. Melanoma, the deadly type of skin cancer, is much rarer, accounting for only 1 to 3 percent of new skin cancers. And perplexingly, outdoor workers have half the melanoma rate of indoor workers. Tanned people have lower rates in general. “The risk factor for melanoma appears to be intermittent sunshine and sunburn, especially when you’re young,” says Weller. “But there’s evidence that long-term sun exposure associates with less melanoma.”)

19.01.09 NYT, *Trump Thinks He’s His Own Best Messenger. Where Does That Leave Bill Shine?*, Katie Rogers <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/09/us/politics/bill-shine-donald-trump.html> (To his friends and allies, Mr. Trump wistfully brings up Hope Hicks, his most successful communications director, who departed nearly a year ago. Ms. Hicks had the president’s trust in a way that only a few remaining aides do, and she was generally seen as among the small number of people who could suggest to Mr. Trump that he hold back from indulging in some of his public relations whims. Since arriving, Mr. Shine has chosen to become useful to Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump, the president’s son-in-law and eldest daughter. At one point, Mr. Shine tried

to help craft a network special for a planned trip by Ms. Trump to Africa, which has been postponed amid the government shutdown. So far, Mr. Shine has not satisfied the president's demand for better news coverage, but the two have bonded over Mr. Trump's tendency to hold grudges toward certain journalists and news outlets. In November, as the president stepped up to the podium in the East Room of the White House for a news conference that devolved into an aggressive exchange with Jim Acosta, a CNN reporter, Mr. Shine turned to Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the White House press secretary. "This is going to be fun," Mr. Shine said, a remark that was overheard by people nearby. White House aides said Mr. Shine could not have planned that a confrontation between Mr. Trump and Mr. Acosta would take place, or known that it would turn into a fight that ultimately went to court, and insisted he was referring simply to the president's feistiness before he went to the podium. But Mr. Shine's willingness to encourage a confrontation that led to Mr. Acosta's White House access badge being pulled — something that aides for months had kept the president from doing — is in keeping with much of his private advice to the man he now works for.)

19.01.07 New Yorker, *The Philosopher Redefining Equality*, Nathan Heller

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/01/07/the-philosopher-redefining-equality> (At fifty-nine, Elizabeth Anderson is the chair of the University of Michigan's department of philosophy and a champion of the view that equality and freedom are mutually dependent, enmeshed in changing conditions through time. Working at the intersection of moral and political philosophy, social science, and economics, she has become a leading theorist of democracy and social justice. She has built a case, elaborated across decades, that equality is the basis for a free society. Her work, drawing on real-world problems and information, has helped to redefine the way contemporary philosophy is done, leading what might be called the Michigan school of thought. Because she brings together ideas from both the left and the right to battle increasing inequality, Anderson may be the philosopher best suited to this awkward moment in American life. She builds a democratic frame for a society in which people come from different places and are predisposed to disagree ... To be truly free, in Anderson's assessment, members of a society had to be able to function as human beings (requiring food, shelter, medical care), to participate in production (education, fair-value pay, entrepreneurial opportunity), to execute their role as citizens (freedom to speak and to vote), and to move through civil society (parks, restaurants, workplaces, markets, and all the rest). Egalitarians should focus policy attention on areas where that order had broken down. Being homeless was an unfree condition by all counts; thus, it was incumbent on a free society to remedy that problem. A quadriplegic adult was blocked from civil society if buildings weren't required to have ramps. Anderson's democratic model shifted the remit of egalitarianism from the idea of equalizing wealth to the idea that people should be equally free, regardless of their differences. A society in which everyone had the same material benefits could still be unequal, in this crucial sense; democratic equality, being predicated on equal respect, wasn't something you could simply tax into existence. "People, not nature, are responsible for turning the natural diversity of human beings into oppressive hierarchies," Anderson wrote. ... This was, after all, exactly the sort of freedom that she championed in her work. Trouble arose only when Sean announced an intention to go to art school instead of a liberal-arts college. Anderson saw this as a confounding unwillingness to walk through open doors of opportunity. ... "Having a kid who was a communist anarchist? That was nothing for Liz," Jacobi said. "Having a kid who was lesbian? That took Liz about two seconds to live with. Transgender? That took about five seconds. A kid who didn't want to go to college? Heresy." "I was in tears," Anderson said. "I'm, like, 'Art school? You're an anarchist, and ninety-nine per cent of people there go into commercial art. Really?'" ... Andersonism holds that we don't have to give up on market society if we can recognize and correct for its limitations—it may even be our best hope, because it's friendlier to pluralism than most alternatives are. And we shouldn't commit ourselves to an ideal system of any sort, whether socialist or libertarian, because a model set in motion like a Swiss watch will become a trap as soon as circumstances change. Instead, we must be flexible. We must remain alert. We must solve problems collaboratively, in the moment, using society's ears and eyes and the best tools that we can find.)

19.01.05 NYT, *The Border Wall: How a Potent Symbol Is Now Boxing Trump In*, Julie Hirschfeld Davis, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/05/us/politics/donald-trump-border-wall.html> (Now, Mr. Trump's fixation with a border wall — the material embodiment of his keep-them-out immigration agenda — has run headlong into the new realities of divided government, pitting him against Democrats who reject the idea out of hand. The impasse is particularly remarkable given that even some immigration hard-liners do not regard the wall as their highest priority and fear that Mr. Trump's preoccupation with it will prompt him to cut a deal that trades a relatively ineffectual measure for major concessions on immigration. "I've always thought it created a danger that he would trade almost anything in order to get the wall — I think that's still a potential danger," said Mark Krikorian, the executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, a group that argues for less immigration. "I'm still worried about that now." ... While most Republicans refuse to say so publicly for fear of angering Mr. Trump, many share the view that the wall is only a piece — and nowhere near the most important one — of a broader set of actions needed to overhaul the immigration system, including cuts to legal immigration, tighter standards for granting asylum and better enforcement.)

19.01.04 NYT, *American Jews and Israeli Jews Are Headed for a Messy Breakup*, Jonathan Weisman <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/04/opinion/sunday/israeli-jews-american-jews-divide.html> (American Jewry has been going its own way for 150 years, a drift that has created something of a new religion, or at least a new branch of one of the world's most ancient faiths. ... For a faith that for thousands of years was insular and self-contained, its people often in mandated ghettos, praying for the Messiah to return them to the Promised Land, this was a radical notion. But for most American Jews, it is now accepted as a tenet of their religion: building a better, more equal, more tolerant world now, where they live. ... Zionism divided American Jewry for much of the latter 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. Those divisions remained in the early decades of the Jewish state, fading only with the triumph of the Arab-Israeli War of 1967 and the peril of the Yom Kippur War. Now many American Jews, especially young American Jews, would say, Israel is Israel's problem. We have our own. There are roughly 6.5 million Jews in Israel. There are roughly 5.7 million Jews in America. Increasingly, they see the world in starkly different ways. The Great Schism is upon us.)

18.12.31 NYT, *In Orange County, a Republican Fortress Turns Democratic*, Adam Nagourney <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/31/us/orange-county-republicans-democrats-demographics.html> (Many first-generation Asian-Americans have tended to vote Republican, particularly Vietnamese, but many of their children have moved toward the Democratic Party, because of issues like health care, immigration and education, said Karthick Ramakrishnan, a professor of public policy and political science at the University of California, Riverside. Until this year, younger Asian-Americans, like younger voters in most demographic groups, turned out in low numbers. "What happened in Orange County has to be seen in the context of this being a high-turnout election," said Mr. Ramakrishnan. "There is a big generational divide in terms of party identification. If this had been a typical midterm election, it would have been a more conservative older turnout that came out." "From all the evidence we can see so far it looks like Asian-Americans were part of the blue wave," he said. Ms. La, who grew up in the San Diego area and moved to Westminster six years ago, said the demonstration on Saturday took just 36 hours to organize — in a part of the world that was once known for being politically apathetic. "The federal government and the issues that they are targeting has helped stir the mobilization — as well as the need for action in our community," she said. "That's the first time the Vietnamese community has come out to protest. A lot of things are changing." Mr. Ramakrishnan said Mr. Trump had made the situation markedly more difficult for Republicans. He suggested that had Mr. Trump had not engaged in "so much anti-immigrant rhetoric," Young Kim, a Republican who was seeking to become the first Korean-American woman in Congress, would likely have won in her race against Mr. Cisneros. "All she had to do was win white Republicans because turnout among Asians and Latinos would have been relatively low," he said. "Trump made a difference. But it's going to be really tough to get back to what the Republican Party looked like before Trump.")

18.12.31 Kleinlieu.com, *Growing Up A Crazy Broke Asian*, Klein Lieu

<https://kleinlieu.com/2018/12/31/growing-up-a-crazy-broke-asian/> (One day my oldest sister and mom sat me down and asked me what I was going to study in college. Film studies, I proudly proclaimed, I am going to make movies in Hollywood for a living! With a deep sigh, my oldest sister mentioned that her and my mom just discussed this topic amongst themselves and thought I was wasting my time. I would never make it in Hollywood. How many directors or films do you see that are made by Asians, my sister questioned, you will not succeed because it will be too difficult. Think about your well-being in the future, your “tương lai”, or else you will not have one. Those words destroyed me. I struggled so much the first couple years at UC Berkeley as I pushed myself away from film. I tried to rebel: my first couple classes were in film studies, I joined my school’s TV production club, and I even took a 3D graphics class in my CS department to try and bridge a future with film that might be a bit more palatable to my family. I thought I could make this work: a world where both my family and I were proud of what I was pursuing. That rebelliousness crumbled though under the weight of my responsibilities. You might think going to college and being away from home might make accomplishing my passions easier, but the security of college only made my duty more apparent. For the first time in my life, I did not live in East Oakland. I lived in a dorm room with working windows, where the only gunshots were those from the football team’s cannon, and where cars did not get locked up with anti-steering locks. Being lifted out of poverty only made me more acutely aware of my family’s situation at home, and to my duty to do whatever I could to lift them with me. That meant finding a very practical career path, but that also meant giving up film.)

18.12.31 NYT, *Wielding Rocks and Knives, Arizonans Attack Self-Driving Cars*, Simon Romero

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/31/us/waymo-self-driving-cars-arizona-attacks.html> (At least 21 such attacks have been leveled at Waymo vans in Chandler, as first reported by The Arizona Republic. Some analysts say they expect more such behavior as the nation moves into a broader discussion about the potential for driverless cars to unleash colossal changes in American society. The debate touches on fears ranging from eliminating jobs for drivers to ceding control over mobility to autonomous vehicles. “People are lashing out justifiably,” said Douglas Rushkoff, a media theorist at City University of New York and author of the book “Throwing Rocks at the Google Bus.” He likened driverless cars to robotic incarnations of scabs — workers who refuse to join strikes or who take the place of those on strike. “There’s a growing sense that the giant corporations honing driverless technologies do not have our best interests at heart,” Mr. Rushkoff said. “Just think about the humans inside these vehicles, who are essentially training the artificial intelligence that will replace them.”)

18.12.31 The Atlantic, *The Media’s Post-Advertising Future Is Also Its Past*, Derek Thompson

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/12/post-advertising-future-media/578917/> (To understand the future of post-advertising media, let’s briefly consider its past. During a period of the early 19th century known as the “party press” era, newspapers relied on patrons. Those patrons were political parties (hence “party press”) that handed out printing contracts to their favorite editors or directly paid writers to publish vicious attacks against rivals. That era’s journalism was hyper-political and deeply biased. But some historians believe that it was also more engaging. The number of newspapers in the United States grew from several dozen in the late 1700s to more than 1,200 in the 1830s. These newspapers experimented with a variety of journalistic styles and appeals to the public. As Gerald J. Baldasty, a professor at the University of Washington, has argued, these newspapers treated readers as a group to engage and galvanize. Perhaps as a result, voting rates soared in the middle of the 19th century to record highs. It was advertising that led to the demise of the party press. Ads allowed newspapers to become independent of patronage and to build the modern standards of “objective” journalism. Advertising also led to a neutered, detached style of reporting—the “view from nowhere”—to avoid offending the biggest advertisers, such as department stores.

Large ad-supported newspapers grew to become profitable behemoths, but they arguably emphasized milquetoast coverage over more colorful reader engagement. As the news business shifts back from advertisers to patrons and readers (that is to say, subscribers), journalism might escape that “view from nowhere” purgatory and speak straightforwardly about the world in a way that might have seemed presumptuous in a mid-century newspaper. Journalism could be more political again, but also more engaging again. That’s already happening. For example, in just the past few decades, The New York Times’ revenue has shifted from more than 60 percent advertising to more than 60 percent reader payments. As its business model has changed, so has its coverage. “Look at The New York Times in 1960 vs. 2010; the reportage is more interpretive,” observed the late James L. Baughman, the communications theorist and University of Wisconsin professor. ... That past is dead and irrecoverable. We’ve accelerated backward, as if in a time machine, whizzing past the flush 20th century to a more distant, more anxious, and, just maybe, more exciting past that is also the future.)

18.12.28 NYT, *How Cancer Changes Hope*, Kate Bowler

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/28/opinion/sunday/resolutions-hope-cancer-god.html> (The Stoics considered time to be cyclical, an eternal recurrence of motion from fire through the creation of elements back to fire again; the Enlightenment saw time as the arena of progress, a moral motion toward improvement and perfectibility. Much of Christian theology rests on the image of God as the ultimate reality beyond time and space, the creator of a past, present and future where all exists simultaneously in the Divine Mind. But where does that leave the bewildered believer who cannot see the future and whose lantern casts light only backward, onto the path she has already taken? ... The terrible gift of a terrible illness is that it has in fact taught me to live in the moment. But when I look at these mementos, I realize that I am learning more than to seize the day. In losing my future, the mundane began to sparkle. The things I love — the things I should love — become clearer, brighter. This is transcendence, the past and the future experienced together in moments where I can see a flicker of eternity. So instead of New Year’s resolutions, I drew up a list for 2019 of experiences that had already passed: a record not of self-mastery but of genuine surprise. 1. My oncology nurse became a dear friend. 2. Even in the hospital I felt the love of God. 3. Zach is under the impression that I never get tired. These are my small miracles scattered like bread crumbs, the way forward dotting the path behind me.)

18.12.28 Vox, *The shutdown is intractable because Trump’s wall is ridiculous and Republicans know it*, Matthew Yglesias <https://www.vox.com/2018/12/28/18158873/wall-shutdown-trump-dreamers-deal> (The tell here is that when congressional Democrats started getting close to a deal that would swap help for DREAMers for wall money, immigration hawks swooped in — not with quibbles about the details but with a huge set of unrelated demands. As Dara Lind wrote in January, the White House’s proposed framework for a deal ultimately included “an overhaul of asylum laws, stepped-up interior enforcement, and a broad crackdown on legal immigration on the scale of the Trump-endorsed RAISE Act.” The RAISE Act is a plan to cut legal immigration levels in half, which illustrates how little immigration restrictionists are actually focused on the nominal border security debate that has shut the government down. But that’s the point. If your goal is to reduce the number of foreign-born people living in the United States by any means necessary, then building an extra 700 miles of border wall is not particularly useful. So extending a path to citizenship for DREAMers or anyone else in exchange for a not-very-useful wall is an unattractive deal. By the same token, if the wall were extremely useful, then Trump could seek to offset its cost by reducing spending on some other aspect of immigration enforcement. But because the wall is a bad idea, that would be a bad deal and he wouldn’t offer it. He also obviously can’t offer to offset the cost with higher taxes on the rich because that would blow up the Republican Party coalition — a coalition that’s happy to exploit the border wall issue for partisan gain but that at its core is supposed to be delivering money to rich people.)

18.12.27 The Atlantic, *Affirmative Action Shouldn't Be About Diversity*, Kimberley Reyes

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/12/affirmative-action-about-reparations-not-diversity/578005/>

(While the push for diverse representation in society is important, it has no place in the legislation of affirmative action. Besides not addressing the actual issues—discrimination and inequality—this ideology creates “otherness.” It breeds the singling out of people who haven’t traditionally held positions of power, people who are often seen as either inferior or astonishingly exceptional, and therefore spectacle. This ideology demands wisdom from an ignorant 16-year-old that, rightly, the state should offer. Affirmative action should be about reparations and leveling a playing field that was legally imbalanced for hundreds of years and not about the re-centering of whiteness while, yet again, demanding free (intellectual) labor from the historically disenfranchised. ... In 2013, Britain, France and the Netherlands were sued by 14 Caribbean countries demanding what could be hundreds of billions of pounds in reparations for slavery. I read the documentation and thought: Yes, let’s at least talk about how those European countries flourished, in part, because of brutality and slavery. Let’s start there instead of a lopsided debate about how EU countries should or shouldn’t be benevolent enough to give the refugee descendants of the countries they pillaged legal status and a chance to succeed. That sort of acknowledgment, on both sides of the Atlantic, would be a start.)

18.12.26 The Cut, *Neither of my parents was exactly who I thought they were.*, Elizabeth Wurtzel

<https://www.thecut.com/2018/12/elizabeth-wurtzel-on-discovering-the-truth-about-her-parents.html> (The best people are the ones you have to forgive for everything. You have no choice; it would be worse to live without them. So I have to forgive my mother. Of course I do. She is the only parent I have. She wanted to be a single mother. She did not want men to tell her what to do. “I wanted to be independent,” she recently told me. “I wanted to make my own way.” She was a woman in a man’s world. She did not know how to have what she wanted without being duplicitous. In 1967, the year I was born, a woman could not have an abortion or a credit card. My mother tried to get a job at IBM, but she was too qualified to work at the same place as her loser husband. My mother had to take the side entrance into the Random House office building with all the other women. Men made my mother feel shabby. She thought her best bet was lying. That is the corruption of sexism: My mother lied to me too. Because I am a feminist, I have to forgive her. My mother is the author of this story.)

18.12.26 WaPo, *A millionaire paid Jews to move to a small town in Alabama. Now, a couple struggle with their choice.*, Julie Zauzmer

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/a-millionaire-paid-jews-to-move-to-a-small-town-in-alabama-now-one-couple-struggles-with-their-choice/2018/12/26/19703dba-fd6e-11e8-83c0-b06139e540e5_story.html

(The next morning, Lisa’s cellphone rings. It’s her son Nick, calling from New York. She tells him that she and Kenny are leaning toward staying in Dothan. “Mom, I was really looking forward to having dinner together again, family dinners,” Nick says. She is working from home, reviewing claims for the insurance company on her computer, but her mind keeps drifting. She thinks about the day after Thanksgiving, when she and Kenny sat down to make their holiday shopping list. They knew right away that they wanted to get their aging dog, Shadow, a set of steps for climbing up on the bed. But they were stumped about what their grandchildren might enjoy. “Wow, I know my dog better than I know my own grandchildren,” Lisa remembers thinking. She turns away from the computer and begins to cry, her resolve draining.)

18.12.25 NYT, *The Relentlessness of Modern Parenting*, Claire Cain Miller

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/25/upshot/the-relentlessness-of-modern-parenting.html> (Experts agree that investing in children is a positive thing — they benefit from time with their parents, stimulating activities and supportive parenting styles. As low-income parents have increased the time they spend teaching and reading to their children, the readiness gap between kindergarten students from rich and poor families has shrunk. As parental supervision has increased, most serious crimes against children have declined significantly. But it’s

also unclear how much of children's success is actually determined by parenting. "It's still an open question whether it's the parenting practices themselves that are making the difference, or is it simply growing up with college-educated parents in an environment that's richer in many dimensions?" said Liana Sayer, a sociologist at the University of Maryland and director of the Time Use Laboratory there. "I don't think any of these studies so far have been able to answer whether these kids would be doing well as adults regardless, simply because of resources.")

18.12.25 The Atlantic, *I Used to Write for Sports Illustrated. Now I Deliver Packages for Amazon.*, Austin Murphy

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/12/what-its-like-to-deliver-packages-for-amazon/578986/>

(Lurching west in stop-and-go traffic on I-80 that morning, bound for Berkeley and a day of delivering in the rain, I had a low moment, dwelling on how far I'd come down in the world. Then I snapped out of it. I haven't come down in the world. What's come down in the world is the business model that sustained Time Inc. for decades. I'm pretty much the same writer, the same guy. I haven't gone anywhere. My feet are the same.)

18.12.24 Wapo, *Side hustles and family loans help federal workers weather the shutdown*, Ian Shapira

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/side-hustles-and-family-loans-help-federal-workers-weather-the-shutdown/2018/12/24/fb9b91fe-07a4-11e9-85b6-41c0fe0c5b8f_story.html

(Although Snyder is happy to have more time with his girlfriend and their 8-month-old son, he worries the shutdown will drag on. His girlfriend works part time at a federally funded state care program and fears her job could be vulnerable the longer the shutdown lasts. "It's definitely going to start to get rough," he said. "It's definitely an inconvenience, especially when the reason the government is shut down, I think most people agree, is ridiculous, because we don't want to spend \$5 billion on an electrified wall with flaming arrows." Outside of Washington, some families are facing a government shutdown double whammy. Erin Kidwell and her husband in Mt. Hood, Ore., both work for the U.S. Forest Service. During the last government shutdown, they were renting and had only one child. Now they have two kids and a mortgage and are both furloughed. "We're going to lose both of our incomes right now," said Kidwell, 41. "If we don't get back pay, that will be a significant impact. Health care, insurance all comes out of that check. That's really scary. I just don't know what's going on anymore. None of us do." Her family always lives modestly, she said, so unlike some co-workers, she will not have to return any Christmas presents. But she's forgoing a party for her younger son's fifth birthday, which comes a couple of days after Christmas. Her birthday is in January, and her older son turns 8 in February. "It's an expensive time of year," she said. She can't save money by keeping her kids out of day care, either, she said, because she just paid for the month, and if she pulls them out, they will lose their spots.)

18.12.22 NYT, *For Trump, 'a War Every Day,' Waged Increasingly Alone*, Peter Baker & Maggie Haberman

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/22/us/politics/trump-two-years.html> (And he can be hard on his staff. He regularly curses at them, some say. Even his humor can be abrasive. When Larry Kudlow, his economics adviser, returned after a heart attack this year, the president ribbed him in front of aides. "Larry, you're here six weeks and you had a heart attack?" Others laughed uncomfortably. More recently, the president has told associates he feels "totally and completely abandoned," as one put it, complaining that no one is on his side and that many around him have ulterior motives. That extends even to his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, who was credited for helping push through the criminal justice bill, praise that Mr. Trump took note of. Longtime associates said Mr. Trump's relationship with his children has grown more removed and that he feels he does not have a friend in the White House. He disagrees with Mr. Kushner and Ivanka Trump much of the time, but cannot bring himself to tell them no, leaving that instead to Mr. Kelly, according to former aides. That made Mr. Kelly the heavy, they said, and therefore the target of their ire until he was finally forced out.)

18.12.21 Quartz, *A Nobel Prize-winning psychologist says most people don't really want to be happy*, Ephrat Livni <https://qz.com/1503207/a-nobel-prize-winning-psychologist-defines-happiness-versus-satisfaction/>

(We think we want to be happy. Yet many of us are actually working toward some other end, according to cognitive psychologist Daniel Kahneman, winner of the 2002 Nobel Prize in economics. Kahneman contends that happiness and satisfaction are distinct. Happiness is a momentary experience that arises spontaneously and is fleeting. Meanwhile, satisfaction is a long-term feeling, built over time and based on achieving goals and building the kind of life you admire. On the Dec. 19 podcast “Conversations with Tyler,” hosted by economist Tyler Cowen, Kahneman explains that working toward one goal may undermine our ability to experience the other. For example, in Kahneman’s research measuring everyday happiness—the experiences that leave people feeling good—he found that spending time with friends was highly effective. Yet those focused on long-term goals that yield satisfaction don’t necessarily prioritize socializing, as they’re busy with the bigger picture.)

18.12.20 Outside, *Life and Death on El Capitan*, Haley Cohen Gilliland

<https://www.outsideonline.com/2373551/death-el-cap> (Both Becky and JJ chafe at the idea that their husbands were doing anything uncommon for climbers of their ability. Something just happened to go wrong, in the way that it can while driving on the freeway, or walking down the stairs. Perhaps a loose rock hit one of them, or a bird; both women find it hard to believe that either Tim or Jason simply slipped. While on a hike in Colorado’s El Dorado Canyon State Park in September, Becky, who was by then seven months pregnant, tried to explain. “Look, it’ll be hard for a non-climber to understand but they were just really comfortable on the rock. That was like their home. It was like walking on a little sidewalk for them,” she said. “I mean could they have done something different? I’m sure. But we could say that about a lot of things where something goes wrong.”)

18.12.20 Longreads, *The Redemption of MS-13*, Danny Gold

<https://longreads.com/2018/12/20/the-redemption-of-ms-13/> (We are with the Pastor because he has agreed to take us into his neighborhood so my photographer and I can follow him as he walks the streets of the slums, trying to convince residents and gang members to become born-again Christians. In El Salvador, Jesus saves. For the young men caught up in the vicious cycle of violence perpetrated by gangs like MS-13, the church is the only thing that can save them. Embracing Jesus Christ and becoming a born-again Christian is the one way that gang members will allow one of their own to leave and strike out for a better life. ... The Pastor has been on the frontlines of this battle. The Church has always had a strange relationship with the gangs, with pastors and church groups being the only organizations allowed to work in gang-controlled communities or to advocate for gang member’s rights, negotiating truces. Somewhere along the line, gang leaders decided that if a member found God, he would be permitted to leave. Gang members and church officials will both tell you that the church is one of the few things the gang respects. Often, church organizations are the only groups allowed to provide community services to residents in gang areas, with nearly all NGOs and the government prohibited from doing so.)

18.12.17 New Yorker, *Should We Be Worried About Computerized Facial Recognition?*, David Owen

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/12/17/should-we-be-worried-about-computerized-facial-recognition> (China has nearly two hundred million public-surveillance cameras, far more than any other country. In 2015, it announced plans to build an integrated human-monitoring system, with the goal, according to the Washington Post, of making the cameras “omnipresent, fully networked, always working and fully controllable” by 2020. The reliable real-time identification of more than a billion people by their faces alone is not possible yet, but the Chinese system doesn’t depend on faces alone. Erik Learned-Miller, of UMass, told me, “Let’s assume you’re a Chinese citizen and your home address is registered with the government. So when they see a person in Xi’an who looks like you, and they know you live in Xi’an, they’ll probably guess it’s you. And if

they're also tracking your cell phone and they know that twenty minutes ago you were in a restaurant nearby—now it's almost certainly you." Cell-phone signals and digital financial transactions, which in China are highly centralized, are the human-surveillance equivalent of bovine ear tags: they're supplemental identifiers that increase the reliability of facial matches. "The Chinese are integrating massively," Learned-Miller continued. "They can say, 'Hey, we recognized this guy in a Starbucks this morning, and now he's in a McDonald's—he is getting too American, let's bring him in.' "By the time China's surveillance system is fully implemented, it will include mandatory "social credit" ratings, which score individuals' general worthiness based on factors such as what they buy (too much alcohol?), what they do with their free time (too many video games?), and whom they hang out with online (too many low-rated social parasites?). A voluntary version of the rating system is already in place. People with high scores are given opportunities that others don't receive, including access to jobs, loans, and travel. And virtual ear tags are proliferating. The N.Y.P.D. reads and records the license plates of many vehicles that enter and leave the city. Google knows everywhere I've been with my phone. China has begun employing its own gait-recognition technology, which its developer has said can't be fooled by "limping, walking with splayed feet, or hunching over." Americans may believe that we would never tolerate the installation of millions of surveillance cameras, but the Hunts told me that we wouldn't necessarily know it was happening. Ross Hunt said, "I want autonomous driving to be a thing, but if you have autonomous-car ubiquity you have the Internet of Eyes everywhere, because on an autonomous car there are cameras all the way around." Self-driving vehicles use their cameras to identify and avoid obstacles, but any camera that sees its surroundings also sees every person it passes. Many electric vehicles record location and driving data continuously and periodically upload that information to their manufacturers; China now requires all such vehicles operating in the country to transmit the same information to government monitors. Ross went on, "That's today. So, if they already have your telemetry, how long will it be until they also have the imagery? It's just a bandwidth issue.")

18.12.11 Vox, *The political tribalism of Andrew Sullivan*, Ezra Klein

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/12/11/18131370/andrew-sullivan-religion-tribalism-christianity-trump>

(There's a logical fallacy called the "no true Scotsman" problem. As the handy website YourLogicalFallacyIs.com (ain't the internet grand?) explains, "in this form of faulty reasoning one's belief is rendered unfalsifiable because no matter how compelling the evidence is, one simply shifts the goalposts so that it wouldn't apply to a supposedly 'true' example." I am not here to judge anyone's religion, and I've been moved many times in the past by how Sullivan writes of his faith. But as a matter of political analysis, Sullivan is trying to close a gaping hole in his argument by defining his Christian practice as true and competing interpretations, no matter how widespread they are, as aberrant. That's a fine hobby, but it's not a useful interpretive lens for understanding America's past or guiding our future. To state the obvious: Christians were found among both the abolitionists and the secessionists, the segregationists and the Freedom Riders. Study the moments of maximum collision in America's past and you will find them thick with godly rhetoric and devout believers. Political rhetoric in America is filled with signifiers of Christian identity, and it always has been. It is absurd to suggest that Christianity was somehow less of a social and political identity in the past.)

18.12.10 The Atlantic, *The Real Roots of American Rage*, Charles DuHigg

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/01/charles-duhigg-american-anger/576424/> ("The trick they were teaching was to use anger strategically," Sutton told me. "They had it as a formula: when to fake anger, when to cool down, when to give people a bit of forgiveness." Even when the debtors on the other end of the line sounded friendly, the collectors were trained to pretend they were angry at them. One supervisor told Sutton that in some instances, you have to "slam 'em. I slam 'em against the wall." He explained that callers needed to hear a "hostile tone," something that said, "I want the payment today! Express mail!" The point wasn't to intimidate the debtors into paying—the strategy was more sophisticated than that. As soon as a debtor started screaming back, the collector would switch tactics and become soothing and accommodating.

“The idea was, once you get them angry and aroused, you need to deliver catharsis, a sense of relief. That’s going to make them more likely to pay up,” Sutton told me. One collector recounted to him: “I would say, in a soft voice, ‘Mr. Jones, calm down. Excuse me.’ If you can’t cut the person off, then you should just let them blow their smoke, and then when your chance comes, try and be positive with them. Say, ‘Look, I know you’ve got a problem. I hope nothing I did set you off, because neither of us is going to benefit if we don’t resolve this thing.’” “It was incredibly effective,” Sutton told me. “People would be so charged up from getting mad and then so relieved you weren’t blaming them anymore, and so they’d agree to nearly anything.” The bill collectors knew how to use the debtors’ desire for reconciliation to get them to open their checkbooks. “It’s become standard operating procedure in a lot of corporate America now, when they’re dealing with a certain kind of customer,” Sutton said. “They’ve monetized anger by making it into this tool.” ... When we scrutinize the sources of our anger, we should see clearly that our rage is often being stoked not for our benefit but for someone else’s. If we can stop and see the anger merchants’ self-serving motives, we can perhaps start to loosen their grip on us. Yet we can’t pin the blame entirely on the anger profiteers. At the heart of much of our discontent is a very real sense that our government systems are broken. Larry Cagle wasn’t wrong to be livid at a state government that refused to allocate funds to educate the next generation of Oklahomans; his mistake was succumbing to the view that the only way to fix the system was to destroy it. Many of the nation’s most contentious issues are driven by a feeling that our institutions have failed us. Historically, this feeling has been at the root of some of America’s most important movements for change. Ours, too, could be a moment for progress, if we can channel our anger to good ends, rather than the vanquishing of our enemies. “It is not enough for people to be angry,” Martin Luther King Jr. told an audience at Carnegie Hall in February 1968. It was the 100th anniversary of the birth of W. E. B. Du Bois, and King hoped to remind those in attendance of his teachings, but also of his methods. Du Bois, King said, had been an angry radical his whole life. He had furiously called for resistance. But he had also sought to make his enemies into allies. He had overcome his anger in the hopes of finding peace. As King spoke, protests were happening in New York and Paris. Soldiers were dying in Vietnam. Just over a month later, King would be assassinated in Memphis. “Above all, he did not content himself with hurling invectives for emotional release and then to retire into smug, passive satisfaction,” King said to the crowd about Du Bois. “The supreme task is to organize and unite people so that their anger becomes a transforming force.”)

18.12.10 Vulture, *Can Special Effects Be Special Again?*, Bilge Ebiri

<https://www.vulture.com/2018/12/special-effects-can-they-be-special-again.html> (Today, financial incentives all over the world help keep studios’ post-production costs down, but they also result in VFX houses regularly moving offices from city to city and country to country, chasing new subsidies, thereby turning some workers into nomads. “Many people have had to uproot their lives — sometimes for full-time jobs, sometimes for contract work that might last six months or a year,” says writer Ian Failes, author of the book *Masters of FX*, who regularly covers the industry at his site VFX Blog. “Some young people tend to be into that, but it’s a lot tougher for people who might have families to have to move around.” The long hours, and the lack of job security or benefits have taken their toll. Many veterans have moved on to other areas, such as virtual and augmented reality studios, gaming, and television. Disgruntled workers and brain drain are only part of the problem, however. At the 2013 Oscars ceremony, in an incident that got some media coverage at the time, *Life of Pi*’s VFX supervisor Bill Westenhofer revealed during his acceptance speech that Rhythm & Hues, the company responsible for most of the film’s award-winning effects, had just filed for bankruptcy. Though Westenhofer had timed out his words to make sure he didn’t get played off, his mic was cut before he could finish his statement. It was hard not to get the feeling that Hollywood didn’t want anyone to know that the geese laying the golden eggs — the VFX houses that made everything from *Titanic* to *The Matrix* to *Avengers* possible — were unwell. From 2003 to 2013, more than 20 major VFX companies went out of business, while others closed down offices and laid off employees. As a revealing *New York Times Magazine* article last year about recent upheavals in the industry put it: “The companies that make billion-dollar blockbusters possible

are barely hanging on, and — for the most part — they aren't anywhere near Los Angeles.” “What we've seen over the last ten years is a process of consolidation and expansion,” says Paul Franklin, who has worked on numerous Christopher Nolan films, and won Oscars for *Interstellar* and *Inception*. “My own company, Double Negative, started with 10 people back in 1998, with one little office in London. Now, we have around 4,000 staff, spread across three continents.” But he also notes that it “hasn't been steady sailing.” The turmoil comes partly because the financial margins of the VFX industry are often quite brutal. VFX companies generally get work by bidding on individual productions before a shoot starts. But with competition so intense, and faced with rivals that can take advantage of various subsidies, these companies often find themselves driving down their bids and slashing their projected costs. “The client base is quite small,” Franklin continues. “Only a handful of Hollywood studios can put up the budgets required to make the VFX we do. And therein lies the problem. There is a huge amount of competition between VFX companies to get the work in the first place, but not that much competition among the studios to actually place it, so the clients can drive a very hard bargain.”)

18.12.06 Vox, *I was a Sheryl Sandberg superfan. Then her “Lean In” advice failed me.*, Katherine Goldstein <https://www.vox.com/first-person/2018/12/6/18128838/michelle-obama-lean-in-sheryl-sandberg> (As I think about Sandberg's feminist legacy, her true positive contributions came from using her platform to make it common knowledge that women are less likely to negotiate and more uncomfortable talking about our successes, and commonly suffer from impostor syndrome. I also think creating a supportive community for women through these “circles” is a worthy mission, one that rewarded us; around half of the group actually got raises before the end of our time together. As I dig deeper, I realize our circle had some notable shortcomings that didn't allow us to fully understand the limits of the Lean In message. While our group had some racial diversity and job industry diversity, we were all well-educated, white-collar New York City professionals, and none of us were mothers. ... Many people criticized Sandberg's message as elitist and out of touch when the book came out. But I didn't personally bump up against the limitations of her message until something in my life changed dramatically: I became a mom. I now believe that Lean In promoted a completely unrealistic portrait of what working motherhood is like. I knew being a working mom would be tough, but in Sandberg's cult of hard work and personal responsibility, I thought it would be nothing I couldn't handle. I could just lean in, or, as Sandberg specifically advised for working women thinking about having a baby: “Don't leave till you leave,” meaning you shouldn't step back from work just because you anticipate becoming a mother. ... My feminist thinking about women and workplaces is now in pretty direct opposition to Sandberg's Lean In message. I believe telling mothers to raise their hands and try harder in the open sea of hostility we face in the workplace is like handing a rubber ducky to someone hit by a tsunami. I think it also inadvertently encourages us to internalize our own discrimination, leading us to blame ourselves for getting passed over for raises, eased out of jobs, not getting called for job interviews, and being denied promotions. I now believe the greatest lie of Lean In is its underlying message that most companies and bosses are ultimately benevolent, that hard work is rewarded, that if women shed the straitjacket of self-doubt, a meritocratic world awaits us. My own life, and my research and reporting, along with interacting with hundreds of mothers in the past two years, has convinced me this is untrue. ... Irrespective of Sandberg's standing in the court of public opinion, which has undoubtedly changed, the conversation is moving well past her brand of feminism. Women are realizing that looking out for each other is even more powerful than just looking out for ourselves.)

18.12.06 NYT, *‘There Isn't Hope for Us’: Once Dominant, California Republicans Are on the Ropes*, Adam Nagourney <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/06/us/california-republicans-midterms.html> (“It is yet to be seen whether the California Republican Party could be rebuilt — or whether it's time for a new party that captures the interest of middle California,” she said. “This wasn't just a decline in viability, but a death.”)

18.12.05 The Atlantic, *America's Two Political Parties Are Asymmetrical*, Adam Serwer <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/12/avenatti-was-never-going-be-democratic-trump/577387/>

(Forty-three percent of white voters are Democrats, compared with 51 percent of white voters who lean GOP. That means white voters remain an essential part of the Democratic coalition—which is precisely why Fox News and other conservative media outlets serve so much culture-war red meat, fomenting white panic about diversity, telling their audiences that Democrats are racist against white people or want to take away Christmas. But unlike the Republican Party, Democrats must also draw support from black, Latino, and Asian voters—meaning they can't afford to antagonize them, and must be responsive to their interests. Republicans are almost entirely reliant on white voters—which is why generalizations about racial and religious minorities meet with so little pushback within the party. There is simply no constituency willing to hold Republican politicians accountable for such remarks—on the contrary, most of the party either sees both the generalizations and the discriminatory policy approaches that emerge from them as admirable or remains in denial about what is happening. The divergence is clear even in the respective parties' choice of standard-bearers. Obama's rise to political stardom came after a speech in which he declared that "there's not a black America and white America and Latino America and Asian America; there's the United States of America." And Trump's came from his strategic deployment of the slander that the first black president was born abroad and was therefore illegitimate. These distinctions mean that Democrats cannot afford to attack Americans who have only a high-school education the way that Republicans wage culture war against academia. Democrats cannot dismiss seniors the way Republicans condescend to young voters. Democrats cannot represent white men as a national-security threat after a terrorist attack the way Republicans can call to ban members of an entire religion from entering the country. Democrats must take care to not alienate police in the aftermath of unjustified police shootings, while Republicans can assassinate the character of entire communities. Democrats seeking higher office cannot hate the people who vote Republican the way that Republicans can hate people who vote for Democrats, not because Democrats are inherently better people but because they need the votes. And that means that without a fundamental change in the constituencies of both parties, there can never be a Democratic Trump.)

18.12.04 Vox, *Why are people still living in the western US with the constant threat of climate change?: New Mexicans like me are weighing our future in a fast-drying climate.*, Cally Carswell
<https://www.vox.com/first-person/2018/12/4/18124567/climate-change-wildfires-california-new-mexico> (In 2005, the Australian philosopher Glenn Albrecht coined the term "solastalgia" to characterize the peculiar modern condition caused by circumstances like these — "a form of homesickness one gets when one is still at 'home.'" Solastalgia describes a loss that is less tangible than psychic. "It is the pain experienced when there is recognition that the place where one resides and that one loves is under immediate assault," Albrecht writes. "It is manifest in an attack on one's sense of place, in the erosion of the sense of belonging to a particular place and a feeling of distress about its transformation." When the drought began in the late 1990s, my parents and I had stopped spending summers in Santa Fe. A couple of years into the drought, my uncle called to report that the piñon trees surrounding the house on the hill were dying. The news of the tree die-off inspired apprehension and a kind of fear — my dad said he was afraid to go back.)

18.12.03 GQ, *Miracle At Tham Luang*, Sean Flynn
<https://www.gq.com/story/thai-cave-rescue-miracle-at-tham-luang> (More important than the presence of hope, though, was the absence of panic, and the conservation of energy. Coach Ek had been a practicing monk for ten years, during which, like most monks, he'd learned how to meditate. There is a difference, of course, between devout and dedicated religious meditation and staving off terror in the damp dark of a cave, but the idea is the same. Coach Ek taught the boys to breathe slowly and purposefully, to clear their minds, to remove themselves mentally and emotionally from a muddy slope. Done properly—and the boys would later say their coach was an excellent teacher—the heart rate slows and metabolism downshifts and panic quells. That probably was more effective than digging. ... Second, they would be unconscious. Sedated, if you prefer the technical term, but so heavily that the difference is immaterial. An Australian cave diver and anesthesiologist

named Richard Harris, who arrived at the cave on July 6, had consulted colleagues and specialists on how to dose the boys. "I've never done it in the back of a cave on malnourished, skinny, dehydrated Thai kids before," he would say at a press conference later. "So that, for me, was the most frightening part of the week." (Frightening enough, in fact, that the Thai government granted him diplomatic immunity before the kids were sedated)

18.12.03 Nat Rev, *The White-Supremacy Surge*, David French

<https://www.nationalreview.com/magazine/2018/12/03/the-white-supremacy-surge/> (What is happening? Some on the left have a straightforward explanation. Under Donald Trump, they say, the subtext is becoming text. In other words, the "dog whistle" racism that's the foundation of GOP appeal to much of white America is now out in the open. And as the appeals to white identity become more acceptable, people will feel more comfortable coming out of their racist closet. Under this formulation, the alleged "economic anxiety" that drove the Trump voter to the polls was but a pretext. White voters were rallying against the Obama coalition, and white-identity politics gave Trump the White House. There is no doubt that alt-right figures rallied around Trump, and there's no doubt that some still cling to their MAGA hats. Trump's words have emboldened white supremacists, but he is not making them racist. What's happening online and in the real world is far more complicated (and, frankly, worrisome) than the appeal or impact of a single politician. No, there are immensely important cultural factors in play. The ranks of socially disconnected Americans are growing at alarming rates. Men and women, especially in white working-class populations, attend church less, their families fracture, and they check out of civil society. As Rich Lowry wrote after the Pittsburgh massacre, "the rise of mortality among a subset of working-class whites from suicide, drugs, and alcohol" represents "one of the most stunning trends in American life." All too many Americans suffer from a profound lack of purpose. But they still need purpose, and the aimless or despairing man is ripe for radicalization. He's ready to take the "red pill" (the pill, from the film *The Matrix*, that opens your eyes to painful and brutal reality) and embrace a new cause. Lowry sees the work of violent racists as "the handiwork of a very small, violent fringe of the socially disconnected." This is true, but I'd argue that the broader (nonviolent) wing of white supremacism is a larger part of that same fringe. And when the number of the socially disconnected rises, the size of the fringe will as well. There's something else at work also — a poison within the broader conservative movement. Hatred for political correctness has yielded an unhealthy fascination with and admiration for pure defiance. Young voices pride themselves on fearlessness and place attitude over thought in their words and deeds. They troll online and at school to "trigger the libs," and nothing triggers the libs more than defiance on matters of race. How could so many people flock to Yiannopoulos's banner? Admiration for a man who never let anyone tell him what to say. How could any person embrace Paul Nehlen? He was ready to fight and didn't care who he made angry. If the ethos of the defiant Right is never, ever to accede to either a leftist or (what is, arguably, more hated) an "establishment" or "elite" conservative critique, then it's easy to see how bigots can flourish. ... Exposing the source of the problem also reveals its depth. The white-supremacist and white-nationalist surge is a symptom of a greater disease, and it's a disease with no easy cure. Yes, you can address symptoms. House Republicans could and should sanction Steve King. Conservative writers and thinkers should expose right-wing racism just as zealously as they expose leftist bigots such as Louis Farrakhan or Linda Sarsour. The online Right should decline to practice mindless opposition and petty trolling, tactics that draw readers to the worst voices on the Internet. But the work that really matters is the immensely difficult task of cultural repair. Censuring and condemning — though necessary — don't address root causes. Faith and family can act as a vaccine against extremism. As much as we might wish that better politics could provide the cure, only a purpose beyond politics can truly transform the human heart.)

18.11.29 Vox, *How you think about raising children says a lot about your political views*, Marc

Hetherington <https://www.vox.com/first-person/2018/11/29/18116789/trump-bolsonaro-right-wing-populism-voting-child-rearing> (The qualities that citizens think are most important in children explain whether or not they

voted for these right-wing populists. Those who favor traditional characteristics like respect for elders, obedience, and good manners flock to them. Those who favor independence, self-reliance, and curiosity are repelled by them. Why? Because these preferences help to reveal people's worldviews — whether they think the world is a safe place to explore, or a dangerous place to protect oneself against. ... As American party conflict shifted in the late 20th and early 21st century toward racial and gender equality, sexual orientation, immigration, various religious matters, and how best to remain safe from terrorism, the dividing lines changed. People's deeply ingrained worldviews about the relative safety of these dramatic social changes and the world around us, in general, evolved into the key pivot between Republicans and Democrats. The worldview of those who value traditional qualities in children is that the world is dangerous. It is best to keep children, and by extension society, on the straight and narrow. To them, the rapid political and cultural changes occurring around them — including increasing demographic diversity and sexual expression — pose a threat. They yearn for a simpler time, perhaps an imagined past, when life seemed more secure. Their response is to try to impose order on their political system, much like parents might want to impose order on a chaotic household by emphasizing the qualities of respect, obedience, and good manners in children. Although a preference for traditional qualities in children is fine when managing a household — families, after all, are not democracies and children are not political citizens — imposing them on the political sphere is not entirely benign. Those who prefer obedient, respectful children tend to be less concerned about bedrock democratic principles like free speech and a free press, which can, of course, produce disagreement. They are more open to a strongman leader who might not heed the legislature or judiciary, but who promises a more orderly society.)

18.11.28 The Cut, *'I'm Broke and Mostly Friendless, and I've Wasted My Whole Life'*, Heather Havrilesky <https://www.thecut.com/2018/11/im-broke-and-friendless-and-ive-wasted-my-whole-life.html> (You need to discard some of this shame you're carrying around all the time. But even if you can't cast off your shame that quickly, through the lens of art, shame becomes valuable. When you're curious about your shame instead of afraid of it, you can see the true texture of the day and the richness of the moment, with all of its flaws. You can run your hands along your own self-defeating edges until you get a splinter, and you can pull the splinter out and stare at it and consider it. When you face your shame with an open heart, you're on a path to art, on a path to finding joy and misery and fear and hope in the folds of your day. Even as your job is slow and dull and pointless, even as your afternoons alone feel treacherous and daunting, you can train your eyes on the low-hanging clouds until a tiny bit of sunlight filters through. You are alive and you will probably be alive for many decades to come. The numbers on your credit-card statements can feel harrowing, but you can take that feeling and keep it company instead of letting it eat you alive. You can walk to the corner store to buy a newspaper and pull out the weekend calendar section and circle something, and make a commitment to do that one thing. You can build a new kind of existence, one that feels small and flawed and honest, but each day you accumulate a kind of treasure that doesn't disappear. Because instead of running away from the truth, you welcome it in. You don't treat what you have as pointless. You work with what you have. ... You are 95 years old, looking back at your 35-year-old self, and this is what you see: a young woman, so young, so disappointed, even though everything is about to get really good. She doesn't see how much she's accomplished, how much she's learned, how many new joys await her. She doesn't know how strong she is. She is blindfolded, sitting on a mountain of glittering gems. She is beautiful, but she feels ugly. She has a rich imagination and a colorful past, but she feels poor. She thinks she deserves to be berated because she has nothing. She has everything she needs.)

18.11.28 Vox, *Why racist politics appeals to white women, explained by American history*, Anna North <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/11/14/18088930/mississippi-election-2018-cindy-hyde-smith-midterms> (In recent decades, the war on crime has been pitched as an effort to keep white women safe, Kendi said. White women have been the plaintiffs in some lawsuits against affirmative action, and conservatives have argued that the practice harms white women, even though research has shown that white

women have been some of the greatest beneficiaries of affirmative action. Most recently, supporters of the confirmation of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh directed their comments specifically at white women, Kendi said. “The defense was: What if this happened to your husband or your son or your brother — which was a direct appeal to white women.” Race-based appeals to white women are similar, in some ways, to appeals to poor white voters of all genders. In both cases, politicians like Trump set up people of color as “this enemy of white people” and then present themselves as “the savior from that very enemy.” “That is how a billionaire who is extremely sexist can simultaneously attract poor whites who imagine him as their defender, and white women who imagine him as their defender,” Kendi said. White women who vote for racist candidates are endorsing not just racism, but also sexism, he explained. They’re buying into the racist idea that their privileges as white people “are withering away” as well as “the sexist idea that imagines that all white people are men or that the white race is masculine.” That sexism allows white women to feel that by defending white men, “they’re defending themselves.” White men’s interests aren’t always white women’s interests, especially when those white men are part of a Republican Party that fails to take sexual harassment and assault seriously and campaigns on overturning *Roe v. Wade*, something even a majority of Republican voters oppose. Racist politics won’t work as well on white women if those women “see what white men are gaining and what they are simultaneously losing from racism and sexism,” Kendi said. But at the same time, white women have had something to gain, historically, from racism. Public lynchings, Jones-Rogers said, “taught white girls and women that, for all the legal constraints they faced in most aspects of their lives, their accusations of rape or improper behavior, which they lodged against African-American men, women, and children, would be taken seriously.” We can see the repercussions of those lessons in the white women who call police on black people and other people of color today, when those people are engaged in no criminal behavior, she added. “When we acknowledge that white girls and women were able to exercise power in this nation, from its colonial beginnings, because of their whiteness,” she said, “it becomes easier to understand why white women vested in white supremacy and white supremacist activities and movements long after slavery.” And it becomes easier to understand why some white women today might feel an allegiance to the Republican Party not in spite of, but because of, the racism of white men like Trump.)

18.11.28 *The Atlantic*, *How Creed Forever Changed the Rocky Series*, Adam Serwer

<https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2018/11/how-creed-forever-changed-rocky-series/576757/>
(Creed then, had a difficult task. To make Apollo Creed a character worthy of having a successor, it first had to redeem him, to make him great, a quality that the previous Rocky movies consistently denied him. Coogler did this in several ways: through cameos from sports reporters discussing Creed as one of the greatest boxers ever, through the casual manner in which Philly’s denizens recognize and revere the name, and through Rocky, who acknowledges that Creed defeated him in their final, secret fight. When Adonis asks Rocky how he defeated Apollo, Rocky says he didn’t—time did. “It’s undefeated,” Rocky says. ... Stallone’s decision to accede to fundamentally altering the most important fictional creation of his career, to elevate Apollo above Rocky as a fighter, and to make his journey subordinate to that of the young black man on the screen, is worthy of recognition. But it is Coogler who, with Creed, as he did later with *Black Panther*, deftly subverted a cherished American cinematic tradition, placing black communities at the center of genres in which they were never meant to be more than plot devices, mere stepping stones for white protagonists on a journey to greatness.)

18.11.28 *HuffPo*, *My Evangelical Church Is Gaslighting Me, But I Refuse To Fall For It Anymore*, Elizabeth

Baker https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/evangelical-christians-trump_us_5bfc326de4b03b230fa57ae9
(The boldness of the church’s hypocrisy is causing me to question the very foundation of my spiritual beliefs. It’s disorienting. Every biblical principle I hold sacred has been disregarded by many other Christians, and I often feel like I’m losing my sanity while the entire house of cards that is my evangelical upbringing collapses around me. ... When I speak out against racism, police brutality, gun violence and discrimination against the

LGBTQ community, many Christians sneer at the concept of justice and accuse me of being “divisive” and “too political.” Instead, they embrace nationalism, the rule of law without mercy and “Make America Great Again” as their values, even at the expense of human life. It simply does not matter to the evangelical church that Trump is racist and that his dehumanizing rhetoric is emboldening radicals and costing Americans their lives. Americans are dying in mass shootings at the hands of white supremacists, while the church is celebrating the nation’s return to traditional values. For Christians who reject the MAGA mindset, this is absolute crazy making. No wonder I live with crippling anxiety and spiritual trauma. The church that warned me against moral relativism now calls me a heretic when I apply the very principles they taught me to real situations, with real stakes for real people. I don’t know where to turn or whom to trust. Is any of it true? Have I wasted my life on a religion that hurts more than it helps? I stopped attending church regularly almost two years ago, but I am more invested in my spiritual life than ever before. Although I’ve lost the majority of my local Christian community, save for a few precious friends, I still cling to the true teachings and example of Jesus to inform my politics and moral code. I now understand that Scripture pays more attention to serving the needs of the oppressed than to regulating their lifestyle. Sin is not as much about my behavior as it is about my inability to love people well. ... I wish the evangelical church would wake up and realize how many of us there are out there feeling manipulated and abused. This community of wanderers is dealing with grief both privately and collectively. Together we weep, we rage and we try to rebuild what’s left of our shattered spiritual lives. Healing is slow and it’s painful. I’m working hard to separate the true, worthy parts of Christianity from the bullshit. I do hope to return to church someday, but I will never again be gaslighted by an institution that sells out Jesus for political power.)

18.11.27 NYT, *The Insect Apocalypse Is Here*, Brooke

Jarvis<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/27/magazine/insect-apocalypse.html> (Riis had not been able to stop thinking about the missing bugs. The more he learned, the more his nostalgia gave way to worry. Insects are the vital pollinators and recyclers of ecosystems and the base of food webs everywhere. Riis was not alone in noticing their decline. In the United States, scientists recently found the population of monarch butterflies fell by 90 percent in the last 20 years, a loss of 900 million individuals; the rusty-patched bumblebee, which once lived in 28 states, dropped by 87 percent over the same period. With other, less-studied insect species, one butterfly researcher told me, “all we can do is wave our arms and say, ‘It’s not here anymore!’” Still, the most disquieting thing wasn’t the disappearance of certain species of insects; it was the deeper worry, shared by Riis and many others, that a whole insect world might be quietly going missing, a loss of abundance that could alter the planet in unknowable ways. “We notice the losses,” says David Wagner, an entomologist at the University of Connecticut. “It’s the diminishment that we don’t see.” Because insects are legion, inconspicuous and hard to meaningfully track, the fear that there might be far fewer than before was more felt than documented. People noticed it by canals or in backyards or under streetlights at night — familiar places that had become unfamiliarly empty. The feeling was so common that entomologists developed a shorthand for it, named for the way many people first began to notice that they weren’t seeing as many bugs. They called it the windshield phenomenon.)

18.11.27 WaPo, *The Khashoggi killing had roots in a cutthroat Saudi family feud*, David

Ignatiushttps://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/the-khashoggi-killing-had-roots-in-a-cutthroat-at-saudi-family-feud/2018/11/27/6d79880c-f17b-11e8-bc79-68604ed88993_story.html (On the afternoon of Aug 25, Obaid flew from Shanghai to Beijing on a private jet. When the plane landed, it taxied to a remote area of the airport. Parked nearby was a plane with the tail marking “HZ-ATR.” The “HZ” prefix designated it as a Saudi plane. What happened next was described by knowledgeable Saudi and Swiss sources who were briefed on the case. As Obaid left his plane, he was stopped by more than 40 plainclothes Chinese security men. The leader of the group, speaking in Arabic, is said to have told Obaid: “We are the Ministry of State Security. Are you going to cooperate?” Obaid surrendered; his head and body were covered in a bag so tight

that he couldn't see or move unassisted; he was taken to an interrogation facility somewhere in Beijing and handcuffed to a chair. A Chinese intelligence officer asserted that Obaid was a terrorist financier who was organizing a plot by Pakistani militants to disrupt the G-20 summit scheduled for the next month, a source briefed on the case said. "Where are you hiding the terrorists? Where are you hiding the Pakistani militiamen?" demanded the interrogator. Obaid protested that he had no idea what they were talking about; they had the wrong man. He was subjected to a lengthy and painful interrogation ordeal. Fortunately, Ministry of State Security technicians were examining Obaid's iPad and cellphone and checking the information against their own sources. Quickly, the Chinese concluded that an error had indeed been made: Saudi officials had given them false information about Obaid to arrest him as a terrorist and extradite him back to the kingdom. According to a knowledgeable source, a senior Ministry of State Security officer told Obaid: "Look, there's been a mistake. Someone in your country called us five minutes before you landed in Beijing and said you were a terrorist financing a hit on the G-20 summit." The Chinese official explained: "You are stuck in a power play in your country between two powerful princes." Chinese intelligence officers, angry that they had been deceived, arranged for Obaid to quickly travel back to Shanghai and protected him for the rest of his stay in China. ... Obaid remains in Switzerland. He's under investigation there and in the United States on suspicion of improper payments from the Malaysian sovereign wealth fund, known as 1MDB, to a company called PetroSaudi International, which was founded by Turki bin Abdullah and Obaid. He has not been accused of any wrongdoing. ... Why didn't anyone stop this deadly chain of error? The failed rendition of Obaid from China is eerily similar to the Khashoggi killing in Istanbul. In each case, the Saudis wanted to silence a meddlesome critic. When initial contacts failed, they attempted an illegal covert operation, each time under the direction of the deputy chief of intelligence, who had close links with the royal court. The deputy intelligence chief, each time, proved to be the fall guy; no hard evidence has emerged in either case documenting MBS's role. Both operations appear to have been organized by a special cell within the royal court, where Qahtani was a key supervisor, not by the Saudi intelligence services. That's reassuring to U.S. officials, who see as potential stabilizing forces Humaidan and his colleague Abdulaziz al-Howairini, the head of the internal security agency, known as the Mabathith.)

18.11.26 NYT, *Maybe They're Just Bad People*, Michelle Goldberg, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/26/opinion/trump-supporters-bill-white-bryan-eure.html> (Senator Lindsey Graham, another insincere Trumpist, once justified his sycophantic relationship with the president by saying, "If you knew anything about me, I want to be relevant." Some people would rather be on the wrong side than on the outside.)

18.11.26 New Yorker, *Degrees of Freedom: A scientist's work linking minds and machines helps a paralyzed woman escape her body.*, Raffi Khatchadourian <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/11/26/how-to-control-a-machine-with-your-brain> (The emergence of drone warfare, in the past decade, inspired darpa officials to envision an updated role for brain-controlled aviation. A program manager who worked under Geoff Ling when the idea of the F-35 simulator was being developed told me, "It really is a twentieth-century notion to think of the function of the pilot as controlling only one airplane. In the future, it is highly likely that we will move to a one-to-many relationship, so that the pilot controls maybe fifteen or twenty assets—to be an air-battle commander, rather than a stick-and-throttle jockey." With brain implants, one person could conceivably command a swarm. ... At darpa, Geoff Ling screened a video of Scheuermann flying, and described it in momentous terms. The experiment, he believed, prefigured evolutionary changes to the human organism. "Don't you understand what has happened?" he told me. "We just got rid of the confines of our bodies. That is taking mankind to another level, brother! Can you imagine a body with four arms? Can you imagine having two more eyes? The body we have been given is a biological thing. We could totally break free of it." Ling stepped down from his position in 2015, but his successor, Justin Sanchez, decided to keep pursuing the transhumanist lines of inquiry. darpa has since been

investing in a widening portfolio of neural technologies, most significantly an effort to develop neural implants beyond the Utah array. A new program manager was hired to accelerate the development of brain implants in the private sector. “The door to the future was opened—tinged with some challenges,” he told me. “How do we solve the problem so that it is not just a hundred wires but something more powerful, with higher bandwidth? And can you make it wireless?” ... Soon after her pedestals—Lewis and Clark—were removed, her husband and children took her to the movies. “The sun was shining on the hillside across the river, highlighting the glorious colors of autumn,” she wrote. “I was just basking in the company of my family and my beautiful day. I remember thinking how beautiful life was, and how blessed I was. Then, in the twenty-minute drive home, it happened. I went from that blissful happiness to being a sobbing, blubbing mess. I was suddenly overwhelmed by the loss of Lewis and Clark and what their absence meant. It meant I would never control Hector again. It was all over. I might visit the lab, but I would never again be hooked up, would never again make Hector move. The full measure of that loss hit me, and I cried.” Scheuermann yearned to see the arm one last time, to speak to it. “I had to tell him that I would miss him, and I knew he would miss me. I thought that Hector needed to hear that we had had a wonderful time together, but that it was all right for him to have a good time with someone else now, and to achieve new things with that person. I didn’t want Hector to feel that he was betraying me by making a connection with a new subject. As I thought this over, I realized what I really needed was to tell myself all that.” In time, her sense of loss dissipated. She was happy to learn that Copeland had broken some of her records. She thought of the two of them as twin explorers—No. 001 and No. 002—pushing forward into an uncharted zone of human experience. She was filled with a sense of gratitude and meaning. “I did it!” she told herself. “I moved a robotic arm just by thinking about it. I maneuvered Hector’s wrist and fingers, and we made technological history! Now I get to talk about it. I get to share with people the excitement of our study, the thrill that I experienced, and the advances that we made. How lucky—how blessed—can one girl get?”)

18.11.26 Washingtonian, *The Inside Story of Mike Isabella’s Fallen Empire: How alcohol, infighting, and a sexual harassment scandal turned the prince of DC dining into a pariah.*, Jessica Sidman & Anna Spiegel <https://www.washingtonian.com/2018/11/26/the-inside-story-of-mike-isabellas-fallen-empire/> (Isabella looks older than his 43 years these days. He’s lost weight, and he grew a graying beard—“to hide my face,” he says, half kidding. He says he isn’t feeling very talkative. But he still has ten restaurants, and he doesn’t want people to forget about them. He wishes he’d apologized from the beginning: “I should have just taken responsibility.” That includes taking responsibility for his drinking on the job. “I had a \$35-million, \$40-million empire on my shoulders,” he says. “With the pressure of reviews, with hiring and staffing a team, the pressure of giving the best quality you can give—making investors happy, it’s a lot of pressure. And I drank too much.” Asked when he realized it was too much, Isabella says: “I never want to make anyone feel uncomfortable. And obviously I did.” Isabella didn’t just build a business empire—he built a world around himself. Fans and organizations used to pay top dollar for a Mike Isabella appearance. Not anymore. He used to sign 800 paychecks; now he’s had to let more than 400 people go. He just put his new Wharf condo on the market. The business, meanwhile, no longer feels like a family. As of press time, its future remained uncertain—with surrogates for Isabella and partner George Pagonis giving Washingtonian contradictory stories about which one of them would be leading the company. On December 1, another Isabella restaurant will close—Kapnos Taverna in College Park. Isabella has been struggling to adjust to the new order. “It’s so much easier to come from nothing and then slowly move your way up. Not many people in life go from nothing to stardom. How you control your actions when you have no father, no guidance, no nothing, no boss—sometimes you get in trouble. And I definitely made mistakes.” He says he went cold turkey after his panic attack and that he has “pretty much” stayed sober since. He watches UFC fights. He takes walks. He cooks at home with his wife. He’s trying to see more of his mom. Asked who else is still in his corner—friends, family—he exhales. Then he excuses himself: “Let me go smoke a cigarette.”)

18.11.26 The Outline, *What a brandless brand is selling you*, Will

Partin <https://theoutline.com/post/6698/brandless-brands-instagram-ads-capitalism?zd=1&zi=pwdihgup> (If that seems counterintuitive, consider two advertisements for Dove soap separated by about 50 years. In a 1957 television spot, the camera's near-fetishistic attention on the look and feel of the newly-introduced Dove bar is supplemented by a breakdown of its chemical composition ("¼ cleansing creme!") and a pseudo-scientific demonstration of its effectiveness. Compare that to Dove's 2006 Super Bowl XL commercial, part of the company's famous (but well-critiqued) "Campaign for Real Beauty." Over the ad's 45 second-long ode to women's insecurity, Dove products appear exactly zero times. What matters is no longer Dove soap's cleansing creme or demonstrable superiority to water, but how the brand associates itself, and those who use it, with a message of social empowerment that reaches well beyond the bathroom. Cultural theorists have come up with a number of ways to describe this shift, but the most influential term is what the Italian Marxist Mario Tronti called the "social factory." When branding appeared at the apex of industrial capitalism, the means of production were still largely confined to literal factories, cordoned off from spaces of consumption. These days, however, that distinction isn't so clear. "The whole of society lives as a function of the factory," Tronti concluded, "and the factory extends its exclusive domination of the whole society." Social media is most obvious example of how this works in practice: without its user's posts, Facebook would be an empty software shell. Until we start "working" for Facebook, there is nothing for us to consume, troubling any clean break between production (making value) and consumption (using it), which are inescapably amalgamated. Branding, in different and subtler ways, also capitalizes on this shift towards "prosumption" by enlisting consumers in the "work" of managing the brand. Modern branding encourages us not just to loyally purchase or even promote our preferred brands but to be the brand by embodying its virtues in our own lives. If you buy Apple, you must be creative, and, if you're creative, you must buy Apple. All branding then becomes a collaboration, not between products and celebrities but between brands and the ordinary people who use them. In consumer culture, brands are a primary source of meaning, and it's (in part) up to us to make them meaningful, creating value for capital in the process.)

18.11.25 The Atlantic, *America's Epidemic of Empty Churches*, Jonathan

Merritt <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/11/what-should-america-do-its-empty-church-buildings/576592/> (Any minister can tell you that the two best predictors of a congregation's survival are "budgets and butts," and American churches are struggling by both metrics. As donations and attendance decrease, the cost of maintaining large physical structures that are in use only a few hours a week by a handful of worshippers becomes prohibitive. None of these trends shows signs of slowing, so the United States' struggling congregations face a choice: Start packing or find a creative way to stay afloat. ... When St. Francis de Sales Church in Troy, New York, closed in 2009, it was converted into a fraternity house for the Phi Sigma Kappa chapter at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. A communal symbol that once served as a beacon of hope and welcome now seems like little more than an emblem of American youthful superficiality. Imagine the emotional impact of driving past the place of your mother's baptism only to see frat boys stumbling down the front steps.)

18.11.25 NYT, *China's Economy Became No. 2 by Defying No. 1*, Keith Bradsher & Li Yuan

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/11/25/world/asia/china-economy-strategy.html> (The lending-and-spending binge that powered its economy, and arguably the world's, after the financial crisis has saddled the country with a huge debt load. While calculating what China owes is difficult since much is off the books, debt could total \$41 trillion — or three years' worth of the country's economic output. That's roughly equal to developed countries like the United States, Britain and Japan. But whereas their debt built up over decades, China's accumulated in nine years. Moving the needle has become harder. China's economy is roughly three times the size it was in 2008. Those airport and highway projects it still uses to spur growth are expensive and deliver less economic bang. The world has also begun to take aim at China's pace of opening

up and its global ambitions. President Trump has started a trade war over China's economic barriers and its state-sponsored plans to build world-beating competitors in industries like semiconductors, robotics and electric cars. The tariffs and tensions threaten a key cog in China's trade machine: exports of goods and services, which total about one-fifth of the country's output. The United States has also taken more forceful action against Chinese companies that it believes break the global rules of trade, in some cases depriving them of buying or investing in the American-made technology they need to survive or innovate. And in a fundamental change, China's leaders appear to be losing their willingness to experiment. Amid fear over slowing economic growth and difficult social problems, the party's talk has turned to more control. Some increasingly strident voices within the Communist Party are tapping pre-reform language to lash out against Western ideas. Even private business ownership — a bedrock of Deng's reform and opening up — has been criticized in some quarters.)

18.11.25 NYT, *How China's Rulers Control Society: Opportunity, Nationalism, Fear*, Amy

Qin <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/11/25/world/asia/china-freedoms-control.html> (All of it is pointed toward next June, when Qiukai will be one of nine million students taking a test that is at the core of China's high-stakes meritocracy — those who perform best get a ticket to the Chinese dream. ... Yet if the gaokao is a symbol of opportunity, it is also a tool of social control. Scholars say it is a clever governing tactic borrowed from the keju, the Confucian examination system that determined the selection of government officials in China for more than 1,300 years. Even in dynastic China, the keju lent the government an aura of meritocracy, as it was open to all men. But only 1 percent of applicants passed the exam for the highest degree, since few had the time and money to prepare. In a modern China rife with corruption, the gaokao is seen as relatively fair and incorruptible, meaning that those who fail are unlikely to blame the government. "It allows the government to say: 'If you are not successful, you can only blame yourself. You did not work hard enough,'" said Yong Zhao, an education professor at the University of Kansas. "That is a very powerful way of governing." The gaokao was established in 1952, under Mao, and initially only students with class backgrounds deemed suitably red were allowed to apply. The test was suspended during the Cultural Revolution — the turbulent period in which teachers were beaten and schools shuttered — and then restored in 1977, after Mao's death. More than 10 million students rushed to take the exam, which was now more meritocratic, and open to almost anyone. ... Exposed to liberal democracy, Ms. Hua's generation was supposed to be the one that demanded it at home. Middle-class Chinese students poured into universities in the United States and Europe — then seen as the most promising path to wealth and prestige — and some Western analysts predicted that they would return to China as a force for political change. Like many other middle-class parents, Ms. Hua worries about repression and rampant materialism in Chinese society. Yet many of these parents say they want their children to see themselves as Chinese above all else — to understand China's roots as an agrarian society and to have a sense of pride in the perseverance of the Chinese people through decades of poverty and strife. ... Mr. Xi has selectively revived traditional Chinese culture — an effort, experts say, to give people something to be proud of. That approach, however, is rich with historical irony. Both the modernizers who overthrew the Qing dynasty and then Mao and his communists once blamed Chinese tradition for holding the country back. But with communist ideology long ago having lost its appeal to the public, Mr. Xi is drawing on Chinese tradition to reinforce the idea that the country needs a strong leader to prevent chaos and to guard against outsiders. That leaves some worrying that he could be leading the country into a new period of isolation. ... "I hope my daughter will have the chance to be exposed to different worlds and different cultures," she said. "But she was born in China. She grew up here. She will always need some understanding of who she is and what it means to be Chinese, from the very beginning.")

18.11.24 NYT, *Across South, Democrats Risk Speaking Boldly and Alienating Rural White Voters*, Jonathan Martin <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/24/us/politics/south-race-mississippi-senate.html> ("There's a baseline percent of the white vote you have to get to win and you can't get to it just through young and progressive

excitement,” said Steve Schale, a Florida-based Democratic strategist who worked on Mr. Obama’s campaigns there and last week wrote a memo urging his party to grapple with why they got close but lost some key races this year. “The path from 48 to 50 is like climbing Mount Everest without oxygen.” ... The turnout gap was stark in Florida, the most pivotal presidential swing state. Only 56 percent of registered voters cast ballots in Miami-Dade County, one of the worst showings in the state. But in Collier County, which includes Naples and where there are few African-Americans, turnout was over 73 percent — the highest the jurisdiction had ever recorded in a midterm campaign. ... But if questions about race would inevitably surface in a Senate race between a black man and a white woman in Mississippi, Ms. Hyde-Smith’s misstep has also revived another enduring element of Southern politics: the tension between not wanting outsiders to shape their elections and not wanting their politicians to humiliate the state and vindicate old stereotypes. “They just don’t want to be embarrassed,” said Joe Trippi, one of Mr. Espy’s strategists, who last year harnessed a mix of energy among African-American voters and shame among white voters to steer Doug Jones to victory in the Alabama Senate race over former state Supreme Court Justice Roy S. Moore. The first part of this equation is unmistakably present: just a few hours after Walmart announced last week that it was asking for its contribution back from Ms. Hyde-Smith, word of the retailer’s snub had already made its way to the lunch line at the Big Apple Inn, a soul food carryout and a Jackson institution.)

18.11.21 NYT, *Visitors From the Ocean’s Twilight Zone: Researchers recently hauled up specimens from a layer of the world’s seas that contains an abundance of aquatic life.*, JoAnna Klein <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/21/science/twilight-zone-ocean.html> (When the Navy started using active acoustics to monitor the sea in the 1930s, they noticed lots of sound bouncing off a layer they thought was the bottom. But its depth changed from night to day. This “false bottom” turned out to be a traveling mass of animals that journey hundreds to thousands of feet from the depths to the surface each night in a living wave that wraps around the planet. During the day, surface dwellers like sharks, tunas and swordfish dive down to the depths to eat, recent evidence has found. “The layers are not distinct. They’re very highly interconnected, and the organisms that live in one layer are influenced by the organisms that live in another,” Dr. Sosik said. Scientists working to untangle this multilayered food chain think it may play a major role in regulating climate by keeping carbon in the ocean. And that’s part of why it’s so important to study these watery depths that we ordinarily cannot see. “If you imagined erasing the life in the twilight zone, it wouldn’t affect just that layer. It would affect the ocean and the whole planet,” Dr. Sosik said. “It’s also just amazingly interesting, and you can’t look away.”)

18.11.19 NYT, *How Long Can People Live?*, Nicholas Bakalar <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/19/health/human-life-span.html> (In one study of mice, old cells have been found susceptible to a combination of two drugs: dasatinib, a cancer drug, and quercetin, a plant flavonoid. They improved cardiac function and exercise capacity in old mice, delayed symptoms of osteoporosis and prolonged healthy old age. Some drugs already approved for other purposes are being tested as “senolytics,” as the drugs that kill old cells are now called. Dr. Nir Barzilai, a professor of medicine at the Albert Einstein School of Medicine, is planning a study of metformin, a drug that has been used for 60 years to treat diabetes and has been shown to be effective against several age-related diseases. If drugs can treat aging, is aging itself a disease? No, Dr. Barzilai said. “Neither I nor the Food and Drug Administration is interested in calling aging a disease. Our study is to show that we can prevent a composite of age-related diseases — cardiovascular, cancer, cognitive — and ultimately affect mortality.” Another drug candidate involves a coenzyme called nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide, or N.A.D. It functions in cell respiration, moving electrons into the mitochondria where energy is produced. As people age, levels of N.A.D. decline to the point where it is undetectable in the blood of the elderly.)

18.11.19 CityLab, *Housing Can't Be Both Affordable and a Good Investment*, Daniel Hertz
<https://www.citylab.com/perspective/2018/11/housing-cant-both-be-a-good-investment-and-be-affordable/574813/> (This also means that the two stated pillars of American housing policy—homeownership as wealth-building and housing affordability—are fundamentally at odds. Mostly, American housing policy resolves this contradiction by quietly deciding that it really doesn't care that much about affordability after all. While funds for low-income subsidized housing languish, much larger pots of money are set aside for promoting homeownership through subsidies like the mortgage interest deduction and capital gains exemption, most of which goes to upper-middle- or upper-class households. But even markets with large amounts of affordable housing demonstrate the contradiction. Since at least the second half of the 20th century, the vast majority of actually affordable housing has been created via "filtering": that is, the falling relative prices of market-rate housing as it ages, or its neighborhood loses social status, often as a result of racial changes. Low-income affordability, where it does exist, is predicated on large portions of the housing market acting as terrible investments. And to the extent that low-income people do find a subsidized, price-fixed housing unit to live in, that means that they won't be building any wealth, even as their richer, market-housing-dwelling neighbors do, increasing wealth inequality. ... We say we want housing to be cheap and we want home ownership to be a great financial investment. Until we realize that these two objectives are mutually exclusive, we'll continue to be frustrated by failed and oftentimes counterproductive housing policies.)

18.11.18 Quartz, *THE EXISTENTIALIST'S RELUCTANT GUIDE TO LIFE*, Ephrat Livni & Olivia Goldhill <https://qz.com/quartz/1466818/the-existentialists-reluctant-guide-to-life/> (Existential philosophers have already worked out some answers for you, so don't despair. Or despair, that's fine, too. But don't let your fundamental gloominess be a reason to do nothing. For the great victory of the reluctant is that we do despite knowing better—knowing our contributions will not change the course of humanity. That's how Friedrich Nietzsche's übermensch would approach the world: without the reliance on anyone else to confirm their existence. It turns meaninglessness into a sort of freedom that allows one to affirm life despite its absurdity. Think about it. Really, it's no big deal to try to be a decent human who does no harm and maybe even helps, is generous of spirit and labors diligently, if you think there's a god, country, or boss who will reward you now or in the afterlife. But if you manage to live life based on certain values because you've examined them and found them preferable under the circumstances to other less laudable or more destructive approaches, that's no joke. Then you have forged meaning in the fires of futility and you have overcome, which is something. Or at least it's more than nothing. In the 20th century, Jean Paul Sartre argued that "existence precedes essence" and that finding out who we really are is a purpose even if there is no ultimate reason for us to be here. That we exist may be meaningless in and of itself, but there is meaning in the process of uncovering our essence under all the social and cultural detritus that clutters life. We are each born into a set of facts, accidents of circumstance, that describe and shape our reality—class, race, gender, religion, et cetera. But beyond the boundaries and definitions set by our families and societies lies possibility.)

18.11.14 The Guardian, *The truth about time management: how I went from chaos to punctual calm in one week*, Zoe Williams
<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/nov/14/time-management-productivity-julie-morgenstern>
(Bestow upon loved ones your full-beam attention in quarter-hour units "Here is a revolutionary insight," Morgenstern says. "It's very important; it comes out of eight years of research. How much time and attention do kids need to feel loved and secure? The answer is this: short bursts of five to 15 minutes of truly undivided attention delivered consistently – not big blocks of time delivered erratically." When they wake up, when they come home from school, when they are going to bed, when they get back from work (turns out this is true of adults as well as children): stop what you are doing and concentrate on them, then leave them alone to do what they want. Constantly hovering over your children, while simultaneously trying to have a fight on Twitter

and find a food recycling bag, frazzles everyone. Ah, what a revolution. Finally, I could unleash my ceaseless questions – “How was your day?” “Who was annoying?” “Did anything happen that would amuse me?” “What did you have for lunch?” – and nobody minded because they knew it was time-limited and, at some point, there would be no followup. At bedtime, I managed to start reading my favourite book to my son, after months of meaning to but getting derailed by homework and looking for things. It is *The Chrysalids* by John Wyndham, about people who become telepathic following a nuclear apocalypse and are persecuted for it. My son said: “This just sounds like a hard-left WhatsApp back channel.” I may have missed his wonder years.)

18.11.14 NYT, *THE FUTURE OF AGING JUST MIGHT BE IN MARGARITAVILLE*, Kim

Tingley <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/11/14/magazine/tech-design-longevity-margaritaville.html> (All the residents I met shared Al’s desire for a “feeling of neighborhood” their previous homes lacked. Lana Byer, 71, moved in in April. “Everyone looks out for everyone else,” Byer said. “That was missing in the place I was living. Frankly, it’s exceeded my expectations. It’s so much better. It’s a joy to get up in the morning.” Byer had owned a court-reporting firm in Pittsburgh and is divorced. In other communities, she felt excluded by married couples, but that has not happened here. “There were places I’ve lived where, if my daughter didn’t call me, no one would know I was alive,” she said. “Here, they know I’m alive. It’s like living at a resort.” That morning, she’d come from a nutrition group. Later, on her way to paint wine glasses, she planned to stop by happy hour. I wondered if there was a chance that the feeling of being on a perpetual vacation would get old after a while? “Only if you do,” she said. Byer is far from the only single woman in Margaritaville. Rhonda Harvey, 62, lost her husband in an accident on Interstate 4 last year. Afterward, her mother, Ethel, 85, moved in. “I had 12 acres,” Harvey said. “Now there’s almost 12 feet between here and the next house.” Harvey works as the chief operating officer of a behavioral health care agency with nearly 900 employees. Ethel, who is home alone during the day, feels safer with a guardhouse and nearby neighbors. Both are from Kentucky, where one of Harvey’s daughters still lives. “In some ways I think you could say the community that’s intentional here is reminiscent of small towns there where that’s just the way it was,” she said.)

18.11.09 BuzzFeed, *“Girl, Wash Your Face” Is A Massive Best-Seller With A Dark Message*, Laura Turner <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/lauraturner/rachel-hollis-girl-wash-your-face-self-help-book> (“I think the adversity she’s been through gives her a lot of credibility,” said Alex Ethridge, a 27-year-old marketing professional in Missouri. (Hollis had a difficult family upbringing — she calls it “traumatic” — and was just 14 years old when she found her older brother, Ryan, after he had killed himself.) Elissa Johnson, a 35-year-old mom in St. Louis who co-owns a small business with her husband, told me she appreciates Hollis’s tough-love approach: “There’s something refreshing in a post-truth world about rooting out some lies you might be telling yourself ... It feels like so many things are out of our control in the world today, but there’s so much within our reach.” ... The book never quite explains what it means to “wash your face,” but you get the idea that it’s a euphemism for toughening up, taking a good, hard look in the mirror, and getting out into the world with a kind of clear-eyed resolve. Rachel Hollis writes about that really well. I just wish she would actually do it.)

18.11.05 NYT, *Crazy Work Hours and Lots of Cameras: Silicon Valley Goes to China*, Li Yuan

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/05/business/china-silicon-valley-technology.html> (“And then there was the surveillance. Chinese companies have little choice but to cooperate with Beijing’s growing efforts to track the daily lives of its own people. Some, in fact, make money off it. Still, the Silicon Valley delegation did not expect facial recognition technology to be so widespread in Chinese life. Companies they visited used it at office entrances and at retail kiosks inside their facilities. They also saw demo videos of how the Chinese police could use the technology to monitor potential crimes in crowded public spaces and learn how many suspects had been arrested. After grasping how prevalent the cameras were, they started counting them. Even the van they rented from the hotel in Shenzhen had a handful of cameras installed, blinking from time to time to signal that they were on. Then, like many people in China, they got used to it, as if the cameras weren’t even there.”)

18.11.02 Politico, *How Everything Became the Culture War*, Michael

Grunwald <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/11/02/culture-war-liberals-conservatives-trump-2018-222095> (Andrew Gillum, the Democratic candidate for governor of Florida, had to fire his youth outreach director for posing for an Instagram post while wearing a shirt featuring the 2016 electoral map, with blue states labeled “United States of America” and Trump states labeled “Dumbfuckistan.” It was a perfect manufactured-outrage episode for our time—needless to say, similar shirts on which the blue states are labeled Dumbfuckistan are available for purchase—but it did reflect a common Democratic disdain for Republican rubes in the provinces. ... This is presumably how entire countries turn into Dumbfuckistan. The solutions to our political forever war are pretty obvious: Americans need to rebuild mutual trust and respect. We need to try to keep open minds, to seek information rather than partisan ammunition. We need to agree on a shared foundation of facts from authoritative sources. But those words looked ridiculous the moment I typed them. Americans are not on the verge of doing any of those things. Once the dogs of war have been unleashed, it’s hard to call them back. And we should at least consider the possibility that we’re fighting this forever war because we like it. The thing I remember most about Trump’s rallies in 2016, especially the auto-da-fé moments in which he would call out various liars and losers who didn’t look like the faces in his crowds, was how much fun everyone seemed to be having. The drill-baby-drill candidate would drill the Mexicans, drill the Chinese, drill the gun-grabbers, drill all the boring Washington politicians who had made America not-great. It sure as hell wasn’t boring. It was a showman putting on a show, a culture-war general firing up his internet troops. It wasn’t a real war, like the one that Trump skipped while John McCain paid an unimaginable price, but it made the spectators feel like they were not just spectating, like they had joined an exhilarating fight. They got the adrenaline rush, the sense of being part of something larger, the foxhole camaraderie of war against a common enemy, without the physical danger. It’s not clear how a fight like that would ever end.)

18.10.23 MIT Tech Review, *Finally, the drug that keeps you young*, Stephen S.

Hall <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/612284/finally-the-drug-that-keeps-you-young/> (In the past five years, this insight has led to the pursuit of a new class of drugs known as senolytics, which eliminate senescent cells and, in animal experiments, restore more youthful characteristics. Campisi, a professor at the Buck Institute for Research on Aging in Novato, California, cofounded a company called Unity Biotechnology in 2011, which launched a human trial of its first senolytic drug last July. ... Again, don’t confuse aging and death. I am optimistic that we will experience medical interventions that will extend—the buzzword now is “health span.” I think what terrifies people—certainly what terrifies me—is watching, for example, my mom, who is well into her 90s. She’s losing cognitive function, she doesn’t walk as well—and she’s in pretty good shape! There are lots of people at her age who are confined to wheelchairs. That’s aging, and that’s terrifying. I am optimistic that we’re on the cusp of understanding enough about that process to be able to intervene. And that people like us, who are not at that point, will benefit. But we’re still going to die. I’ll remind you of the mouse models, where we eliminate senescent cells. There’s a significant increase in median life span, but there’s no increase in maximum life span. In a way, the mice died healthier. I think that’s the goal, and I think that that’s what the venture capitalists are hoping for, because that will be the kind of intervention that will be broadly applicable and will be very desirable. The conflict is with those who think that we’re going to live to be 200 or 300 or more years old. That’s not realistic at this point.)

18.10.22 Vox, *Is the media making American politics worse?*, Ezra Klein & Jay Rosen

<https://www.vox.com/ezra-klein-show-podcast/2018/10/22/17991170/press-media-trump-polarization-jay-rosen-avenatti> (I think another way of saying entertainment logic, which is in some ways more honest, is market logic. Journalism is a very competitive market. The context of American journalism right now is different than the 1990s; it’s a very difficult business. All of us who’ve now been in it for the last decade or two have been

through layoffs; we've seen great institutions fall. This is not like when journalism was safe as a business. The threat of everything collapsing around you is always there. When that happens, organizations are very much trying to read the market. There's this great line from George Saunders's *The Braindead Megaphone* where he says something like, "'Tell me the truth' and 'tell me as much truth as you can while making a profit' are not the same thing." I think when we talk about entertainment, it sounds trivial. Like people are making a decision to be entertaining, rather than substantive. But rightly or wrongly, I think what's really happening is they're trying to be competitive. We're trying to have a strong enough business to fund the journalism we care about most. ... We talk a lot about left-right polarization, but there's this fundamental polarization of interested-uninterested. Most people don't want to follow political news closely. The people who do, in the same way that people who follow sports news closely do, have a team. They care about who wins and who loses. And so they're coming in with their own desires. They're actors in all this too, not just passive recipients. We can have this discussion about what we amplify, but a lot of what we're amplifying is what we think people want from us, or what they're demonstrating they want on these algorithmic platforms that are built to hype up the most tribally intense emotions. That's a part of this that we have a lot more trouble talking about. Who wants to blame the audience for anything? I don't. And oftentimes, I think we're the ones serving them poorly. But we can't really get away from the fact that a lot of coverage now is on topics we are following our audience into doing. One of the key facts about journalism today is that the audience has a lot more power. They have more power because they have more choices. They have more power because journalists are exposed to public comment and ridicule and feedback in a way that they weren't before. And they have more power because they're paying more of the freight in the case of subscription models. When there's a shift in power, the relationship changes. I don't think journalism is really ready for that. I think this is one of the real challenges the *New York Times* is having right now. The rising power of the *Times*'s core audience is creating anxiety among the journalists because they sense that this rising power can end up as a kind of censor. They don't want to produce news for an ideological segment, but those are the supporters of the *Times*. They fear the rising power of the audience as much as they are relieved that more and more people are willing to support them with digital subscriptions. ... It's very similar to a friend who can tell you the truth about yourself even if you're not necessarily open to hearing it. If our friend understands us, and is most of the time in sync with us, then maybe we're willing to hear difficult truths from that person. And I think the relationship between journalists and their users is very much like that. There has to be the sense that most of the time you're listening to me, you understand me. And then sometimes you're telling me things I don't want to necessarily hear. That ability to say to somebody: "You're not focused on this, but you should be." That's trust in journalism. ... There's a core of Trump supporters who at this point disbelieve the *Voxes* and *Washington Posts* and *New York Times* of the world on principle because they've been instructed to do that. There's been a culture in the conservative moment for a long time that encouraged that. It's a very efficient system now. The loudest voice in the culture, the president, is constantly giving that message. An army of online activists and trolls at the bottom of the period shout down news stories they don't like, attacks individual journalists, ridicules the institution. And then between those two, you have the mediators — Rush Limbaugh, Drudge, Fox News, *Daily Caller* — that efficiently connect the top and the bottom. The result of that is that for about 30 percent of the electorate, Trump is the major source of news about Trump. Which means that for that portion of the American public, an authoritarian news system is already up and running. Another way to put it would be before journalists log on in the morning, about a third of their public is already gone. And when they do their job, when they hold power to account, when they uncover new facts, when they behave as a fourth estate, that dynamic is actually reinforced because Trump attacks them and the news that they're digging up about him enrages his supporters. It confirms their belief that this institution is against them. And so by doing their job, they actually make that situation worse. And right now, nobody has any idea what to do about that.)

18.10.22 *New Yorker*, *Did Uber Steal Google's Intellectual Property?: Silicon Valley was built on job-hopping. But when a leader of Google's self-driving-car unit joined Uber, Google filed suit. Now the Feds are on the*

case., Charles Duhigg

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/10/22/did-uber-steal-googles-intellectual-property> (However, according to former Google executives, when Page heard that Levandowski might be fired, or that he might leave the company, he ordered a reversal. Google needed people like him. Many of its major innovations, like Gmail and AdSense, were more than half a decade old, an eternity in the tech industry. Various “moonshots”—attempts to diversify Google’s revenue stream by building new businesses—had consumed billions of dollars but shown few significant results. The company had spent hundreds of millions of dollars developing Google Glass—augmented-reality spectacles unveiled, to great fanfare, in 2012—but had quietly shuffled them aside when their performance proved underwhelming and glitchy. Even when Google acquired innovative startups—such as the smart-thermostat manufacturer Nest, in 2014—the pace of invention often stalled almost as soon as the purchase closed. Page ordered his lieutenants to negotiate the purchase of 510 Systems and Anthony’s Robots, and to consider giving Levandowski an expanded leadership role. “Anthony became who he is because Larry nurtured and protected him,” a former high-ranking Google executive told me. “They were friends—they liked having dinner and geeking out.” Within Project Chauffeur, though, there was considerable resistance to elevating Levandowski. Thrun, in an e-mail to his colleagues, said that several team members had “concerns about Anthony’s commitment and integrity.” Another executive, David Lawee, wrote that, even if Google was ready to “take the risk with Anthony” and make the acquisition, “I can say, definitively, that if I was choosing a business partner to start a company with, there is no way in hell that I would proceed.” Page was adamant. According to internal Google e-mails, he ordered executives to “make Anthony rich if Chauffeur succeeds.” Two months later, Google bought 510 Systems for twenty-two million dollars. It also purchased Anthony’s Robots; in return, Levandowski was guaranteed a future payment tied to the total value of Project Chauffeur. Google agreed to give him a claim on ten per cent of the division’s eventual worth—a kind of shadow equity that would vest in four years. The stake eventually paid him more than a hundred and twenty million dollars, one of the largest such payouts in Google’s history. “Sometimes the best way to get promoted at Google is to threaten that you’ll quit,” Levandowski told me. “If you’re, like, ‘Hey, I’m going to do my own startup,’ they’re, like, ‘O.K., we need to buy you.’ That’s how Silicon Valley works. You have to shake things up, create pressure. The people who win here are the ones who believe in the biggest future and are willing to take risks to make it come true.” Silicon Valley has always been built as much on treachery as on innovation. The interplay can be traced back to 1957, when the Valley was essentially created by a group of young engineers who gathered to discuss betraying their boss. The engineers worked for William Shockley—a recipient of the Nobel Prize who’d helped invent the transistor, and a disastrous supervisor. He had founded a small company amid the fruit farms of Mountain View, California, choosing the location in part for its proximity to his mother. Its offices were less than three miles from where Google is based today. ... At the time of the Shockley betrayals, other regions were much better positioned than Silicon Valley to become the tech industry’s breadbasket. Route 128, a beltway around Boston, was home to so many universities and pioneering computer firms that it soon became known as America’s Technology Highway. But by the nineteen-seventies Route 128 had been overshadowed by Northern California. Economists later suggested that the Valley’s culture of betrayal was a major reason for its success. Massachusetts’ laws made it difficult for employees to join rival companies or create new businesses. Engineers in Boston were typically forced to sign non-compete agreements that required them, if they quit, to wait at least a year before joining a competitor or creating their own firms. But in California non-compete agreements were illegal. That prohibition had been inserted into the state’s commercial code almost by accident, in the eighteen-seventies, when California lawmakers—seeking to save time—virtually copied a set of statutes that had been proposed (and then rejected) by New York’s legislature. When California’s early legislators outlawed “every contract by which anyone is restrained from engaging in a lawful profession,” none of them could have foreseen that, a century later, their decision would transform the global economy. As companies in Silicon Valley multiplied, you could “quit your job on Friday and have another job on Monday,” a California engineer told the economist AnnaLee Saxenian. “You didn’t necessarily even have to tell your wife. You just drove off in another direction on

Monday morning.” New businesses emerged across the state at a dizzying rate. Every year in the nineteen-seventies, a third of California’s tech workers quit their jobs and joined competitors, or launched new companies.)

18.10.12 LAT, *So many people have had their DNA sequenced that they've put other people's privacy in jeopardy*, Deborah Netburn

<http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-dna-genealogy-privacy-20181012-story.html> (To test the growing power of these sites, researchers led by Columbia University computer scientist Yaniv Erlich set out to see whether they could find a person’s name — and thus, her identity — if all they had to go on was a piece of her DNA and a small amount of biographical information. They started with a full DNA sequence from a Utah woman whose genetic information was published anonymously as part of an unrelated scientific study. (They had actually identified this woman in a previous study, but for the purposes of this work, they pretended they didn’t know who she was.) Erlich and his collaborators uploaded her genetic code to GEDmatch and ran a search to see if she had any relations on the site. They found two: one in North Dakota and one in Wyoming. The researchers could tell they were all related because they shared a number of single nucleotide polymorphisms, or SNPs. These are single letters in specific spots among the roughly 3 billion A’s, C’s, T’s and G’s that make up the human genome. The more SNPs people share, the more closely related they are. By comparing the DNA of all three relatives, Erlich’s team was able to find a common ancestral couple that were the Utah woman’s great-grandparents. Next, the researchers scoured genealogical websites and other sources for additional descendants of that long-ago couple. They found 10 children and hundreds of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Then they started culling their massive list of descendants. They eliminated all the men from the sample, then those who were not alive when the Utah woman’s DNA was sequenced. The authors also knew that their subject was married and how many children she had, which helped them zero in on their target. After a long day of painstaking work, they researchers were able to correctly name the owner of the DNA sample. The authors said the same process would work for about 60% of Americans of European descent, who are the people most likely to use genealogical websites, Erlich said. Though the odds of success would be lower for people from other backgrounds, it would still be expected to work for more than half of all Americans, they said.)

18.10.02 NYT, *The American Civil War, Part II*, Thomas

Friedman <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/02/opinion/the-american-civil-war-part-ii.html> (We can’t find common ground on which to respectfully disagree; the other side is “the enemy.” We shout at each other on television, unfollow each other on Facebook and fire verbal mortars at each other on Twitter — and now everyone is on the digital battlefield, not just politicians. Senator Jeff Flake this week said: “Tribalism is ruining us. It is tearing our country apart.” Across the land, before dinner parties or block parties, the refrain “I hope none of them will be there” is uttered with increasing frequency, referring no longer to people of another race or religion — bad enough — but to people from a different political party. ... That’s why our generation’s civil war is so hard to bring to a truce. There are so many fronts. There’s the battle between those who feel the American dream has slipped from their grasp and those who can easily pass it on to their kids. There’s the one between rural small-town Americans and “globalized” city slickers, who, the small-town folks are sure, look down upon them. There’s the fight between the white working-class Americans who feel that their identities are being lost in an increasingly minority-majority country and the Americans who embrace multiculturalism. And there’s the struggle between men who believe that their gender still confers certain powers and privileges and the women challenging that. There are so many fields of dispute.)

18.10.01 NYT, *The Angry White Male Caucus*, Paul

Krugman <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/01/opinion/kavanaugh-white-male-privilege.html> (What distinguished Trump voters was, instead, racial resentment. Furthermore, this resentment was and is driven

not by actual economic losses at the hands of minority groups, but by fear of losing status in a changing country, one in which the privilege of being a white man isn't what it used to be. And here's the thing: It's perfectly possible for a man to lead a comfortable, indeed enviable life by any objective standard, yet be consumed with bitterness driven by status anxiety. You might think that this is impossible, that having a good job and a comfortable life would inoculate someone against envy and hatred. That is, you might think that if you knew nothing of human nature and the world. ... But it's privilege under siege. An increasingly diverse society no longer accepts the God-given right of white males from the right families to run things, and a society with many empowered, educated women is finally rejecting the *droit de seigneur* once granted to powerful men. And nothing makes a man accustomed to privilege angrier than the prospect of losing some of that privilege, especially if it comes with the suggestion that people like him are subject to the same rules as the rest of us. So what we got last week was a view into the soul of Trumpism. It's not about "populism" — it would be hard to find a judge as anti-worker as Brett Kavanaugh. Instead, it's about the rage of white men, upper class as well as working class, who perceive a threat to their privileged position. And that rage may destroy America as we know it.)

18.09.29 NYT, *He Got Schizophrenia. He Got Cancer. And Then He Got Cured: A bone-marrow transplant treated a patient's leukemia — and his delusions, too. Some doctors think they know why*, Moises Velasquez-Manoff <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/29/opinion/sunday/schizophrenia-psychiatric-disorders-immune-system.html> (A bone-marrow transplant essentially reboots the immune system. Chemotherapy kills off your old white blood cells, and new ones sprout from the donor's transplanted blood stem cells. It's unwise to extrapolate too much from a single case study, and it's possible it was the drugs the man took as part of the transplant procedure that helped him. But his recovery suggests that his immune system was somehow driving his psychiatric symptoms. At first glance, the idea seems bizarre — what does the immune system have to do with the brain? — but it jibes with a growing body of literature suggesting that the immune system is involved in psychiatric disorders from depression to bipolar disorder.)

18.09.25 Aeon, *Religion is about emotion regulation, and it's very good at it*, Stephen Asma <https://aeon.co/ideas/religion-is-about-emotion-regulation-and-its-very-good-at-it> (An emotion such as grief has many ingredients. The physiological arousal of grief is accompanied by cognitive evaluations: 'I will never see my friend again'; 'I could have done something to prevent this'; 'She was the love of my life'; and so on. Religions try to give the bereaved an alternative appraisal that reframes their tragedy as something more than just misery. Emotional appraisals are proactive, according to the psychologists Phoebe Ellsworth at the University of Michigan and Klaus Scherer at the University of Geneva, going beyond the immediate disaster to envision the possible solutions or responses. This is called 'secondary appraisal'. After the primary appraisal ('This is very sad'), the secondary appraisal assesses our ability to deal with the situation: 'This is too much for me' — or, positively: 'I will survive this.' Part of our ability to cope with suffering is our sense of power or agency: more power generally means better coping ability. If I acknowledge my own limitations when faced with unavoidable loss, but I feel that a powerful ally, God, is part of my agency or power, then I can be more resilient. Because religious actions are often accompanied by magical thinking or supernatural beliefs, Christopher Hitchens argued in *God Is not Great* (2007) that religion is 'false consolation'. Many critics of religion echo his condemnation. But there is no such thing as false consolation. Hitchens and fellow critics are making a category mistake, like saying: 'The colour green is sleepy.' Consolation or comfort is a feeling, and it can be weak or strong, but it can't be false or true. You can be false in your judgment of why you're feeling better, but feeling better is neither true nor false. True and false applies only if we're evaluating whether our propositions correspond with reality. And no doubt many factual claims of religion are false in that way — the world was not created in six days. Religion is real consolation in the same way that music is real consolation. No one thinks that the pleasure of Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute* is 'false pleasure' because singing flutes don't really exist. It doesn't need to correspond to reality. It's true that some religious devotees, unlike music

devotees, pin their consolation to additional metaphysical claims, but why should we trust them to know how religion works? Such believers do not recognise that their unthinking religious rituals and social activities are the true sources of their therapeutic healing. Meanwhile, Hitchens and other critics confuse the factual disappointments of religion with the value of religion generally, and thereby miss the heart of it.)

18.09.13 Bloomberg, *Where in the World Is Larry Page?: While Alphabet faces existential challenges, its co-founder is exercising his right to be forgotten.*, Mark Bergen

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2018-09-13/larry-page-is-a-no-show-with-google-under-a-harsh-spotlight> (While Page's tenure was marked by prescient investments in AI and massive facilities to store Google's growing data hoard, the pace of the job also weighed on his health, say two former Google VPs. In the 1990s he was diagnosed with vocal cord paralysis, a nerve condition that eventually has made it difficult for him to speak above a hoarse whisper. "Sergey says I'm probably a better CEO because I choose my words more carefully," Page wrote in a Google+ post in 2013, the same year he stopped joining earnings calls. A person who formerly reported to him even recalls being scolded for once making a mistake that led the CEO to yell, as if Page had only so many words left to speak. ... It's strange how such denunciations can distort Page's image as a friendly futurist. Even his semiretirement, perhaps colored by his health issues, conjures visions of a frail and aging luminary, so much so that it's easy to forget that he's younger than his successor, Pichai. At one of his last public appearances, in an onstage conversation at TED in 2014, Page looked astonishingly young and upbeat. His voice had already grown hushed, but the rasps between his deep breaths lent gravity to his discussion of the ways in which technology can hurt people and data can be misused. Although he was speaking to the Silicon Valley spying revealed by Edward Snowden, he could just as well have been ruminating about the challenges facing Alphabet and Google today when he reflected on how the public needs to reevaluate government powers in the digital age. "We haven't had that conversation," he said. "We need to have a debate about that, or we can't have a functioning democracy." To have a debate, though, you need to show up.)

18.09.13 NYT, *U.S. Has Highest Share of Foreign-Born Since 1910, With More Coming From Asia*, Sabrina Tavernise <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/13/us/census-foreign-population.html> (The Census Bureau's figures for 2017 confirm a major shift in who is coming to the United States. For years newcomers tended to be from Latin America, but a Brookings Institution analysis of that data shows that 41 percent of the people who said they arrived since 2010 came from Asia. Just 39 percent were from Latin America. About 45 percent were college educated, the analysis found, compared with about 30 percent of those who came between 2000 and 2009. "This is quite different from what we had thought," said William H. Frey, the senior demographer at the Brookings Institution who conducted the analysis. "We think of immigrants as being low-skilled workers from Latin America, but for recent arrivals that's much less the case. People from Asia have overtaken people from Latin America." ... North Dakota had the single largest percentage increase in foreign-born residents since 2010, Mr. Frey said, with the number going up by 87 percent. Dr. Fadel E. Nammour, a gastroenterologist in Fargo, N.D., who moved to the United States from Lebanon in 1996, said he has noticed more immigrant-owned restaurants since he moved to North Dakota in 2002. In recent years, the state has settled refugees from countries including Iraq, Somalia and Congo. In all, foreign-born people in North Dakota rose to 31,000 in 2017 from just 16,600 in 2010, Mr. Frey found. "There is more diversity now," Dr. Nammour said. "You can tell by food. There are Indian places that opened up. We have an African place now. Little things that are a little bit different.")

18.09.10 Vox, *Study: giving out cash in Uganda helped after 4 years. After 9 years, not so much.*, <https://www.vox.com/2018/9/10/17827836/cash-basic-income-uganda-study-blattman-charity> Dylan Matthews (Berk Özler, the lead economist for the poverty cluster of the World Bank's Development Research Group, is a bit more circumspect. Özler has been sharply critical of GiveDirectly for being unduly boosterish

and insufficiently evidence-based in its arguments for cash. He's not anti-cash, per se — "nobody's disagreeing that cash is good," he told me — but he does think the new paper's findings are a bit more negative than Faye or Glassman do. Looking at the people who got the cash, Özler said: "You have a third that never really start a business, a third that are disinvesting, and a third that are happy to be small businesses not really growing. That's kind of disappointing, but it's surprising to me. I don't really understand why this is happening." In his view, the positive results among that small third of the recipients who actually used their money — rather than spending it or investing it for a bit and then disinvesting soon thereafter — drove the positive findings in Year 4. And he's not quite sure why that group gained, and the others didn't. Özler also raised the issue of spillovers. The point of the program was to get more people into skilled trades, like tailoring. But that doesn't just affect the people getting the skills; it affects the other tailors already working in the area. "Creating 10-15 tailors at once in a parish of 10,000 people, it's got to affect existing tailors," he said. "Maybe some went out of business." It's hard to know whether the program is cost-effective without knowing what happened to those other tailors. If the program just made some people successful tailors at the expense of others, that's not really a huge gain. For Özler, this all isn't a reason to abandon cash. But it's a reason to think harder about how to do cash. "We're not arguing 'cash good versus cash not good.' Cash is good!" he said. "But the only way to give it isn't, 'I'll drop 1,000 bucks on you and go away.'" There's a lot of different ways to give out cash. The hope was that the Ugandan program had found one that would set up a durable, sustained escape from poverty for beneficiaries. That doesn't really seem to be the case. But the cash certainly helped the recipients. And it's possible an even better-designed cash program could help more. "We don't want to sound too disappointed," Blattman told me, summarizing his takeaway. "It's still better than anything else we'd seen.")

18.09.05 NYT, *I Am Part of the Resistance Inside the Trump Administration*, Anonymous <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/05/opinion/trump-white-house-anonymous-resistance.html> (To be clear, ours is not the popular "resistance" of the left. We want the administration to succeed and think that many of its policies have already made America safer and more prosperous. But we believe our first duty is to this country, and the president continues to act in a manner that is detrimental to the health of our republic. That is why many Trump appointees have vowed to do what we can to preserve our democratic institutions while thwarting Mr. Trump's more misguided impulses until he is out of office. The root of the problem is the president's amorality. Anyone who works with him knows he is not moored to any discernible first principles that guide his decision making. ... This isn't the work of the so-called deep state. It's the work of the steady state. Given the instability many witnessed, there were early whispers within the cabinet of invoking the 25th Amendment, which would start a complex process for removing the president. But no one wanted to precipitate a constitutional crisis. So we will do what we can to steer the administration in the right direction until — one way or another — it's over. The bigger concern is not what Mr. Trump has done to the presidency but rather what we as a nation have allowed him to do to us. We have sunk low with him and allowed our discourse to be stripped of civility.)

18.09.03 New Yorker, *The Mystery of People Who Speak Dozens of Languages*, Judith Thurman <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/09/03/the-mystery-of-people-who-speak-dozens-of-languages> (Much of the data on hyperpolyglots is still sketchy. But, from a small sample of prodigies who have been tested by neurolinguists, responded to online surveys, or shared their experience in forums, a partial profile has emerged. An extreme language learner has a more-than-random chance of being a gay, left-handed male on the autism spectrum, with an autoimmune disorder, such as asthma or allergies. (Endocrine research, still inconclusive, has investigated the hypothesis that these traits may be linked to a spike in testosterone during gestation.) "It's true that L.G.B.T. people are well represented in our community," Simcott told me, when we spoke in July. "And a lot identify as being on the spectrum, some mildly, others more so. It was a subject we explored at the conference last year." Simcott himself is an ambidextrous, heterosexual, and notably outgoing

forty-one-year-old. He lives in Macedonia with his wife and daughter, a budding polyglot of eleven, who was, he told me, trilingual at sixteen months. His own parents were monolingual, though he was fascinated, as a boy, “by the different ways people spoke English.” (Like Henry Higgins, Simcott can nail an accent to a precise point on the map, not only in the British Isles but all over Europe.) “I’m mistaken for a native in about six languages,” he told me, even though he started slow, learning French in grade school and Spanish as a teen-ager. At university, he added Italian, Portuguese, Swedish, and Old Icelandic. His flawless German, acquired post-college, as an au pair, made Dutch a cinch. As Simcott entered late adolescence, he said, “the Internet was starting up,” so he could practice his languages in chat rooms. He also found a sense of identity that had eluded him. There was, in particular, a mysterious polyglot who haunted the same rooms. “He was the first person who really encouraged me,” Simcott said. “Everyone else either warned me that my brain would burst or saw me as a talking horse. Eventually, I made a video using bits and bobs of sixteen languages, so I wouldn’t have to keep performing.” But the stranger gave Simcott a validation that he still recalls with emotion. He founded the conference partly to pay that debt forward, by creating a clubhouse for the kind of geeky kid he had been, to whom no tongue was foreign but no place was home.)

18.09.02 NYT, *A Swastika on a Church Bell: A Village Splits on How to Confront Nazi Past*, Katrin Bennhold <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/02/world/europe/hitler-bell-swastika-germany-church.html> (There is history, and then there is memory. Some here want to keep the bell because of emotional ties — because they married under it or their children were once baptized under it. Dora Jotter has lived in Herxheim all her life. She was 12 when she wrote a school essay about the arrival ceremony for the bell in 1934. “All village streets were resplendent in flags,” she wrote. Now 96, Ms. Jotter calls the day a “meaningful” event in her childhood. And so the other day she called the mayor. Would he please ring the bell during her funeral?)

18.09.01 NYT, *The Next Financial Crisis Lurks Underground*, Bethany McLean <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/01/opinion/the-next-financial-crisis-lurks-underground.html> (A key reason for the terrible financial results is that fracked oil wells show a steep decline rate: The amount of oil they produce in the second year is drastically smaller than the amount produced in the first year. According to an economist at the Kansas City Federal Reserve, production in the average well in the Bakken — a key area for fracking shale in North Dakota — declines 69 percent in its first year and more than 85 percent in its first three years. A conventional well might decline by 10 percent a year. For fracking operations to keep growing, they need huge investments each year to offset the decline from the previous years’ wells. Because the industry has such a voracious need for capital, and capital costs money, fracking could not have taken off so dramatically were it not for record low interest rates after the 2008 financial crisis. In other words, the Federal Reserve is responsible for the fracking boom. Amir Azar, a fellow at the Columbia University Center on Global Energy Policy, calculated that the industry’s net debt in 2015 was \$200 billion, a 300 percent increase from 2005. But interest expense increased at half the rate debt did because interest rates kept falling. Dr. Azar recently called the post-2008 era of super-low interest rates the “real catalyst of the shale revolution.” ... Private equity funds dedicated to natural resources raised nearly \$70 billion of capital in 2015, according to SailingStone Capital Partners, an energy-focused investment firm, and over \$100 billion in 2016. Today, 35 percent of all horizontal drilling (the industry’s preferred terminology) is done by privately backed companies. Private equity titans have made fortunes, but not necessarily because the companies they fund have produced profits. Private equity firms have generated some of their returns by selling one company to another, or taking a company they’ve funded public. For a long time, the public markets have been valuing fracking companies not based on a multiple of profits, the standard way of valuing a company, but rather according to a multiple of the acreage a company owns. As long as companies are able to sell stock to the public or sell themselves to companies that are already public, everyone in the chain, from the private equity funders to the executives, can continue making money. It’s all a bit reminiscent of the dot-com bubble of the late 1990s, when internet companies were valued on the number of eyeballs they attracted, not on the profits they were

likely to make. As long as investors were willing to believe that profits were coming, it all worked — until it didn't. These days, the rhetoric of “energy independence,” meaning an America that no longer depends on anyone else for its oil, not even Saudi Arabia or OPEC, is in perfect harmony with “Make America Great Again.” But rhetoric doesn't produce profits, and most things that are economically unsustainable, from money-losing dot-coms to subprime mortgages, eventually come to a bitter end.)

18.08.30 The Atlantic, *Why Kids Want Things*, Marsha Richins

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/08/kids-materialism/568987/> (Richins: I have this hypothesis, which I've not really been able to test. It seems to me that if a child has certain intangible resources—maybe they play a musical instrument and they're in the band—they would maybe develop some friendships based around that shared experience. Maybe their parents are saying, “Wow, I'm so proud of you for sticking with band and you're practicing your trumpet.” This can give a child a sense of who they are beyond just possessions, but that's an intangible thing. So if kids have more things like athletic skills or activities that they can talk about or form connections with friends over those things, they can feel good about themselves through many different kinds of things. And if you're lacking other kinds of things—if you're lacking intangible resources—you might want to fall back on tangible resources. ... Richins: Rewards and punishments, yes. And those can be earned or unearned rewards. So that's another reasonably strong association: Children who recall that their parents just bought them stuff when they wanted it, or who paid them money or bought them things when they got good grades, there's a very consistent association that when these things happen in childhood, when that person is an adult, they're more likely to be materialistic. And I'm looking now at what parents do when their kid's unhappy, or upset, or they have a big disappointment—how do parents deal with that? And my preliminary evidence suggests that it's something that's learned in childhood. The parents might say, “Oh, you didn't make it on to the team—let's go out and have something to eat,” or, “Let's go out and get you a new video game—that'll take your mind off it.” Well, if the parents do that with their kids, we find that as adults, people are more likely to deal with distress in the same way, by giving themselves a little gift.)

18.08.30 WaPo, *This is the new GOP: Angry and afraid*, Michael

Gerson https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-gop-must-take-a-stand--if-it-still-has-legs/2018/08/30/a992dd8e-ac7f-11e8-b1da-ff7faa680710_story.html (As Robert S. Mueller III continues his inexorable investigation of Trump's sleazy business and political world — and if Democrats gain the House and begin aggressive oversight — a cornered president may test the limits of executive power in the attempt to avoid justice. If the GOP narrowly retains control of the House, Trump and others will take it as the vindication of his whole approach to politics. The president will doubtlessly go further in targeting his enemies for investigation and other harm. He will doubtlessly attack the independence of the FBI and attempt to make it an instrument of his will. He will doubtlessly continue his vendetta against responsible journalism and increase his pressure on media companies that don't please him. On a broad front, Trump's lunacy will become operational. The separation of powers does not work automatically, like a washing machine. Republicans must pick their own point of principled resistance to a corrosive populism, if they have one at all.)

18.08.29 NYT, *Should You Track Your Teen's Location?*, Lisa Damour

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/29/well/family/should-you-track-your-teens-location.html> (That aside, parents who use location tracking to try to catch misbehaving teenagers ought to weigh the harm they feel they are preventing against the harm such surveillance may do to their relationship with their child. When done collaboratively, however, location tracking can contribute to adolescent safety. For example, parents might come to an agreement with their young driver that they will check her location if she's running late, rather than texting or calling her if she's likely to be behind the wheel. And Mr. Curtis has told his own children, with whom he does use location tracking apps, that if they ever have an urgent need to be picked up they, “don't have to even call,” but can send him a text reading 911 — the agreed-upon family code — and he'll be

on his way. In a similar vein, John Shoemaker, a 16-year-old who lives in Coronado, Calif., suffers from a severe nut allergy. He carries an EpiPen and an inhaler, but has a plan with his parents that they are to find him by his iPhone if he doesn't check in or respond as expected. "I see it as a safety net," he explained. "If something were to happen, it's nice to know that somebody would have the capability to know where I am." Parents who know where their teenagers are should not make assumptions about what they are doing. I've cared for an adolescent in my practice who got in trouble with her folks for swinging by a banned home to help a friend retrieve a lost item. And I've known teenagers who were doing all the wrong things, in the exact place where they were supposed to be. When it comes to knowing what is going on with a teenager, having their location cannot take the place of having a sturdy, working relationship. For many families, an adolescent's wish for increased autonomy outpaces the parents' readiness to grant it. At these times, location tracking can be used to establish trust that leads to greater freedom. Parents might help their tween or teenager move toward independence by saying, "We expect you to tell us where you'll be, to let us know if your plans change and to respond if we reach out. We'll confirm your location by phone for a while, but once we feel that you're on top of things, we'll stop looking over your shoulder." Tracking can also be used to rebuild trust that has been broken. After their teenage son drank himself into the emergency room, a family in my practice grounded the boy for two months, then tracked his location — with his full agreement — for several weekends until they felt they could, again, count on their son to look after himself. And though teenagers and young adults routinely location-track their friends, parents should not assume that they enjoy an open-ended tracking arrangement. It's one thing for your roommate to know that you are spending the night at your girlfriend's dorm and quite another for your dad to have that same information. By age 18 or earlier, parents should ask teenagers if they are still O.K. with being located digitally. Especially when young people head off to college, sometimes in a distant state, being responsible for themselves is supposed to be part of their job description. Raising teenagers comes with some guaranteed discomforts. We often do not know where our children are, what they are doing and if they'll tell us the truth should we ask. Location tracking allows us to address some of these concerns even as it exacerbates an age-old parenting tension: We want to keep our children safe, maintain a loving connection and, simultaneously, foster their independence.)

18.08.27, New Yorker, *Paul Singer, Doomsday Investor*, Sheelah Kolhatkar

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/08/27/paul-singer-doomsday-investor> (Later, Cohn met separately with Athena's board of directors and presented a forty-five-page critique of Bush's leadership, much of it centered on his behavior. Cohn highlighted Bush's irreverent tone when speaking about business matters, as well as the heavy drinking that occurred at company events. The presentation included anonymous comments from current and former employees complaining about Bush's antics. "This isn't a frat house, it's a corporation," a comment read. One slide juxtaposed a time line of Athena's financial results with images from Bush's Instagram account. Interspersed with drops in Athena's stock price were pictures of Bush sailing to the Bahamas five times in three months; Athena employees on a party bus just before the company announced disappointing earnings; and Bush wearing a ridiculous costume. There was nothing sordid, exactly, but some photographs on the account—such as one not included in the presentation, which showed Bush at a resort in the Bahamas looking hungover in front of a sign that read "Exercise makes you look better naked, so does Tequila. Your choice."—were publicly available and painted a picture of a less than responsible C.E.O. (Cohn said that an investor had initially directed him to the Instagram account.) At one point, Cohn told the board that, "while it was none of his business," it seemed that Bush had been "taking a female Athena employee on his boat." (Bush acknowledged that the woman had been on the boat, as a member of the corporate sailing team.) Bush told me that he had expected Elliott to engage in "character assassination," but hearing that his personal life was being used as a weapon against him was upsetting. Cohn, on the other hand, felt that he had made a compelling argument that Bush should no longer be running the company.

18.08.23 Politico, *Tired of Dirty Dishes and 'Hacker Houses,' Millennials Revamp Communal Living*, Max Blau <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/08/23/co-living-millennials-san-jose-what-works-219378>(A responsible and respectful bachelor in his mid-20s, Cannon was exactly the kind of member HubHaus was looking for. The Detroit-area native felt socially isolated upon moving to the Bay Area, in part because his first employer, a federal research contractor, largely hired middle-aged workers. He moved into a rundown \$1,550-a-month apartment in San Francisco's SoMa neighborhood. He figured that pricey rent was the cost of finding a social circle. But then he started a new lab tech job at Stanford, more than 30 miles away, that paid less than \$50,000 a year. His rent ate up more than a third of his salary and the long commute took its toll. "I wanted more of a home feel," Cannon says. "I wanted to know my roommates — and know they would clean their dishes. And I didn't want to be in a situation where I was another white dude in a house of five or six white dudes." Cannon's initial skepticism about HubHaus waned after he moved in February 2016. Halfway through unpacking, he and two new housemates struck up a long conversation about "Star Trek." While the housemates hailed from countries like Iran and Italy and were just as diverse politically, a bond grew over shared meals and poolside chats. They argued over their favorite Kanye West records so much that when it came time to name their house—per HubHaus tradition—they dubbed it Casa de Yeezus. HubHaus has tried to foster that sense of community between its houses as well as within them. There were happy hours where HubHaus picked up the first round. The members of other houses open their doors for board game nights, leading to intense matches of Settlers of Catan or Cards Against Humanity. Cannon found himself attending those events, including a BBQ hosted at the HubHaus where Merchant lived. Cannon felt that co-living helped him "go from not feeling comfortable with people to being in a community of people I enjoyed being around.")

18.08.23 NYT, *The Bitter Regrets of a Useless Chinese Daughter*, Jianan Qian <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/23/opinion/international-world/the-bitter-regrets-of-a-useless-chinese-daughter.html> (Before my mother's illness, I spurned what I saw as an excess of pragmatism among Chinese people, who want to ensure that all of their efforts go toward something useful. College degrees, jobs, friendships, marriages — all these should be chosen practically. "Be wise, pick an able man. Love doesn't feed you," my people like to say. Looking back on my high school years, all my relatives tried to talk me, a top-ranking student, into majoring in science or finance in college. But I was stubborn enough to stay with my favorite subject, literature. Now I understand them. They knew very well that in life, things can easily fall apart, and that those degrees are a promise of a steady, good-paying job, and perhaps a ticket to freedom, too. I know I shouldn't take everything so personally. It's China's institutions, after all, that are to blame. Why do we have so few options for good medical treatment, such limited education resources, such narrow career paths? Why do we need to be rich or have guanxi merely to enjoy access to very basic public services? Instead of desperately chasing connections or money, we should work together to address these social and political issues. But that takes too long, and too many things cannot wait, so instead we do things the other way around. The latest vaccine scandal, for example, prompts anxious parents to think about how to get their children shots in Hong Kong or a foreign country, rather than how to put pressure on the central government. After every social tragedy, victims are subjected to disdain on social media, rather than sympathy: "this happened to you because you are a loser; because you don't have the right connections; because you are not making enough money." With time, that sort of thinking starts to take hold: If I'm rich enough, my children can get imported powdered milk instead of tainted Chinese formula; if I'm rich enough, my children will not be put in kindergartens where they're subjected to abuse, forced to strip and stabbed with needles; if I'm rich enough, my children can be citizens in America, where the vaccines are safe. We feel guilty about the things that we shouldn't feel guilty about.)

18.08.22 NYT, *China's Consumption Downgrade: Skip Avocados, Cocktails and Kids*, Li Yuan <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/22/business/china-consumer-downgrade.html> (Quit avocado. Ride bikes instead of taxis. Drink beer instead of cocktails — and make sure that beer isn't craft. Order a

medium-size milk tea instead of a large. Give up the gym, and take up dancing in public squares like a grandmother. Some people joke about eating meat instead of tofu, as American tariffs have made imported soybeans more expensive. Perhaps most worrisome for China's leaders, many young Chinese are increasingly reluctant to have children. A post headlined "This Generation of Young Chinese, Brace for the Bitter Days Ahead," by Ming Na, a blogger, received more than 300,000 views on the social media platform WeChat last weekend. She advised young people to stop going to shopping malls and nightclubs. "The age of the consumption downgrade," Ms. Na wrote, "has arrived with a big crashing sound." ... On paper, the Chinese economy looks strong. Look closer, and the cracks begin to show. Retail sales this year have grown at their slowest pace in more than a decade. Wages in the private sector are growing at their slowest pace since the global financial crisis. The stock market has fallen by one-fifth. ... Like many Chinese men, Mr. Wang believes he needs an apartment in order to find a wife. But he is under so much pressure with his mortgage and debt, and with supporting his aging parents in the countryside, that he has had to postpone his plan for marriage. His prospects weren't good anyway: To save money, he has stopped dating. "I work long hours every day," he said. "It makes me feel occupied.")

18.08.17 The Guardian, *How TripAdvisor changed travel*, Linda

Kinstler <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/aug/17/how-tripadvisor-changed-travel> (The next year, another woman reported being assaulted by a security guard at the same hotel. Love fought to have her original post reinstated, but TripAdvisor wouldn't budge. Though the company's family-friendly policy has since been revised, it is not consistently enforced, and its provisions are rather vague. On 1 November 2017, an investigation by Raquel Rutledge, a journalist at the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, found that TripAdvisor had a habit of deleting posts detailing sexual assaults and other violent crimes on the grounds that they either violated the family-friendly policy, contained second-hand information, or hearsay, or they were deemed "off topic" by site moderators. "There's no way to know how many negative reviews are withheld by TripAdvisor; how many true, terrifying experiences never get told; or for site users to know that much of what they see has been specifically selected and crafted to encourage them to spend," Rutledge wrote. On 7 November, TripAdvisor's market value crashed by \$1bn when its stock price dropped from \$39 to \$30 per share, its worst-ever day on the stock market. A couple of weeks later, the US Federal Trade Commission opened an ongoing investigation into the company's business practices. "For a long time, [companies] could claim that their role was largely proactive, that all they had to do was put safeguards in place to reduce the risks of bad things happening," says Botsman. "We've seen a massive pendulum swing – it's now their responsibility when things go wrong. This is a whole new era of corporate accountability." The day Rutledge's story broke, TripAdvisor issued a public apology to Love, and hastily announced the introduction of a "badge" system that would label establishments where similar incidents had taken place with a red caution sign and a message from the company suggesting that users "perform additional research" before making a booking. But because TripAdvisor prides itself on providing the most up-to-date information, the badges will expire 90 days after the incidents are brought to the company's attention. Kristie Love's post was restored to the forum where she originally posted it, buried behind thousands of other posts. Since the badge system was implemented last year, TripAdvisor says that "nearly a dozen" properties have been flagged for users, a figure that is staggeringly low given the millions of hotel listings that it proudly boasts. The company is reluctant to badge properties because, as Young put it, "TripAdvisor is not a factchecking business." He added: "While we will moderate as aggressively as needed for our guidelines, we weren't at the restaurant and we weren't at the hotel. And accordingly, it's not our place to weigh in on the facts of the review." The hotel where Love was raped was badged for 90 days on [TripAdvisor.com](https://www.tripadvisor.com), and for just three days on its mobile app. (TripAdvisor says the warning was up on mobile for the entire 90 days and that any disparities were due to product updates.) Then the warning disappeared.)

18.08.16 NYT, *Elon Musk Details 'Excruciating' Personal Toll of Tesla Turmoil*, David Gelles <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/16/business/elon-musk-interview-tesla.html> (In the interview on Thursday, Mr. Musk alternated between laughter and tears. He said he had been working up to 120 hours a week recently — echoing the reason he cited in a recent public apology to an analyst whom he had berated. In the interview, Mr. Musk said he had not taken more than a week off since 2001, when he was bedridden with malaria. “There were times when I didn’t leave the factory for three or four days — days when I didn’t go outside,” he said. “This has really come at the expense of seeing my kids. And seeing friends.” Mr. Musk stopped talking, seemingly overcome by emotion. He turned 47 on June 28, and he said he spent the full 24 hours of his birthday at work. “All night — no friends, nothing,” he said, struggling to get the words out. Two days later, he was scheduled to be the best man at the wedding of his brother, Kimbal, in Catalonia. Mr. Musk said he flew directly there from the factory, arriving just two hours before the ceremony. Immediately afterward, he got back on the plane and returned straight to Tesla headquarters, where work on the mass-market Model 3 has been all consuming. Mr. Musk paused again. “I thought the worst of it was over — I thought it was,” he said. “The worst is over from a Tesla operational standpoint.” He continued: “But from a personal pain standpoint, the worst is yet to come.”)

18.08.16 Outside, *Snowbound*, Doug Robinson <https://www.outsideonline.com/2336896/snowbound> (In his final days, perhaps hours, he began summing up his life in his journal: “I NEVER EVER fit in! Not from 4 years old till now. Nowhere, except maybe hiking community.” “5th grade bullied terribly left scar for life.... I was crushed beyond words.... So unhappy we moved away from woods.... I ran away and hitchhiked across the country. I discovered another world that forever changed my life.... Got stoned first time at 16 was best thing ever, escaped reality pain for first time. Went hiking out west on PCT! Got laid first time.” “Looks like I am going to die of dehydration, no flowing water can’t keep up. This is so intense and so sad.... I’m powerless, getting weaker.... Been 50 below just laying around in the sack... Losing track of days. Dream of food all day.” “Boy do I have regrets.” ... Otter, for his part, was remarkably lacking in vindictiveness. “Life is a hike,” was his customary signoff on his blog entries; the hike was simply over. His journal, backed by a lifelong habit of self-reliance in the wilderness, places the blame mostly on Otter himself, his actions and omissions. “This is a situation of my own doing, from a life I led,” he wrote. He did not blame others or wish that they had done more. Instead, in his very last entry, he simply wished to be remembered. When his friends recalled him, he wrote, he wanted them to think of him as he lived, not as he died: “This is for Stephen Beebers, a good man, a good soul, a good friend and I wish he were here now with us.”)

18.08.13 GQ, *Inside the Poisoning of a Russian Double Agent*, Tom Lamont <https://www.gq.com/story/russia-spy-poisoning> (Volodarsky had left the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, after which he re-settled in Austria and began writing spy exposés for Western publications. Alex Goldfarb, a well-known Russian dissident, once described Volodarsky as the only ex-agency man “with whom it is certainly safe to drink tea”—a macabre reference to their mutual acquaintance, Alexander Litvinenko, a journalist and sometime consultant for British intelligence who was murdered in London after drinking from a teacup laced with radioactive poison. Volodarsky attended Litvinenko's funeral in the winter of 2006. Many well-connected people I spoke with about Skripal mentioned, unbidden, Litvinenko's ghost—a lingering guilt, inside and outside the British establishment, that his murder had not been properly faced up to. Few in power doubted that Litvinenko's was a state-sponsored killing, but the diplomatic response from the British government was insubstantial. Oligarch money was splashing through London at the time. Surface relations with the Kremlin were okay. Shrug. And no wonder, people said, that the strange deaths continued. Since 2006, at least a dozen UK residents with strong links to Russia had died abruptly (heart attack, fall, inexplicable collapse), after which their deaths were unimaginatively written off by coroners as unsuspicious (suicide, weak heart). Volodarsky knew many of the deceased, including Boris Berezovsky, found hanged in 2013; and Badri Patarkatsishvili, discovered collapsed in 2008. In the weeks following March 4, another

acquaintance, Nikolai Glushkov, had been found dead at his home in South London, the cause of death given as compression to the neck. ... "Russia is orientated to eliminate enemies," he said. "And not foreigners, primarily, by the way. It's Russians who've left." He said he believed he'd once been targeted himself—a contact he didn't fully trust, some substance slipped into his coffee. His wife told me he was "white as paper" when he came home that day, and had curled up on her lap like an animal. ... When I asked him the same questions I asked everybody about the Skripal hit—why? and why now?—Morozov was withering about certain British assumptions. Whenever the poisoning was described as being ordered by Putin, he said, it showed an awful naivety. "Everyone thinks that Putin controls everything. No! He's controlling only what he controls." To the Russian mind, the Western impulse to have everything be distinctly this or that—if not the truth, a lie—read as idiotically simplistic. He flung up his hands in frustration when I asked, the Skripal hit in mind, how one might draw the Kremlin's permission structure. A triangle, I asked, with Putin at the top? Morozov was appalled. "A triangle!" He searched for a less facile description, something that would properly conjure the mass of interconnecting interests: the politicians, mafia, businesspeople, generals, spies, all cross-assisting or at cross-purposes. "It's not a triangle. It's the Internet." He told me he believed that Skripal had been punished for interfering, maybe inadvertently, in the financial interests of a self-contained criminal group. Morozov speculated that Skripal had passed the wrong intel to the wrong people, probably during the course of "his analytical work for some intelligence companies, if I understood what he was saying..." ... Boris Volodarsky told me if Skripal had plugged himself into Western intelligence networks, that would have made him a conspicuous point of contact for anybody wavering within the Russian system. Volodarsky recounted that when Alexander Litvinenko first hoped to contact MI6, he sought an introduction through Oleg Gordievsky, a KGB double agent living in the UK. And once Litvinenko was on MI6's books, a later defector named Vyacheslav Zharko reportedly came to him for a similar intro. Volodarsky imagined an equivalent conversation between Skripal and some old colleague: "Sergei, could we meet?" If it was difficult for Volodarsky to explain the targeting of a pardoned, pensioned-off spy, he had less difficulty in imagining why a roving defector magnet might be worth snuffing out.)

18.08.07 Scientific American, *How to Recover from Romantic Heartbreak*, Guy Winch

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-to-recover-from-romantic-heartbreak/> (If you are trying to get over heartbreak, make a list of the person's faults as well as of the shortcomings of the actual relationship and to keep that list on their phone. Whenever you find yourself having idealized thoughts and memories, whip out your phone and read a few reminders in order to balance your perceptions and remind yourself that your ex was not perfect and neither was the relationship. One crucial aspect of recovery from heartbreak that was not covered in the current study is that breakups leave all kinds of voids in our lives. Our social circle gets diminished, our activities change, our physical space changes (e.g., their 'stuff' is no longer there), some of the things we did as couples we no longer do, and the list goes on. A significant part of the emotional pain we feel after a breakup is related to these other losses, the ripple effects that go beyond the loss of the actual person. Finding ways to recognize these voids and fill them is an important task of recovery from heartbreak and one that is often neglected. Heartbreak is a form of grief and loss that can cause insomnia, changes in appetite, depression, anxiety, and even suicidal thoughts and behavior and as such it should be taken very seriously, as should our efforts to recover. However, to do so, we have to assert control and consciously and willfully prevent ourselves from making mistakes that will set us back (like staying in touch or trying to be friends while we're still heartbroken) and encourage ourselves to take steps that might feel unpleasant or counter-intuitive, but that will ultimately diminish our emotional pain and expedite our recovery.)

18.08.05 NYT, *He's a Superstar Pastor. She Worked for Him and Says He Groped Her Repeatedly*, Laurie

Goodstein <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/05/us/bill-hybel-willow-creek-pat-baranowski.html> (Since leaving the church, Ms. Baranowski said she has struggled to keep a job, lost her condominium, moved from state to state, and had migraines and panic attacks. "I carried Bill's responsibility, for things he should have

been responsible for,” she said. Ms. Baranowski told only one friend, the Rev. Don Cousins, about one month after she left the Willow staff. She begged him to stay silent, and he did, until now. The entanglement with Mr. Hybels “altered the trajectory of her life,” said Mr. Cousins, a well-known evangelical leader who worked at Willow for 17 years. “She had been a very high-performing person, committed, high-caliber, responsible,” said Mr. Cousins, now a pastor in Orlando, Fla. “And the church was her life.” Mr. Hybels went on to expand Willow to eight sites with 25,000 worshipers. He published more than 50 books, many on ethics, like “Who Are You When No One’s Looking.” He was a spiritual adviser to President Bill Clinton and stuck with him through his impeachment. He drew speakers like Colin Powell, Bono and Sheryl Sandberg to his annual Global Leadership Summit, which has continued and will be held later this week. When news of the other allegations against Mr. Hybels broke, Mr. Cousins encouraged Ms. Baranowski to get in touch with Ms. Beach. The two women had a tearful reunion. Both wish they had confronted Mr. Hybels at the time so they could have spared other women from harassment. Ms. Beach remembers traveling to 27 countries representing Willow Creek and hearing pastors say hundreds of times that they owed their churches’ success to Mr. Hybels. “How could he have done all this good,” she asked, “when there were such dark things happening behind the scenes?”)

18.08.05 NYT, *‘Too Little Too Late’: Bankruptcy Booms Among Older Americans*, Tara Bernard

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/05/business/bankruptcy-older-americans.html> (The rate of people 65 and older filing for bankruptcy is three times what it was in 1991, the study found, and the same group accounts for a far greater share of all filers. Driving the surge, the study suggests, is a three-decade shift of financial risk from government and employers to individuals, who are bearing an ever-greater responsibility for their own financial well-being as the social safety net shrinks. The transfer has come in the form of, among other things, longer waits for full Social Security benefits, the replacement of employer-provided pensions with 401(k) savings plans and more out-of-pocket spending on health care. Declining incomes, whether in retirement or leading up to it, compound the challenge. Cheryl Mcleod of Las Vegas filed for bankruptcy in January after struggling to keep up with her mortgage payments and other expenses. “I am 70, and I am working for less money than I ever did in my life,” she said. “This life stuff happens.” ... Ms. Mcleod said she hoped that filing for bankruptcy would help her catch up on her mortgage so she could stay in her home. “I am too old to move out of here,” she said. “I am trying to stay stable.” ... For Lawrence Sedita, a 74-year-old former carpenter now living in Las Vegas, the problems began when he lost his health insurance about two years ago. He said he had been on disability since 1991, when a double pack of 12-foot drywall fell on his head at work. After his union, the New York City District Council of Carpenters, changed the eligibility requirements for his medical, dental and prescription drug insurance, he lost his coverage. Mr. Sedita, who has Parkinson’s disease, said his medical expenses had risen exponentially. (A spokesman for the union declined to comment.) A medication that helps reduce the shaking — a Parkinson’s symptom — rose to \$1,100 every three months from \$70, Mr. Sedita said. “I haven’t taken my medicine in three months since I can’t afford it,” he added. He said he and his wife, who has cancer, filed for bankruptcy in June after living off their credit cards for a time. Their financial difficulty, he said, “has drained everything out of me.”)

18.07.30 Vox, *White threat in a browning America*, Ezra Klein

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/7/30/17505406/trump-obama-race-politics-immigration> (As we navigate these sensitivities, we can do so with more or less care. Richeson believes it would be wise for demographers to stop using terms like “majority-minority America” — after all, whites will still be a plurality, and what good can come of framing America’s trajectory in a way that leaves the single largest group feeling maximally threatened? It sounds like “a force of nonwhite people who are coming and they are working as a coalition to overturn white people and whiteness,” Richeson said, laughing. “That’s a problem!” Richeson’s research shows that if you can add reassurance to discussions of demographic change — telling people, for instance, that the shifts are unlikely to upend existing power or economic arrangements — the sense of threat, and the tilt toward racial and political conservatism, vanishes. The problem, she admits, is, “we can’t say,

‘Don’t worry, white people, you’ll be okay and you’ll get to run everything forever!’” The other problem is that the conversation about, and the experience of, a browning America will not be driven by demographers and social psychologists; it will be driven by ambitious politicians looking for an edge, by political pundits looking for ratings, by outrageous stories going viral on social media, by cultural controversies like Gamergate and Roseanne Barr getting fired. To say American politics is in for turbulence is not to say we are in for dissolution. A majority of Americans — though not of Republicans — believe the browning of America is a good thing for the country. And we have watched states like California and Texas transition into majority-minority status without falling to pieces. Politicians able to articulate a vision of this future that is inclusive, inspiring, and nonthreatening — the mixture Obama sought in 2008 — will reap massive rewards. But as Obama found after he was elected, leadership in this era requires delivering for diverse coalitions, and taking sides in charged cultural battles, and thus becoming part of the very conflict you’re trying to calm. The cycle of unity giving way to conflict, of hope about the future activating fear about the present, is likely to continue. And as long as much of the country feels threatened by the changes they see, there will be a continuing, and perhaps growing, market for politicians like Trump.)

18.07.30 Afar, *How to Make the Most of Tokyo — Even at the Last Minute*, Helen

Rosner <https://www.afar.com/magazine/tokyos-long-lines-lead-to-magic-and-life-changing-ramen> (In the dim light of sunrise, I stood for an hour to get sushi at a tiny Tsukiji restaurant whose name I couldn’t figure out. On the top floor of a department store, I waited for a table for one to open up at a hushed, jam-packed tonkatsu restaurant. I waited for ramen—for a lot of ramen, and especially for one particular bowl, at Ginza Kagari, a tiny counter in the labyrinth of the Ginza subway station. There, I spent an hour behind a slow-moving line of fewer than a dozen people, only to be told politely by a porter that the restaurant would run out of broth with the patron before me. I came back even earlier the next day and waited again, for nearly two hours this time, mostly standing still, occasionally shuffling forward. I watched harried commuters power-walk by, I listened to the murmured Japanese flirtations of the young couple in front of me, I read a few chapters of a novel on my phone, until at last I made it inside. At the end of all those waits was, invariably, magnificence: The most jewel-like sashimi. The lightest pork cutlets. The richest, deepest, most exquisite ramen broth I’ve ever had. There’s a phrase in Japanese for places like this_gyouretsuo no dekiru mise: “restaurants that have very long lines.” The lines are often self-fulfilling prophecies: The wait isn’t part of the cost, as I’d always considered it; to a Japanese person, it’s part of the value. When presented with two vendors selling effectively identical products, the Japanese choose whichever one has the longer line in front of it. Making it through a long line is a praiseworthy feat of endurance, and long queues for one thing or another are always in the news. Some retailers even try to game the system, hiring line-wait professionals to pose as sincerely dedicated consumers, equal parts priming the pump and angling for headlines. These faux queuers also have a Japanese term to describe them_sakura, the word for “cherry blossoms.” They’re adornment, they make things look good, and they really bring in the crowds. ... What I found, as I let myself relax into being a person who waits, is that even if you’re standing near roaring traffic—or in a subway station during the crush of rush hour, or in the riot of a department store—inside the act of waiting, there’s a form of quiet. As my days in Tokyo passed by, I felt myself undergo an almost physical change: In the scurrying chaos of a dense megacity, my restlessness retreated, my breath slowed. I could feel something else emerging inside me, a blanket unrolling over a rumpled bed, a calmness that was neither contentment nor boredom. Patience was its own emotion.)

18.07.29 Bloomberg, *What Economists Still Don’t Get About the 2008 Crisis*, Noah Smith

<https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2018-07-29/what-economists-still-don-t-get-about-2008-crisis> (All of these papers have one thing in common — they use debt to predict recessions years in advance. That fits with the emerging post-crisis wisdom that problems in credit markets are the source of both financial crashes and the ensuing economic slowdowns. Gennaioli and Shleifer explain these patterns by turning to their own preferred theory of human irrationality — the theory of extrapolative expectations. Basically, this theory holds

that when asset prices rise — home values, stocks and so on — without a break, investors start to believe that this trend represents a new normal. They pile into the asset, pumping up the price even more, and seeming to confirm the idea that the trend will never end. But when the extrapolators' money runs out, reality sets in and a crash ensues. Gennaioli, Shleifer, and their coauthors have been only one of several teams of researchers to investigate this idea and its implications in recent years. When extrapolative expectations are combined with an inherently fragile financial system, a predictable cycle of booms and busts is the result. At some point during good economic times, irrational exuberance takes hold, pushing stock prices, house values, or both into the stratosphere. When they inevitably come down, banks collapse, taking the rest of the economy with them. This story, if it became the standard model of the business cycle, would represent a true revolution in macroeconomics. It discards two pillars of recent macroeconomic thought — rational expectations, and shock-driven unpredictable recessions. It would represent a triumph for Minsky's ideas, and for those outside the academy who have long urged macroeconomists to pay more attention to debt markets and human psychology. And if the code of booms and busts can finally be cracked, there may be ways for central banks, regulators or other policy makers to head off crises before they begin, instead of cleaning up afterward. So far, Gennaioli and Shleifer's story isn't close to achieving dominance in macro. But of all the ideas being put forth in the field, this seems like the most interesting to watch.)

18.07.26 Medium, *Newsletters Are Immortal*, Dave Pell

<https://medium.com/@davepell/newsletters-are-immortal-9887b1a5dc6a> (Perpetual: Email has always been the best. And everyone knows it will remain the best. Think about it: When that newfangled social media startup wants to get you back on their site, what do they do? They send you an email. Even people building the next, supposedly better way for you and others to keep in contact are admitting up-front that the best way keep in contact is via email. (Can a sentence win a Pulitzer?) Ask politicians and ecommerce sites how huge that email address is. For that matter, ask publishers of web content. A large majority of the people who read this post will come here via a link in my newsletter. (And does @Ev ever thank me?) Even with all these clear and often entertaining points, you will inevitably leave newsletters for dead again—and then be deepy surprised at their reincarnation. And I'll probably write another version of this post when you do. Like all newsletter writers, I need the reads.)

18.07.26 Inc, *The World's Most Ruthless Food Startup: The Inside Story of How HelloFresh Clawed Its Way to the Top*, Burt Helm <https://www.inc.com/magazine/201808/burt-helm/hellofresh.html> (HelloFresh, in its assertive way, was attempting to address what has emerged as a fundamental problem with the meal-kit business: People quit. Why? Perhaps the novelty wears off, or there's guilt about all the wasteful packaging, or simply because they are too lazy to cook a gourmet meal every night. Whatever the reasons, it turns out the majority of customers ditch their HelloFresh subscriptions after receiving only a few boxes. The idea that these subscriptions would generate enough cash to cover the sizable marketing cost was wishful financial modeling. "It required a leap of faith," says Ellie Wheeler of Greycroft. But now, as HelloFresh and Blue Apron pass their sixth birthdays, they know what the quit rates (also known as churn rates) really are. While neither company discloses figures, third parties including Dan McCarthy, an Emory assistant professor of marketing, and Second Measure, a research firm that analyzes pools of credit card data, have examined the companies' data. Their findings, which largely match up, paint a grim picture: Nearly half of subscribers of both services cancel within a month. Just 20 percent stay on as long as six months. By the end of the year, meal-kit companies are lucky if they've retained 15 percent of their original subscriber base, and the numbers dwindle from there. What's more, HelloFresh lags Blue Apron and other competitors in retention, often by several percentage points. The value of a subscriber is likely to be much lower than anyone thought. Richter says this analysis is false on multiple levels, but won't disclose retention figures or churn rates. "Retention is one of the strongest points of our business model. We've always been very, very happy with retention rates," he says. When Inc. asked to connect with HelloFresh's longest-standing customers, the best the company could

provide was a woman who had been featured in a company TV ad, and another who'd been with the service for five months. Critics worry these high churn rates may prove fatal. "At some point, they'd go through millions of people who had tried the services who had churned out, and what would they be left with?" says Nikhil Basu Trivedi, a partner at Shasta Ventures who considered investing in Plated, Green Chef, and Sun Basket but ultimately passed. "There are a number of ways these businesses can be profitable, but at the end of the day it's a tradeoff between growth and profitability, right? You can't make the math work for both." "Without marketing, the business is dead," says Eugene Auh of Oakchun Advisors, referring to the constant need to replenish the ranks of quitting customers with fresh subscribers. In 2016, Auh was hired to analyze the meal-kit business for a conglomerate interested in potential acquisitions. Auh eventually told his client to steer clear of the industry. Revenue growth comes "at an astounding cost," he says.)

18.07.25 Vox, *Those who leave home, and those who stay*, Alvin Chang

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/6/15/15757708/hometown-stay-leave> (Staying in your hometown makes you insular. You aren't exposed to other people, other cultures, other experiences — and that otherness scares you. This fear aligns with Trump's worldview. It fell in line with the research showing it was racism and sexism that drove Trump's rise, not economic dissatisfaction. And it paints the picture of people who are so insular that they won't leave their hometown, even when economic conditions are subpar. This isn't necessarily wrong. But Cox pushed back a bit. He told me, "There is a value judgment often made with people who don't leave their hometown — that there's something wrong with that decision. Sometimes people don't have opportunity to leave." ... What they found was that rural communities spent a lot of resources on the achievers — the kids who show promise early on, and are pushed to leave town so they can reach their full potential. School administrators basically admitted that's what happens: "This is the job we set out to do." Ken Johnson, a University of New Hampshire demographer, told me, "It's a theme that runs through a lot of the historical research on rural America. Rural communities lose the cream of the crop — lose the brightest kids — who go away and don't come back." And we can see this rural "brain drain" in several data sets, although it impacts other non-urban areas as well. ... People who stayed at home tend to be younger, whiter, and more male. This is a group that has gotten their fair share of privilege in this country. And in broad, sweeping statistics, it's a group that holds more regressive views toward marginalized people, including immigrants, minorities, and women. And yes, these factors likely played a bigger part in Trump winning the presidency than economic reasons. But in that same sweeping vein, it's also a group that didn't get the bulk of resources growing up, a group that was encouraged into a life path that kept them near home, and a group that is now suffering. Other than their support for Trump, one split that stands out is what percentage of people have attended the funeral of someone under 65 — and this split is across all people, including those who stayed in their urban hometowns. People who stayed had a 33 percent greater chance of having to attend a funeral of someone under the age of 65 compared to those who left home.)

18.07.25 Vox, *Trump needs his alternate reality to survive — and he knows it*, Alvin

Chang <https://www.vox.com/2018/7/25/17611854/trump-alternate-reality-survival> (According to a recent poll by the Knight Foundation and Gallup, 39 percent of conservatives say negatives news stories about politicians or political groups are always "fake news" — even if they are accurate. This is far more than liberals who say the same. ... Let's take a moment to appreciate how astounding it is for more than one-third of conservatives to admit that they're calling something "fake" when it is, well, not. But it all makes sense when you think about Mason's work on sorting.)

18.07.23 New Yorker, *Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Historic Win and the Future of the Democratic Party*, David Remnick

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/07/23/alexandria-ocasio-cortezs-historic-win-and-the-future-of-the-democratic-party> (A few days earlier, Ocasio-Cortez had visited the Capitol, in Washington, and had spent

much of her time thinking about her father. When she was five or so, he was planning a road trip to Florida with some of his friends, and she begged him to let her go along. “Three burly men and a five-year-old in a sedan,” she recalled. “One day, his buddies went to get a beer or something, and he took me to the reflecting pool of the Washington Monument. I put my toes in the water, and suddenly the goldfish started to nibble my toes. It was a beautiful day, the sun was out, totally clear. And my dad pointed to all of it—the reflecting pool, the monuments, the Capitol, and he said, ‘You know, this is our government. All of this belongs to us. It belongs to you.’ And so, when I went to the Capitol, I thought about that. I feel like it’s supposed to belong to us. Not all of it belongs to all of us. Not yet. But that’s the whole point of going to Congress, isn’t it?”)

18.07.20 (accessed) 2014.05 Farnam Street, *Hunter S. Thompson’s Letter on Finding Your Purpose and Living a Meaningful Life*, Hunter S. Thompson <https://fs.blog/2014/05/hunter-s-thompson-to-hume-logan/> (As I see it then, the formula runs something like this: a man must choose a path which will let his ABILITIES function at maximum efficiency toward the gratification of his DESIRES. In doing this, he is fulfilling a need (giving himself identity by functioning in a set pattern toward a set goal), he avoids frustrating his potential (choosing a path which puts no limit on his self-development), and he avoids the terror of seeing his goal wilt or lose its charm as he draws closer to it (rather than bending himself to meet the demands of that which he seeks, he has bent his goal to conform to his own abilities and desires). ***In short, he has not dedicated his life to reaching a pre-defined goal, but he has rather chosen a way of life he KNOWS he will enjoy.*** The goal is absolutely secondary: it is the functioning toward the goal which is important. And it seems almost ridiculous to say that a man MUST function in a pattern of his own choosing; for to let another man define your own goals is to give up one of the most meaningful aspects of life—the definitive act of will which makes a man an individual. Let’s assume that you think you have a choice of eight paths to follow (all pre-defined paths, of course). And let’s assume that you can’t see any real purpose in any of the eight. THEN—and here is the essence of all I’ve said—you MUST FIND A NINTH PATH. Naturally, it isn’t as easy as it sounds. You’ve lived a relatively narrow life, a vertical rather than a horizontal existence. So it isn’t any too difficult to understand why you seem to feel the way you do. But a man who procrastinates in his CHOOSING will inevitably have his choice made for him by circumstance. So if you now number yourself among the disenchanteds, then you have no choice but to accept things as they are, or to seriously seek something else. But beware of looking for goals: look for a way of life. Decide how you want to live and then see what you can do to make a living WITHIN that way of life. But you say, “I don’t know where to look; I don’t know what to look for.” And there’s the crux. Is it worth giving up what I have to look for something better? I don’t know—is it? Who can make that decision but you? But even by DECIDING TO LOOK, you go a long way toward making the choice.)

18.07.20 (accessed) 16.06.13 New Yorker, *Who Really Stands to Win from Universal Basic Income?*, Nathan Heller <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/07/09/who-really-stands-to-win-from-universal-basic-income> (Speenhamland does offer a lesson, in other words, but it is not the one most widely taught. In “The Failed Welfare Revolution” (2008), the sociologist Brian Steensland suggests that, if Nixon’s Family Assistance Plan had passed, conservative policy might have evolved along a different path. George H. W. Bush, then a congressman, supported the guaranteed-income scheme. So did Donald Rumsfeld. From the late sixties into the seventies, he and Dick Cheney helped run trials on thirteen hundred families to see how much a modest financial top-up discouraged them from working. The falloff was smaller than expected, and the researchers were pleased. We might hope that, with Speenhamland’s false myths finally cleared, the United States will do better going forward. But our aptitude for managing the future is no stronger than our skill at making sense out of the past.)

18.07.06 NYT, *Why Europe Could Melt Down Over a Simple Question of Borders*, Max Fisher <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/06/world/europe/europe-borders-nationalism-identity.html> (Perhaps the drive to restore European borders is, on some level, about borders themselves. Maybe when populists talk about restoring sovereignty and national identity, it's not just a euphemism for anti-refugee sentiment (although such sentiment is indeed rife). Maybe they mean it. ... It is not easy for Europeans to abandon the old-style national identity, rooted in race and language, that has caused them such trouble. The human desire for a strong group identity — and for perceived homogeneity within that group — runs deep. Germany for the Germans, Catalonia for the Catalans. A country of people who look like me, speak my language and share my heritage. These nationalist impulses, however dangerous, emerge from basic human instinct. It makes us feel safe; losing it makes us feel threatened. It is reinforced in our popular culture and built into the international order. ... For that, many Europeans turned to their national identity: British, French, German. But the more people embraced their national identities, the more they came to oppose the European Union, studies found — and the more they came to distrust anyone within their borders who they saw as an outsider. European leaders, unable to square their project's ambition of transcending nationalism with this reality of rising nationalism, have tried to have it both ways. Ms. Merkel has sought to save Europe's border-free zone by imposing one hard border.)

18.07.06 Long Reads, *Eating Alone*, Stephanie Bloom <https://longreads.com/2018/07/06/eating-alone/> (I've eaten by myself in France more than anywhere else, with the exception of my own country where, more than half the time when we're eating, we're eating alone. That's more often than in any previous generation. Pressed for time at work or school, Americans frequently eat by themselves at breakfast and when snacking, according to the NPD Group, a market research company. More than half of lunch meals are solitary. And more than 30 percent of Americans have dinner alone because they're single or on a different schedule from their partner. The trend is being seen in other countries, too. In South Korea, for instance, it's largely being driven by long work hours, according to Euromonitor International. And while many may not be dining alone by choice, the fact that more people are doing it is changing perceptions. "Dining alone has not only become socially acceptable in South Korea," Euromonitor reported, noting that Seoul is an incubator for trends that resonate throughout East Asia and beyond, "it is almost fashionable.")

18.07.05 Medium, *Survival of the Richest*, Douglas Rushkoff <https://medium.com/s/futurehuman/survival-of-the-richest-9ef6cddd0cc1> (When the hedge funders asked me the best way to maintain authority over their security forces after "the event," I suggested that their best bet would be to treat those people really well, right now. They should be engaging with their security staffs as if they were members of their own family. And the more they can expand this ethos of inclusivity to the rest of their business practices, supply chain management, sustainability efforts, and wealth distribution, the less chance there will be of an "event" in the first place. All this technological wizardry could be applied toward less romantic but entirely more collective interests right now. They were amused by my optimism, but they didn't really buy it. They were not interested in how to avoid a calamity; they're convinced we are too far gone. For all their wealth and power, they don't believe they can affect the future. They are simply accepting the darkest of all scenarios and then bringing whatever money and technology they can employ to insulate themselves—especially if they can't get a seat on the rocket to Mars. Luckily, those of us without the funding to consider disowning our own humanity have much better options available to us. We don't have to use technology in such antisocial, atomizing ways. We can become the individual consumers and profiles that our devices and platforms want us to be, or we can remember that the truly evolved human doesn't go it alone. Being human is not about individual survival or escape. It's a team sport. Whatever future humans have, it will be together.)

18.07.03 Brain Pickings, *How to Grow Old: Bertrand Russell on What Makes a Fulfilling Life*, Bertrand Russell <https://www.brainpickings.org/2018/07/03/how-to-grow-old-bertrand-russell/> (Make your interests gradually wider and more impersonal, until bit by bit the walls of the ego recede, and your life becomes increasingly merged in the universal life. An individual human existence should be like a river — small at first, narrowly contained within its banks, and rushing passionately past rocks and over waterfalls. Gradually the river grows wider, the banks recede, the waters flow more quietly, and in the end, without any visible break, they become merged in the sea, and painlessly lose their individual being.)

18.07.03 Vox, *Why haven't we found aliens yet?*, Liv Boeree <https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/7/3/17522810/aliens-fermi-paradox-drake-equation> (Therefore, the researchers represented the full range of possible values on a logarithmic scale and ran millions of simulations to obtain more statistically reliable estimates for N. They then applied a technique known as a Bayesian update to those results. That means mathematically incorporating the information that we have not discovered extraterrestrial intelligence yet (because the absence of evidence of aliens is evidence itself!). This two-stage process produced striking results: Based upon the current state of astrobiological knowledge, there's a 53 to 99.6 percent chance we are the only civilization in this galaxy and a 39 to 85 percent chance we are the only one in the observable universe. This implies that life as we know it is incomprehensibly rare, and if other intelligences exist, they are probably far beyond the cosmological horizon and therefore forever invisible to us.)

18.07.02 The Baffler, *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Debt to Me: An American family's struggle for student loan redemption*, M.H. Miller <https://thebaffler.com/salvos/looks-like-debt-to-me-miller> (I've spent a great deal of time in the last decade shifting the blame for my debt. Whose fault was it? My devoted parents, for encouraging me to attend a school they couldn't afford? The banks, which should have never lent money to people who clearly couldn't pay it back to begin with, continuously exploiting the hope of families like mine, and quick to exploit us further once that hope disappeared? Or was it my fault for not having the foresight to realize it was a mistake to spend roughly \$200,000 on a school where, in order to get my degree, I kept a journal about reading Virginia Woolf? (Sample passage, which assuredly blew my mind at the time: "We are interested in facts because we are interested in myth. We are interested in myth insofar as myth constructs facts.") The problem, I think, runs deeper than blame. The foundational myth of an entire generation of Americans was the false promise that education was priceless—that its value was above or beyond its cost. College was not a right or a privilege but an inevitability on the way to a meaningful adulthood. What an irony that the decisions I made about college when I was seventeen have derailed such a goal. ... Throughout this misery my father had reacted with what I suddenly realized was stoicism, but which I had long mistaken for indifference. This misunderstanding was due in part to my mother, whom my father mercifully hadn't lost, and who had suffered perhaps most of all. Not that it was a competition, but if it were, I think she would have taken some small amount of satisfaction in winning it. The loss of home and finances felt at least like a worthy opponent for cancer, and yet here was my father telling me that none of this was the end of the world. I felt a flood of sympathy for him. I was ashamed of my selfishness. The lump in my throat began to feel less infectious than lachrymal. "Okay," I said to him, and that was that. When I got home I scheduled an appointment with a doctor. ... We sat down to dinner. Across from me was Mira, a defense attorney from Brooklyn, who attended law school at Stanford. Her payments amount to \$2,300 a month, more than double my own. When I asked her why she came to this event, she glanced at me as if the answer should have been obvious: she went to law school at Stanford and her payments are \$2,300 a month. The table, myself included, looked on her with an odd reverence. She wore a business suit and had her hair pulled back, but I saw her as something like the sage and weathered biker of the group, holding her twenty-year chip, talking in her wisdom about accepting the things you cannot change. After the food was served, a waiter came by with a stack of to-go boxes, which sat on the edge of the table untouched for a while as everyone cautiously eyed

them. The group was reluctant at first, but then Ian said, “The chicken was actually pretty good,” as he scooped it into one of the boxes. Mira shrugged, took a fork, and added, “This is a little tacky, but I’d hate to waste free food,” and the rest of the table followed her lead. Maybe the next generation would do better, but I felt like we were broke and broken. No number of degrees or professional successes would put us back together again. For now, though, we knew where our next meal was coming from.)

18.07.01 NYT, *South Korea’s Enduring Racism*, Se-Woong Koo

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/01/opinion/south-korea-racism.html> (In a more recent egregious example, in June 2017, a bar in the popular Itaewon district of Seoul refused an Indian customer. “No Indians,” the bouncer was heard to say. “It is a rule. No Kazakhstan, no Pakistan, no Mongolia, no Saudi Arabia and no Egypt. ”None of this is surprising given South Korea’s education system. For decades, children, myself included, were taught to believe that this is a single-blooded nation — dubbed danil minjok in Korean. This myth of racial purity was promoted to foster national unity.)

18.06.30 NYT, *What Men Say About #MeToo in Therapy*, Avi Klein

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/30/opinion/sunday/men-metoo-therapy-masculinity.html> (I have found that for many men, underneath the anxiety that is always humming along are layers of shame. Shame at having feelings at all, shame because they believe that there is something fundamentally wrong with them, shame that they are not men, they are just boys. Shame is the emotional weapon that allows patriarchal behaviors to flourish. The fear of being emasculated leads men to rationalize awful behavior. This kind of toxic shame is in direct contradiction with the healthy shame that we all need to feel in order to acknowledge mistakes and take responsibility. Very often, I have found, men’s difficulties with women are rooted in their boyhood. With the medical resident, for example, underneath the constant pursuit of women were painful memories that led him to believe that he was unacceptable in his father’s eyes. A 42-year-old entrepreneur who came to see me because of his serial cheating and lying described his motivations as if he were still a 15-year-old boy craving the approval of his peers: “I actually don’t even like the sex that much, but there’s something satisfying about adding a notch in the belt. I imagine other guys would be impressed if they knew.” In their efforts to manage the feeling of shame, some men numb themselves. Others sink under it and slip into depression or chronic underachievement. And others take the pain that they feel and project it back out into the world with violent words and deeds. These are the issues that lead them to seek therapy in the first place. And yet, despite this bleak picture, men heal. They begin to heal when we can both embrace them and hold them accountable.)

18.06.29 Salon, *The naked truth about nude art modeling*, Robin Eileen Bernstein

<https://www.salon.com/2018/06/29/the-naked-truth-about-nude-art-modeling/> (Brianna learned this early on. Modeling the very first time, she “was absolutely a wreck with nerves” but within five minutes of her first pose, all she could think about was her foot, which had fallen dead asleep. “That was the last time I ever worried about being naked.” To demonstrate how hard it is to hold a pose for 20 minutes, Alan suggests I pretend to squeeze a ball in my hand for five minutes because that stiffness and pain is “what your entire body is going to experience.” If he feels a muscle cramp coming on, he’s learned to calm his body by going into what he calls “Zen master” mode, slowing himself down to roughly five breaths per minute. But arguably more difficult is the discipline to be alone with your thoughts. “I wish my mind would go blank so badly,” said MacKenzie, who during poses will ponder her love life or her career or writes songs in her head for her band. The biggest surprise for Ivan was that it’s more mental than physical. “In one 20-minute pose you can go through your whole ‘to do’ list, your five-year goal plans, your 10-year goal plans,” he said, laughing. He learned that meditation and staying present in the moment keep him from zoning out. “My job is not to hold the pose; it’s to be the pose,” he said. If he thinks too much, he tends to nod off.)

18.06.29 NYT, *Of Course, It Could Not Happen Here*, Roger Cohen

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/29/opinion/europe-immigration-trump-putin-germany.html> (The European Union disbands. Its flag is lowered at the French-German border, where work on a high-tech wall flanked by banks of barbed wire has begun. Trump and Marine Le Pen, the French National Front leader, tweet their approval. Germany announces a strategic alliance with Russia. The United States Supreme Court rules, on “national security” grounds, that due process is not required before expelling undocumented immigrants. Mass deportations begin. Trump tweets that due process “is overrated.” It could not happen. Of course, it could not happen. Only a fool would believe for a moment that it could.)

18.06.27 Quartz, *A Stanford researcher says we shouldn't start working full time until age 40*, Corinne Partill

<https://work.qz.com/1314988/stanford-psychologist-laura-carstensen-says-careers-should-be-mapped-for-longer-lifespans/> (Rather than a four-decade professional sprint that ends abruptly at 65, Carstensen argues, we should be planning for marathon careers that last longer but have more breaks along the way for learning, family needs, and obligations outside the workplace. “We need a new model,” Carstensen says of the current norms around career pacing. The current one “doesn’t work, because it fails to recognize all the other demands on our time. People are working full-time at the same time they’re raising children. You never get a break. You never get to step out. You never get to refresh. . . . We go at this unsustainable pace, and then pull the plug.” Longevity, as Carstensen sees it, is not about the biohacked immortalism popular in other parts of Silicon Valley. Her work focuses instead on redesigning institutions to accommodate the lives that people actually have—lives that are longer and in many cases healthier than at any time in human history. Stopping work abruptly at 66, the year current US retirees are eligible to claim full Social Security benefits, isn’t practical financially for a growing number of seniors. And given the sudden loss of status, social interaction, and purpose that can follow retirement from a valued career, it’s often not a psychologically healthy move, either. Instead, Carstensen says, a life’s work should be redistributed across the longer time frame many people can reasonably expect. Education and apprenticeships could stretch longer, she says, through the years when many people are starting their families and have young children at home. Full-time ideally would begin around the age of 40, rather than in our early 20s. Careers would be longer, with a gradual transition to part-time work in the later years before full retirement around age 80.)

18.06.27 NYT, *We Have Reached Peak Screen. Now Revolution Is in the Air.*, Farhad Manjoo

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/27/technology/peak-screen-revolution.html> (Tech has now captured pretty much all visual capacity. Americans spend three to four hours a day looking at their phones, and about 11 hours a day looking at screens of any kind. So tech giants are building the beginning of something new: a less insistently visual tech world, a digital landscape that relies on voice assistants, headphones, watches and other wearables to take some pressure off our eyes. This could be a nightmare; we may simply add these new devices to our screen-addled lives. But depending on how these technologies develop, a digital ecosystem that demands less of our eyes could be better for everyone — less immersive, less addictive, more conducive to multitasking, less socially awkward, and perhaps even a salve for our politics and social relations. Who will bring us this future? Amazon and Google are clearly big players, but don’t discount the company that got us to Peak Screen in the first place. With advances to the Apple Watch and AirPods headphones, Apple is slowly and almost quietly creating an alternative to its phones.)

18.06.27 Slate, *Why Anthony Kennedy Gave Up*, Dahlia Lithwick

<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2018/06/anthony-kennedy-retirement-why-he-joined-team-trump.html> (And so the formerly “centrist” Anthony Kennedy ended his Supreme Court career by taking sides, not simply in the spate of bombshell 5–4 decisions that came out in recent weeks. He took sides in a rhetorical war about the suffering of Christian bakers and pregnancy centers, and the language of “no you’re the radical” he now directs at liberals with whom he could once find common cause. It wasn’t so much that Kennedy ever

represented the “center” of the court. He was no more the center than John Roberts will be the center of a vastly more conservative post-Kennedy Supreme Court. But Kennedy did become, for a time, a symbol of certain values around judging and justice—of acute concern that both sides be heard, of respect for the rule of law, and of solicitude for at least some communities that were invisible to his colleagues on the right. And to the extent that this was the center, it is perhaps apt that it falls away at the end of this term. Those institutional and rhetorical values feel like the relic of another time. Neither Sonia Sotomayor nor Samuel Alito has any patience for that kind of signaling anymore. ... Many of us predicted that Kennedy would not allow Trump to replace him with someone who would dismantle his legacy. We were wrong. Many of us believed that a lifelong devotee of dignity, civility, and the rule of law would not want his work tarnished by a president who routinely attacks individual judges and the very notion of an independent judiciary. We were wrong. That two of Anthony Kennedy’s last judicial acts included a letter that opened “My dear Mr. President” and a vote to grant that same president a virtual blank check on the national security front certainly suggests that nothing about a president who lies, bullies, and destabilizes the rule of law was any kind of real impediment to Kennedy’s departure. We will debate in the coming months whether Kennedy tacked back to the right this year or if he was never anything but a staunch conservative who enjoyed occasional casual day trips to the left side of the bench. But one thing is beyond doubt: If there was anything like a “moderate center” inside the only branch of government not broken by polarization, it’s gone. Even the idea of such a thing is gone. For any of us who clung to such symbols, it’s a bracing reminder that there is no longer a center, or even a center built of make-believe.)

18.06.26 Gizmodo, *I’m Starting to Have Serious Doubts About Amazon Prime*, Adam Clark Estes <https://gizmodo.com/im-starting-to-have-serious-doubts-about-amazon-prime-1827112911> (Years later, I’m carrying a balance on that Amazon Rewards card and paying more in interest than I’m reaping in rewards. That’s my own damn fault. I’m also going out of my way to buy stuff on Amazon, not because it’s more convenient but because I feel the need to take advantage of my Prime benefits. This is also my fault, and it happens in various ways. Sometimes, I’m tossing random shit into my cart, so that I can hit the minimum amount for a Prime Pantry box. Other times, I’m renting videos through Amazon Prime, because I can’t find anything good that’s free and, well, it’s so easy to do in the app. Sometimes I just open the app on my phone, when I’m bored and wonder if I should be buying stuff. This is the dystopia I pay for.)

18.06.26 NYT, *You Can’t Hurt Lindsay Lohan Now*, Gabrielle Bluestone <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/26/style/lindsay-lohan-mykonos-beach-club.html> (If there’s one thing Ms. Lohan wants the public to know about her personal life, it’s that there’s almost nothing that she wants them to know. She hoped, she said, that people realize “I’m a normal, nice person. A good person. I don’t have any bad intentions. And my past has to stay in the past.” “Like, people have to just let go of it and stop bringing it up because it’s not — it’s gone,” she said. “It’s dead. And that’s the most important thing to me.” Despite decades of breathless tabloid coverage of her life, she said the public has never known the real her at all. Recently, that has been by design. “I think success is the best revenge — and silence, as a presence,” she said. “When I chose to change my future, my life, I was like, ‘Where’s the one place I can find silence?’” That place turned out to be Dubai, where unmarried women can still be arrested or deported for the crime of becoming pregnant. It’s also a place where intruding on privacy via photography can often be illegal, and Ms. Lohan feels protected enough there to leave the doors of her penthouse apartment unlocked. She said she first discovered Dubai in 2008, when she hosted the opening of an Atlantis resort. On her second visit, she realized there were no cameras tracking her. “That click — Karl Lagerfeld said, ‘It’s like they’re shooting guns at me,’ when I first met him at Fendi,” Ms. Lohan said. “And I felt it. You feel like you’re always watching out, you’re paranoid. It creates this paranoia in your head that’s not necessary.” That’s part of the reason she doesn’t see herself moving from Dubai anytime soon.)

18.06.24 Salon, *In-work dining at Silicon Valley companies like Google and Facebook causes spike in divorce rate*, Stan Herman

<https://www.salon.com/2018/06/24/in-work-dining-in-silicon-valley-companies-like-google-and-facebook-cause-spike-in-divorce-there/> (However, this then leads to the second observation and the purpose of "time." All of

this time spent at the campus, reinforced with plentiful and cheap food, is being taken from somewhere. As the days spent in the offices grow more and more (coming in for the weekend project is becoming the norm not the exception), and the hours per day spent working, eating, talking in the crunch of getting the job (usually a discrete project on a tight deadline) done lengthen as well, the simple mathematical proposition is that this time spent in one form of solidarity is being taken from another. The world outside of the company. Family. Friends. Hobbies. Life. The world — or at least the people in it — become oddly convergent. The people you encounter at the meals are from similar backgrounds, with similar means and similar ambitions. The diversity of the world outside of the campus is limited and regimented by the similitude of the vocation. As one engineer once said, "It's a monoculture, just as with agriculture. Fifty years ago it was all diversified. But now its mono-crops. Just corn. Just barley. Just wheat. That's how I feel when I eat on campus. We are supposed to be so diverse — from all around the globe! But everyone is obsessed over the same things. The same problems. The same conversations." Time spent in the company then is time spent reinforcing the company's demands and values. And time lost looking at other points of views. ... Food, that great human device of socialization and expression of care, the center of so much cultural experience, has been modified by the major companies of Silicon Valley to quietly direct workers and their efforts. Food allows for and represents a new lifestyle within the company. Food encourages position and motion: to be at work early, to keep moving within the office, to stay longer. And more than that, to identify with what we do, the brand. We are what we eat. And so solidarity of the corpus is made sacrament in eating apples at Apple and its strange transubstantiation. However, what is different here, and arguably most tragic, is that the fidelity of this new corporate solidarity is becoming a one-way street. The surveillance model of power to emphasize collectiveness and efficiency within the institution applies to the workers, not the institution itself. And the workers are increasingly being treated less atomistically, as creative individuals to encourage maximum yield, but as fungible, nondescript individuals in an ever-replaceable pool of actors. ... So it is of little surprise to learn from people I spoke with in Silicon Valley administration of four-year packages, designed to sign up new employees with massive benefits tied to the completion of four years, under a logic that the first ideas that employees who have not yet entered the workforce have will be their best ideas (Einstein would agree) and squeeze them, sign them to the corporate brand, and when they dry up, quietly let them go. One source who has worked in human resources at a number of tech companies told me of one company's strict policy for a percentage base of turnover, that a set number of people must be liquidated every year. All in the name of maximization, competition and building the better tomorrow. ... What Silicon Valley appears to be doing is replacing that home with a new identity fixed upon the company and its goals, which in the short term creates a great deal of productivity and a willingness to sacrifice, but in the long term treats individuals as fungible assets ready to be replaced. As the company steps in and provides more and more services traditionally associated with the larger community — from health care to child planning, to vacations and hosting weddings — this fundamentally one-sided nature of the compact and commitment is something that modern workers and societies are going to have to face. Because it is unstable; and human beings need stability. The symptoms of an unstable system of home and hearth are what we are already now witnessing in some quiet statistics of divorce and suicide that are coming out of corners of the so-called new economy of tech. Increasing despair and disconnect, families becoming replaceable in search of what is clearly a mission. Sacrifice of the self means service to the community, in this case, and yet the question we all must ask is — what community? And is it worth it? The future can wait.)

18.06.24 The Guardian, *After 25 years of being homeless, I learned there's one simple thing you can do to help*, Gregory P. Smith

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jun/25/after-25-years-of-being-homeless-i-learned-theres-one-simple-thing-you-can-do-to-help-gregory-p-smith> (I came to see society – the well-dressed people with jobs, homes, food, family, friends and stability – as reinforcers of my feelings of shame and self-disgust. For the most part, to be homeless is to be see-through. In my experience, the vast majority of passersby pretend that the unfortunate soul on the park bench or huddled on the inner-city footpath in front of them simply isn't there. They'd look right through me as if I was made of glass ... Society hadn't changed that much in my absence but, as psychosis and malnutrition stripped me mentally bare, there'd been a profound shift inside me. In deciding to give society another chance I vowed to be the best version of myself possible. In doing so I became vulnerable to others, and that's when I ceased to be invisible. As much as there was a tendency for people to avoid the homeless, I realised I had been pushing the world away from me, too. In letting my guard down a little, I allowed people to come into my life. I was recently asked by someone what they should do when they come across a homeless person. My response to this question is quite simple. Maybe you cannot make a difference to that person's circumstance, but you can make a difference to how you see them. Many are hurting with the shame and stigma of being homeless. Don't pretend they don't exist: they are people too.)

18.06.24 NYT, *White Extinction Anxiety*, Charles Blow

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/24/opinion/america-white-extinction.html> (Strip all the other rationales away from this draconian immigration policy. This is at the core: White extinction anxiety, white displacement anxiety, white minority anxiety. This is the fear and anxiety Trump is playing to. Politico Magazine dubbed Trump "Pat Buchanan With Better Timing." ... This is happening. America will soon be a majority-minority country. White America is growing older, there are fewer white women of childbearing age, and the white fertility rate is lower than that of Hispanics and blacks. All manner of current policy grows out of this panic over loss of privilege and power: immigration policy, voter suppression, Trump economic isolationist impulses, his contempt for people from Haiti and Africa, the Muslim ban, his rage over Black Lives Matter and social justice protests. Everything. Trump is president and is beloved by his base in part because he is unapologetically defending whiteness from anything that threatens it, or at least that's the image he wants to project. It is no more complicated than that. These immigrant children crying out for their mothers and fathers are collateral damage, pawns in a political battle to wring strict legislation out of Congress — medieval torture displays meant to serve as deterrents. As Buchanan wrote in his book, "Suicide of a Superpower," which got him fired from MSNBC because of its racist overtones: "White America is an endangered species." And he chided any white person who might cheer this nation's changing demographics: "Ethnomasochism, the taking of pleasure in the dispossession of one's own ethnic group, is a disease of the heart that never afflicted the America of Andrew Jackson, Theodore Roosevelt, or Dwight Eisenhower. It comes out of what James Burnham called an 'ideology of Western suicide,' a belief system that provides a morphine drip for people who have come to accept the inevitability of their departure from history." These immigration policies are for people who conflated America with whiteness, and therefore a loss of white primacy becomes a loss of American identity.)

18.06.21 NYT, *The Fourth Great Awakening*, David Brooks

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/21/opinion/marvel-video-games-religion.html> (Myths are moral narratives — they describe one interpretation of the moral landscape of reality and offer a model of how to be a sanctified person in that landscape. You might say that America's Fourth Great Spiritual Awakening has come in the form of this mythic revival. There are many virtues to the mythic worldview — to stand heroically for justice, to be loyal to friends and fierce against foes. But history does offer some sobering lessons about societies that relied too heavily on the competitive virtues. They tend to give short shrift to relationships, which depend on the fragile, intimate bonds of vulnerability, trust, compassion and selfless love. They tend to see life as an eternal competition between warring tribes. They tend to see the line between good and evil as running between groups, not, as in parable, down the middle of every human heart. We're spiritual creatures; our lives

are shaped by the moral landscapes and ideals we inherit and absorb. I'd say our politics and our society are coming to resemble the competitive mythic ethos that is suddenly all around.)

18.06.20 WaPo, *A GOP strategist abandons his party and calls for the election of Democrats*, Dan Balz https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/a-gop-strategist-abandons-his-party-and-calls-for-the-election-of-democrats/2018/06/20/b3f9fbd4-74c3-11e8-b4b7-308400242c2e_story.html ("My role in Palin is something that there's not a day that has gone by that I don't have regret about," he said. "She was manifestly unfit" — which he said became more and more obvious after she was selected — "and she injected all manner of toxin into the political system. But she is not the cause of any of this." He charts the roots of the rise of Trump to later, after Palin resigned as governor and became — despite the harsh reviews of her candidacy for vice president — a prominent voice in the shifting politics of anger and disaffection. Trump, he said, profited from those changes. He decries the decision to welcome Trump into the 2012 Republican campaign despite his having pushed the false narrative that Obama was not born in the United States as a means to endear himself to a most extreme wing of the GOP. "Trump was legitimized by birtherism, and he was abetted by a billion-dollar incitement industry," he said.)

18.06.18 Life Hacker, *How to Avoid a Life of Regret*, Patrick Allan <https://lifehacker.com/how-to-avoid-a-life-of-regret-1826928609> (According to psychologist Tom Gilovich, lead author on "The Ideal Road Not Taken," published in the journal *Emotion*, our regrets that bother us the most involve failing to live up to our "ideal selves." Basically, we're not as bothered by the mistakes we've made or the things we ought to have done as we are bothered by never becoming the person we truly wanted to be. Gilovich explains: ... All of this is based on the self-discrepancy theory of the three selves: the actual self, the ideal self, and the ought self. The actual self is what a person believes themselves to be now, based on current attributes and abilities. The ideal self is comprised of the attributes and abilities they'd like to possess one day—in essence, their goals, hopes, and aspirations. The ought self is who someone believes they should have been according to their obligations and responsibilities. In terms of regrets, the failure of the ought self is more "I could have done that better," and the failure of the ideal self is more "I never became that person I wanted to become." ... This isn't to say you should forego your duties and responsibilities in pursuit of your dreams. It's merely a reminder that the things you want to do in your life don't go away. Sure, we get older and our priorities and responsibilities change, but we still have things we want to be when we grow up. We all have a perfect version of ourself in our mind's eye, and while we will never be able to achieve every single thing we envision, we can't even begin to approach our ideal selves without, well, doing something.)

18.06.17 OCR, *Although dad, daughter are separated by an ocean, Father's Day bonds are strong*, David Whiting <https://www.ocregister.com/2018/06/17/although-dad-daughter-are-separated-by-an-ocean-fathers-day-bonds-are-strong/> (When He was growing up in China, dad helped ferry her to and from swimming and dance classes. Still, like most kids, He admits, "I was disappointed when he came home after midnight or hurried to work on a weekend." But He also understood her father's work was about more than helping pay the bills. "He was always improving the quality of someone's life." After moving to the U.S., when she visited Beijing He started shadowing her father during his rounds at Peking Union Medical College Hospital, also known as Beijing Xiehe Hospital, one of China's top medical colleges. She asked questions, talked to her father's friends at the hospital to learn more, closely observed operations. "My dad was surprised I wasn't scared," He recalls at the first operation she watched. "I was OK with it." After long days at the hospital, father and daughter often go out for their favorite dinner — Thai food. The more she learned, the more she became convinced she wanted a similar career. "When I saw the transformation in my father's patients," she explains, "I secretly planted a wish to become someone who can help more people live without pain.")

18.06.16 Slate, *The Mafia Is More Powerful Than It's Ever Been*, Alex Perry

<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2018/06/ndrangheta-mafia-more-powerful-and-scarier-than-its-ever-been.html> (There are two dynamics there. The mob thrives on chaos. It likes chaos. It likes to be the alternative authority that you go to because you can't get anything done through the legitimate state. For that very reason, I think there's no doubt that it promotes that chaos. It likes civic distrust. It likes cynicism. It can profit from that. I think the great tragedy of Italy is that, to a large extent, it's kind of succeeded. It plays on the divide between north and south Italy. It plays on the idea that Italy has never really coalesced as a single unit but is terribly regional and terribly factional. And at the heart of that is a hole at the heart of Italy, where there should be a center and established certainty and facts. There's a vacuum. There's a famous bomb attack, for instance, in Rome in 1971. To this day, nobody knows who did that, and there are both fascists and communists serving time for the same bomb attack. That's the real tragedy of Italy. Nobody knows what's true. And in that environment of distrust, the mob thrives, because you can't really point at them and say with certainty, "That guy's a criminal." Because he's pretending to be something else and everybody's pretending to be something else, and therefore nobody's to be trusted. In that kind of atmosphere, where it's difficult to distinguish right and wrong, wrong can thrive. And wrong can paint itself as the righteous champions of southern resistance to northern domination. The whole thing about the mafia is it's a massive lie. There is no honor to the "men of honor." There's no righteousness. They don't care about the rights of southerners. They don't care about the economy. They are parasites. They are predators, but they've managed to create this myth around themselves of, as I say, "men of honor." It's that uncertainty in Italy that allows them to persist.)

18.06.15 The Verge, *The court's decision to let AT&T and Time Warner merge is ridiculously bad*, Nilay Patel

<https://www.theverge.com/2018/6/15/17468612/att-time-warner-acquisition-court-decision> (Tech companies might have vertically integrated the creation and production of content with consumer-facing apps and services, but they all depend on internet connections to reach their audiences. And those connections are increasingly wireless. AT&T and Time Warner aren't trying to catch up to Netflix by merging; they're trying to step ahead of them in line by marrying Time Warner's content to AT&T's network. So, right away, Judge Leon has conflated internet platforms like Google and Netflix with internet providers like AT&T. ... It's also incredible that Shapiro gave AT&T the absolute gift of saying traditional merger analysis predicts this deal will result in cost savings to AT&T customers. Most smart industry observers are predicting the rise of new kinds of internet and content bundles after megadeals like this go down. It would be very surprising if those bundles were cheaper than AT&T's current service offerings. ... Netflix might make an app, but no one can use that app if they don't have an internet connection. Netflix is just as reliant on the internet as Turner is on cable. We just don't expect our ISPs to act like cable companies and prioritize some channels over others. And, of course, Time Warner networks like HBO also spend enormous sums of money on original programming and distribute it directly to consumers in apps, just like Netflix. In a country where net neutrality has just been repealed, owning the internet connection is a huge advantage, just like owning the cable network would be. ... Since the Department of Justice has decided against asking for a stay while it decides whether to appeal, this merger is going through for now. (Frankly, I'm shocked President Trump didn't command the DOJ to appeal in a tweet, or even tweet about this at all.) But just looking at the arguments and reasoning here, it's clear that neither the DOJ nor the judge really understands how video on the internet works, or is going to work, especially as the world shifts to mobile and net neutrality goes away. And I would love to be there when Judge Leon tries to watch Netflix on his AT&T phone next year and sees a bloatware pop-up reminding him that HBO Now is free to stream instead.)

18.06.15 NYT, *My Wife Said You May Want to Marry Me*, Jason Rosenthal

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/15/style/modern-love-my-wife-said-you-may-want-to-marry-me.html> (If I can convey a message I have learned from this bestowal, it would be this: Talk with your mate, your children and other loved ones about what you want for them when you are gone. By doing this, you give them liberty to live

a full life and eventually find meaning again. There will be so much pain, and they will think of you daily. But they will carry on and make a new future, knowing you gave them permission and even encouragement to do so. I want more time with Amy. I want more time picnicking and listening to music at Millennium Park. I want more Shabbat dinners with the five of us Rosies (as we Rosenthals are referred to by our family) ... I wish I had more of all of those things, just as Amy had wished for more. But more wasn't going to happen for her or us. Instead, as she described, we followed Plan "Be," which was about being present in our lives because time was running short. So we did our best to live in the moment until we had no more moments left. The cruelest irony of my life is that it took me losing my best friend, my wife of 26 years and the mother of my three children, to truly appreciate each and every day. I know that sounds like a cliché, and it is, but it's true.)

18.06.15 (accessed) 15.05.16 NYT, *Poor Little Rich Women*, Wednesday Martin

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/17/opinion/sunday/poor-little-rich-women.html> (Then I met the women I came to call the Glam SAHMs, for glamorous stay-at-home-moms, of my new habitat. My culture shock was immediate and comprehensive. In a country where women now outpace men in college completion, continue to increase their participation in the labor force and make gains toward equal pay, it was a shock to discover that the most elite stratum of all is a glittering, moneyed backwater. ... Instead they toiled in what the sociologist Sharon Hays calls "intensive mothering," exhaustively enriching their children's lives by virtually every measure, then advocating for them anxiously and sometimes ruthlessly in the linked high-stakes games of social jockeying and school admissions. ... It was easy for me to fall into the belief, as I lived and lunched and mothered with more than 100 of them for the better part of six years, that all these wealthy, competent and beautiful women, many with irony, intelligence and a sense of humor about their tribalism ("We are freaks for Flywheel," one told me, referring to the indoor cycling gym), were powerful as well. But as my inner anthropologist quickly realized, there was the undeniable fact of their cloistering from men. There were alcohol-fueled girls' nights out, and women-only luncheons and trunk shows and "shopping for a cause" events. There were mommy coffees, and women-only dinners in lavish homes. There were even some girlfriend-only flyaway parties on private planes, where everyone packed and wore outfits the same color. "It's easier and more fun," the women insisted when I asked about the sex segregation that defined their lives. ... And then there were the wife bonuses. I was thunderstruck when I heard mention of a "bonus" over coffee. Later I overheard someone who didn't work say she would buy a table at an event once her bonus was set. A woman with a business degree but no job mentioned waiting for her "year-end" to shop for clothing. Further probing revealed that the annual wife bonus was not an uncommon practice in this tribe. ... Women who didn't get them joked about possible sexual performance metrics. Women who received them usually retreated, demurring when pressed to discuss it further, proof to an anthropologist that a topic is taboo, culturally loaded and dense with meaning. ... Anthropology teaches us to take the long and comparative view of situations that may seem obvious. Among primates, *Homo sapiens* practice the most intensive food and resource sharing, and females may depend entirely on males for shelter and sustenance. Female birds and chimps never stop searching out food to provide for themselves and their young. Whether they are Hadza women who spend almost as much time as men foraging for food, Agta women of the Philippines participating in the hunt or !Kung women of southern Africa foraging for the tubers and roots that can tide a band over when there is no meat from a hunt, women who contribute to the group or family's well-being are empowered relative to those in societies where women do not. As in the Kalahari Desert and rain forest, resources are the bottom line on the Upper East Side. If you don't bring home tubers and roots, your power is diminished in your marriage. And in the world. Rich, powerful men may speak the language of partnership in the absence of true economic parity in a marriage, and act like true partners, and many do. But under this arrangement women are still dependent on their men — a husband may simply ignore his commitment to an abstract idea at any time. He may give you a bonus, or not. Access to your husband's money might feel good. But it can't buy you the power you get by being the one who earns, hunts or gathers it. The wives of the masters of the universe, I learned, are a lot like mistresses — dependent and comparatively disempowered. Just sensing the

disequilibrium, the abyss that separates her version of power from her man's, might keep a thinking woman up at night.)

18.06.14 Vox, *The fraught racial politics of entrance exams for elite high schools*, Alvin Chang <https://www.vox.com/2018/6/14/17458710/new-york-shsat-test-asian-protest> (Most of these immigrants couldn't be considered wealthy by any means — especially in New York, where Asians have the highest poverty rate of any racial group. But most of our families weren't subjected to the same discriminatory policies that have kept black and Hispanic families in intergenerational poverty. This test, like so many others, appears to disproportionately measure these engineered gaps.)

18.06.14 NYT, *Hey Boss, You Don't Want Your Employees to Meditate*, Kathleen Vohs <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/14/opinion/sunday/meditation-productivity-work-mindfulness.html> (But on the face of it, mindfulness might seem counterproductive in a workplace setting. A central technique of mindfulness meditation, after all, is to accept things as they are. Yet companies want their employees to be motivated. And the very notion of motivation — striving to obtain a more desirable future — implies some degree of discontentment with the present, which seems at odds with a psychological exercise that instills equanimity and a sense of calm. ... Mindfulness is perhaps akin to a mental nap. Napping, too, is associated with feeling calm, refreshed and less harried. Then again, who wakes up from a nap eager to organize some files? Mindfulness might be unhelpful for dealing with difficult assignments at work, but it may be exactly what is called for in other contexts. There is no denying that mindfulness can be beneficial, bringing about calm and acceptance. Once you've reached a peak level of acceptance, however, you're not going to be motivated to work harder.)

18.06.14 The Guardian, *Tesla workers say they pay the price for Elon Musk's big promises*, Julie Carrie Wong <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/jun/13/tesla-workers-pay-price-elon-musk-failed-promises> ("If I were a lazier person, I probably wouldn't be injured at all," said the worker, who said he is still in constant pain. While he is still employed by Tesla, he finds the "light duty" tasks that he gets assigned to be humiliating, like "standing in front of the class with a dunce cap". But the worker, who is 41 and started at Tesla in 2014, doesn't see many other options. "The problem is that everything that I know how to do is with my hands," he said. "Everything that I ever heard of doing is with my hands, and I can't do it.")

18.06.13 NYT, *White People Are Noticing Something New: Their Own Whiteness*, Emily Bazelon <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/13/magazine/white-people-are-noticing-something-new-their-own-whiteness.html> (The growing self-recognition among white people, prodded into being by demographic change and broader conversations about how racial identity works, could certainly lead toward self-acceptance and harmony, sure. The Parkland student activists, for example, have seemed almost intuitively savvy about such things, finding ways to interweave their goals and share their stage with kids of color who had, as one put it, "always stared down the barrel of a gun." But we're also staring at copious evidence of this self-recognition swinging in the other direction. When white Americans burrow into their group identity, the switch that Painter described often flips, from nothingness to awfulness. Some of us fixate on maintaining racial dominance, conjuring ethnonationalist states or a magical immigration formula that somehow imports half of Scandinavia. A majority of white Americans currently believe that their own race is discriminated against. News accounts fill with white resentment and torch-lit white-power marches. White Americans, who "seem lost," are searching for something important: how to see ourselves without turning awful in the process.)

18.06.13 CNBC, *Reed Hastings won by studying Amazon — then running in the opposite direction*, Alex Sherman <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/06/13/netflix-reed-hastings-inspiration-amazon.html> (Netflix has toyed with different tactics to win these "moments of truth" over the years. The company considered allowing its

customers to buy and own new releases of movies and TV shows, similar to Amazon. Netflix has considered allowing advertising on its site. It has thought about investing in live sports and news. It once sold used DVDs and showcased movie screening times at theaters on its site. It dabbled in producing independent films and original movies (dubbed Red Envelope Entertainment) for DVD distribution. It nearly launched a Netflix set-top box, which would have brought the company into the hardware business. ... "Jeff Bezos seems to put his fingers in everything," said Willerer. "Reed wants to do one thing exceptionally well and that's it." "We realized we could compete with Amazon as long as streaming was not in their top three or five things they focused on," said Gib Biddle, Netflix's former vice president of product management. "In the early days, video certainly was not. It probably still isn't." ... If Netflix is to justify its grand valuation and not come crashing down to Earth, one of two things must happen — either it has to dominate the global media landscape, or it has to use its scale to go after new markets. It's clear Netflix has already decided expanding into adjacent markets isn't the strategy. Instead, its only way forward is to win in media.)

18.06.12 Longreads, *The Menace and the Promise of Autonomous Vehicles*, Jacob

Silverman <https://longreads.com/2018/06/12/the-menace-and-the-promise-of-autonomous-vehicles/> (The study's authors worried that mandating utilitarian AVs—those that would swerve to avoid a crowd—through federal regulation would present a confounding problem: passengers would never agree to be rationally self-sacrificing. "Regulation could substantially delay the adoption of AVs," they wrote, "which means that the lives saved by making millions of AVs utilitarian may be outnumbered by the deaths caused by delaying." Things get even more complicated in what are called edge cases, in which an AV may face a variety of thorny weather, traffic, and other conditions at once, forcing a series of complex rapid-fire decisions. The report concludes, "There seems to be no easy way to design algorithms that would reconcile moral values and personal self-interest." Azim Shariff—one of the paper's authors and a professor at the University of California, Irvine—has called for "a new social contract" for AVs. Riding in one will mean giving yourself over to a machine whose "mind" humans don't understand—and which, in a moment of crisis, may be programmed to prioritize the lives of others over your own. "I've kind of wracked my brain to think of another consumer product which would purposefully put their owners at risk against their wishes," he told me. "It's really a radically new situation." In practice, Shariff went on, cars are unlikely to be faced by stark choices. The trolley question is meant to emblemize tough decision-making for the purpose of moral deliberation; programming morality into our vehicles is a matter of deeper, almost mystical complexity. "The cars are going to have to be choosing in the maneuvers that they make to slightly increase the risk toward a pedestrian rather than the passenger, or slightly increase the risk toward somebody who's walking illegally versus someone who's walking legally," he said. That's a fraction of a percent here or there. "Only at the aggregate level, with all the cars driving all the miles, will you then see the statistical version of these scenarios emerge.")

18.06.11 Vox, *Why this political scientist thinks the Democrats have to fight dirty*, David Faris

<https://www.vox.com/2018/5/1/17258866/democratic-party-republicans-trump-election> (We're in the midst of a slow-motion unraveling of democracy in this country. If we don't return the favor with some of this procedural war stuff, the only other option is to continue watching the other side do it. That's not an acceptable option in my opinion. I don't think we can restore order by respecting rules that are not respected by Republicans. I do believe we'll have to find a way to end this procedural war at some point, but now is not that time. Republicans need to know what it's like to be on the other end of normative violations. The Republicans are behaving like a party that believes it will never be held accountable for anything they're doing, and so far they haven't been. That has to change before we can fix this mess.)

18.06.10 Vulture, *Inside the Binge Factory*, Josef Adalian

<http://www.vulture.com/2018/06/how-netflix-swallowed-tv-industry.html> ("The first word out of everybody's mouths in meetings is, 'How do we deal with Netflix?' " says one longtime TV-industry executive. "How do we

compete with Netflix? What are they doing?’ ” Disney’s pending purchase of much of 20th Century Fox’s film and TV assets — which has prompted a counterbid by Comcast, parent company of NBCUniversal — is in no small part a reaction to the rise of Netflix. Robert Iger, Disney’s CEO, wants the added scale 20th Century Fox’s assets will bring as he prepares to launch Disney’s own direct-to-consumer streaming service next year. The proposed AT&T–Time Warner merger is similarly designed to help AT&T take on Netflix. Mysterious though it may seem, Netflix operates by a simple logic, long understood by such tech behemoths as Facebook and Amazon: Growth begets more growth begets more growth. When Netflix adds more content, it lures new subscribers and gets existing ones to watch more hours of Netflix. As they spend more time watching, the company can collect more data on their viewing habits, allowing it to refine its bets about future programming. “More shows, more watching; more watching, more subs; more subs, more revenue; more revenue, more content,” explains Ted Sarandos, Netflix’s chief content officer. So far, it’s worked spectacularly well: Netflix has gone from around 33 million global subscribers before *House of Cards* premiered to over 125 million today. Wall Street analysts have predicted Netflix could flirt with 200 million subscribers by the end of 2020; by 2028, one Morgan Stanley analyst has said, 300 million is possible. “The thing that keeps me up at night is scale,” says Sarandos. “It’s a mind-boggling amount of programming that’s being produced here. How do we keep scaling it?” One answer is cultural. “I’m building a team that’s oriented as saying ‘Yes’ in a town that’s built to say ‘No,’ ” Sarandos says. That’s not just New Age–speak. It’s practical. To stimulate volume, Sarandos and Holland have put in place an extraordinarily decentralized development and production pipeline, one that allows Netflix to operate like ten or 15 semi-independent entertainment companies — whose output all happens to be distributed by a single service.)

18.06.03 NYT, *Democrats Hope an Asian Influx Will Help Turn Orange County Blue*, Vivian Yee <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/03/us/democrats-asians-orange-county-california.html> (When the Taiwanese bakery opened for business a decade ago, the line for taro bread and sea-salt coffee undulated down the sidewalk, but at least it wasn’t the three-hour wait for Shanghainese hot pot that plugged up the same shopping center earlier this year. Still, that was preferable to the half-day’s perseverance required for entry to the South Coast Plaza branch of Din Tai Fung, the upscale soup-dumpling chain that, for three weeks this winter, threw a crystal-bedecked Lunar New Year party more elaborate than that of most Chinatowns. Immigrants from China and Korea, and Asian-Americans from other states, have made Irvine nearly half Asian. This has not gone unnoticed by the Irvine Company, the developer that did not so much develop as invent this master-planned city of spotless parks, top schools and cul-de-sacs out of a former sheep ranch in the 1960s, when Orange County was agricultural (think lima beans and orange groves), conservative (think Richard Nixon and the John Birch Society) and white (very, very white). ... Whether Asians are also good for votes is one of the biggest political questions driving this year’s midterm races in Orange County, where Democrats are counting on immigrants to help the party pull off, if not quite a blue wave, then at least an unmistakable purpling. Orange County is now one-fifth Asian and more than one-third Latino, with a Little Saigon in Garden Grove and Westminster; a Koreatown in nearby Buena Park that is beginning to rival Los Angeles’s; and a thriving Latino community centered in Santa Ana. Forty-five percent of the county’s households speak a language other than English. In the 45th Congressional District, whose biggest city is Irvine, three of the four Democratic candidates were born to immigrants, including one of the front-runners, Dave Min, a Korean-American law professor at the University of California, Irvine. Whichever Democrat does best in the June 5 primary will challenge Rep. Mimi Walters, the Republican incumbent, in a district that has never elected anyone but Republicans — an area once famous for nurturing the political careers of Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan. ... Hence the double-takes when Orange County chose Hillary Clinton in 2016, the first time a Democratic presidential candidate had carried the county since Franklin D. Roosevelt’s second term. ... Running in Irvine, where Asians, whites and Persians alike buy million-dollar homes in large part to put their children in ultracompetitive public schools, Mr. Min has reasons both for doubt and for hope. “I joke that it’s the one district in the country where being an Asian-American law professor is an advantage,” he

said. Resistance City, this is not. Lawn signs advertising open houses tend to far outnumber those endorsing politicians. And then there is the question of Asian voters, who, beyond inconsistent turnout, are not numerous enough on their own to pick winners. Still, Asians are the fastest-growing immigrant group in the country; in 2015, researchers at the University of California, Davis, projected that the number of eligible Asian-American voters in California would rise 37 percent by 2040. ... Mr. Min speaks only minimal Korean, making it difficult for him to tap into the community on his own. So his parents, who arrived in the United States as graduate students in 1972, have campaigned for him at Korean churches and restaurants, and Mr. Kang has prodded local Korean-language media to cover him more. Nowhere is Orange County's accelerating diversity more obvious than in its schools and shopping centers, where, in the absence of downtowns, community life unfolds. Zion Markets (Korean) and 99 Ranches (Taiwanese) jostle with, or even replace, Vons and Albertsons supermarkets. There are so many Chinese students in Irvine now that the city supports several competing Chinese-language schools, and the public schools have been known to send notices to parents in English and Chinese. ... Local headlines this year have been a reminder that the county is still conservative turf mottled with liberal patches, not the other way around. A dozen Republican-dominated cities recently passed resolutions opposing the state's new so-called sanctuary state law, which extends more protections to unauthorized immigrants. Most of them were predominantly white communities. "To me, it's the last gasp of a ruling group of Republicans who are on their way out the door," said Kia Hamadanchy, a son of Persian immigrants who is running for Congress as a Democrat in Irvine. Whether immigrants will replace them remains to be seen. "It's hard to get Asian-Americans to run," said Cyril Yu, a deputy district attorney who lost his race for the Irvine school board in 2012. "But I think you're going to get people who are excited, nonetheless, because an Asian-American's on the ballot.")

18.06.01 Farnam Street, *Smarter, Not Harder: How to Succeed at Work*, Shane Parrish

<https://fs.blog/2018/06/succeed-at-work/> (Warren Buffett "ruled out paying attention to almost anything but business—art, literature, science, travel, architecture—so that he could focus on his passion," wrote Alice Schroder in her book *The Snowball*. This isn't unique to Warren Buffett. Almost all of the successful people I know follow a similar approach to focusing their efforts. ... It's not about working harder to get better results. You have only so much energy to apply. Pick what matters. Eliminate the rest.)

18.06.01 The Atlantic, *When Your Child Is a Psychopath*, Barbara Bradley

Hagerty <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/06/when-your-child-is-a-psychopath/524502/>

(Forming attachments with callous kids is important, but it's not Mendota's singular insight. The center's real breakthrough involves deploying the anomalies of the psychopathic brain to one's advantage—specifically, downplaying punishment and dangling rewards. These boys have been expelled from school, placed in group homes, arrested, and jailed. If punishment were going to rein them in, it would have by now. But their brains do respond, enthusiastically, to rewards. At Mendota, the boys can accumulate points to join ever more prestigious "clubs" (Club 19, Club 23, the VIP Club). As they ascend in status, they earn privileges and treats—candy bars, baseball cards, pizza on Saturdays, the chance to play Xbox or stay up late. Hitting someone, throwing urine, or cussing out the staff costs a boy points—but not for long, since callous and unemotional kids aren't generally deterred by punishment. ... When I describe the latest twist in Carl's story to Michael Caldwell and Greg Van Rybroek, they laugh knowingly. "This counts as a good outcome for a Mendota guy," Caldwell says. "He's not going to have a fully healthy adjustment to life, but he's been able to stay mostly within the law. Even this misdemeanor—he's not committing armed robberies or shooting people." His sister sees her brother's outcome in a similar light. "This guy got dealt a shittier hand of cards than anybody I've ever met," she tells me. "Who deserves to have started out life that way? And the fact that he's not a raving lunatic, locked up for the rest of his life, or dead is insane." I ask Carl whether it's difficult to play by the rules, to simply be normal. "On a scale of 1 to 10, how hard is it?" he says. "I would say an 8. Because 8's difficult, very difficult." I've grown to like Carl: He has a lively intellect, a willingness to admit his flaws, and

a desire to be good. Is he being sincere or manipulating me? Is Carl proof that psychopathy can be tamed—or proof that the traits are so deeply embedded that they can never be dislodged? I honestly don't know. ... Samantha's parents try not to second-guess their decision to adopt her. But even Samantha has wondered whether they have regrets. "She said, 'Why did you even want me?,'" Jen recalls. "The real answer to that is: We didn't know the depth of her challenges. We had no idea. I don't know if this would be a different story if we were looking at this now. But what we tell her is: 'You were ours.'" Jen and Danny are planning to bring Samantha home this summer, a prospect the family views with some trepidation. They're taking precautions, such as using alarms on Samantha's bedroom door. The older children are larger and tougher than Samantha, but the family will have to keep vigil over the 5-year-old and the 7-year-old. Still, they believe she's ready, or, more accurately, that she's progressed as far as she can at San Marcos. They want to bring her home, to give it another try. Of course, even if Samantha can slip easily back into home life at 11, what of the future? "Do I want that child to have a driver's license?," Jen asks. To go on dates? She's smart enough for college—but will she be able to negotiate that complex society without becoming a threat? Can she have a stable romantic relationship, much less fall in love and marry? She and Danny have had to redefine success for Samantha: simply keeping her out of prison. And yet, they love Samantha. "She's ours, and we want to raise our children together," Jen says. Samantha has been in residential treatment programs for most of the past five years, nearly half her life. They can't institutionalize her forever. She needs to learn to function in the world, sooner rather than later. "I do feel there's hope," Jen says. "The hard part is, it's never going to go away. It's high-stakes parenting. If it fails, it's going to fail big.")

18.05.31 NY Mag, *Seniors Are More Conservative Because the Poor Don't Survive to Become Seniors*, Ed Kilgore,

<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2018/05/poor-people-often-dont-survive-to-become-seniors-who-vote.html>

(Since white people suffer proportionately less from poverty than nonwhite people, they do tend to live longer, and in better health, which is conducive to political and other civic activism. The most politically left-bent demographic racial group, African-Americans, has made progress recently in reducing the gap in life expectancy with white peers, but still lags in both lifespans and health, as a 2017 CDC study showed: ... Inequality in the U.S., in other words, is not solely the result of economic difference. Health, too, has considerable potential to stack the deck against the poor. Socioeconomics, longevity and political participation mutually reinforce each other, making it especially difficult for poor Americans to gain political clout. So it's not just a matter of people naturally growing more conservative as they grow older. It's also a matter of the wealthier — and more conservative — people surviving more often, and for longer.)

18.05.31 The Atlantic, *Unfortunately, the Electric Scooters Are Fantastic*, Robinson Meyer

<https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/05/electric-scooters-are-the-cargo-shorts-of-transportation/561440/>

(riding a scooter is reminiscent of riding a Segway—even if you, like me, have never ridden a Segway in your life. It turns out that even Segway virgins like myself immediately intuit the unnaturalness and awkwardness of standing-still-while-moving-quickly-forward. It feels kinetically uncool; it's the posture of conspicuous tourists and safety-vested traffic cops ... You can understand why the scooters feel so vital, then. A scooter reliably travels one mile in eight minutes. You can ride it door-to-door, and you don't have to find a place to park it. Riding one feels like a superpower ... Yet every day I hear from a new, cool friend: I thought I'd hate the scooters but they are so easy and fast! And I wonder if the scooters will instead follow the path of the selfie. Remember the first year of the selfie? Opinion makers categorized selfies as juvenile, outlandishly sad, and hopelessly narcissistic. But then people got over it. Now I see as many Boomers as Millennials discreetly taking selfies. Perhaps that's how we'll look back on this era of scooters.)

18.05.28 The Cut, *How an Aspiring 'It' Girl Tricked New York's Party People — and Its Banks*, Jessica Pressler

<https://www.thecut.com/2018/05/how-anna-delvey-tricked-new-york.html> (Watching the Rikers guard

shove Fast Company into a manila envelope, I realized what Anna had in common with the people she'd been studying in the pages of that magazine: She saw something others didn't. Anna looked at the soul of New York and recognized that if you distract people with shiny objects, with large wads of cash, with the indicia of wealth, if you show them the money, they will be virtually unable to see anything else. And the thing was: It was so easy. "Money, like, there's an unlimited amount of capital in the world, you know?" Anna said to me at one point. "But there's limited amounts of people who are talented.")

18.05.21 NY Review of Books, *The New Passport-Poor*, Atossa

Abrahamian <https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2018/05/21/the-new-passport-poor/> (Today, the passport's days are rumored to be numbered. Airline executives and government officials predict that as soon as 2022, international travel will be "a smooth, tokenless process," free of IDs or boarding cards, relying entirely on iris scans and fingerprints taken in a split second and vetted by a gigantic database of traveler information. With the rise of these biometric technologies against the backdrop of the war on terror and the resurgence of ethnic nationalism, we're seeing walls—physical, legal, and rhetorical ones—being thrown up at every step. Physical walls have a symbolic part in the populist imagination, dividing "natives" from "others," and beefed-up border controls, surveillance, and tracking technology create boundaries just as concrete in effect that politicians can crow about. Less noticed are the lines being drawn around people, delineations that will potentially follow them around for life. The more information our fingerprints or irises immediately link to—such as where we live, what our occupation is, who our parents are, whether we rely on welfare, or if we've ever committed a crime—the more grounds there are for a kind of algorithmic segregation. Thanks to durable digital technologies like the blockchain, records will become indelible, for better or for worse; our histories could come back to haunt us decades after the fact of an arrest, a bankruptcy, or a deportation. In *Automating Inequality: How High-Tech Tools Profile, Police, and Punish the Poor* (2018), the political scientist Virginia Eubanks writes that data-driven welfare administration in the US ended up being a disaster because the technologies it used "are not neutral." Rather, she argues, "They are shaped by our nation's fear of economic insecurity and hatred of the poor; they in turn shape the politics and experience of poverty." The "invasive electronic scrutiny" of the poor will soon be the status quo for all Americans, she notes. Already, an obvious target of biometric tracking will be the subjects of Trump's promised "extreme vetting": foreigners, refugees, and immigrants. ... This has legal and political consequences, but also personal ones. The collection of biographic, biometric, familial, and even genetic information creates digital legacies that are hard to shake. In China, a country that still requires documents for internal travel, iris scanners, motion sensors, and other sinister-seeming technologies monitor its Muslim Uighur minority constantly. Chinese citizens generally are evaluated for visas, mortgages, schools, and employment by social credit scores. When today's refugees follow Casablanca's refugee trail in reverse and travel from Africa, across the Mediterranean, and into Europe, the authorities collect their biometrics and follow the Dublin protocol, whereby a migrant's first port of entry is where he or she must apply for asylum. It's getting harder and harder to disappear and start over. So much for mobility, be it physical, economic, or social. Drawing borders around people might give us a more orderly and predictable world. But for all the promised benefits of a frictionless experience of journeying, it may not be a more humane one. Passports could well disappear in the next decade, but they'll be replaced by something much more invasive: a digital shadow representing our bodies, our families, and our pasts, following us like little rainclouds everywhere we go.)

18.05.18 The Verge, *The decline of Snapchat and the secret joy of internet ghost towns*, Helena Fitzgerald <https://www.theverge.com/2018/5/18/17366528/snapchat-decline-internet-ghost-towns> (When I made my own humiliatingly verbose and confessional posts, I never imagined the audience to be the few real-life friends who also used the website. I was often embarrassed or even annoyed when these friends referenced those posts in offline conversations. What I loved about LiveJournal, in my early online days, was that it felt like a public space in which I got to talk to no one, a place where I could yell into the void. Putting any part of one's self

online is always a cry for attention to some degree, but sometimes, against all logic, the desire is just as much for the opposite. I want to confess things out loud and be ignored. I want to say the things I can only say if I believe that I am nowhere ... Peach, which never truly caught on and has for most of its life only existed as a barely alive platform, functions as the same kind of private clubhouse for people who use it, a small party where no one is listening. Vine was always great, but it was perhaps at its best in the last weeks before its rumored shutdown, when everyone on it seemed to throw rules and caution to the wind, when every Vine felt like it might be the very last one. Tumblr is a little like this, too. It now feels like an abandoned space that was once a robust destination, and it now feels like a secret.)

18.05.17 Quartz, *This physicist's ideas of time will blow your mind*, Ephrat Livni

<https://qz.com/1279371/this-physicists-ideas-of-time-will-blow-your-mind/> (Though physics gives us insights into the mystery of time, ultimately, the scientist argues, that too is unsatisfactory to us as humans. The simple feeling we have that time passes by, or flows—borne of a fluke, naiveté, and limitations—is precisely what time is for us. Rovelli argues that what we experience as time's passage is a mental process happening in the space between memory and anticipation. "Time is the form in which we beings whose brains are made up essentially of memory and foresight interact with our world: it is the source of our identity," he writes. "Time is the form in which we beings whose brains are made up essentially of memory and foresight interact with our world: it is the source of our identity." Basically, he believes, time is a story we're always telling ourselves in the present tense, individually and together. It's a collective act of introspection and narrative, record-keeping and expectation, that's based on our relationship to prior events and the sense that happenings are impending. It is this tale that gives us our sense of self as well, a feeling that many neuroscientists, mystics, and the physicist argue is a mass delusion. Without a record—or memory—and expectations of continuation, we would not experience time's passage or even know who we are, Rovelli contends. Time, then, is an emotional and psychological experience. "It's loosely connected with external reality," he says, "but it is mostly something that happens now in our head.")

18.05.10 The Guardian, *The spectacular power of Big Lens*, Sam

Knight <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/may/10/the-invisible-power-of-big-glasses-eyewear-industry-essilor-luxottica> (The \$100bn (£74bn) eyewear industry is built on feelings such as this. In the trade, the choreography that takes you from the consulting room to the enticing, bare-brick display of £200 frames is known as "romancing the product". The number of eye tests that turn into sales is the "capture rate", which most opticians in Britain (or optometrists, as they are known in the rest of the world) set at around 60%. During the 20th century, the eyewear business worked hard to transform a physical deficiency into a statement of style. In the process, optical retailers learned the strange fact that for something that costs only a few pounds to make (even top-of-the-range frames and lenses cost, combined, no more than about £30 to produce), we are happy, happier in fact, when paying 10 or 20 times that amount. "The margins," as one veteran of the sector told me carefully, "are outrageous." The co-founder of Specsavers, Mary Perkins, is Britain's first self-made female billionaire ... But what we see masks the underlying structure of the global eyewear business. Over the last generation, just two companies have risen above all the rest to dominate the industry. The lenses in my glasses – and yours too, most likely – are made by Essilor, a French multinational that controls almost half of the world's prescription lens business and has acquired more than 250 other companies in the past 20 years. There is a good chance, meanwhile, that your frames are made by Luxottica, an Italian company with an unparalleled combination of factories, designer labels and retail outlets. Luxottica pioneered the use of luxury brands in the optical business, and one of the many powerful functions of names such as Ray-Ban (which is owned by Luxottica) or Vogue (which is owned by Luxottica) or Prada (whose glasses are made by Luxottica) or Oliver Peoples (which is owned by Luxottica) or high-street outlets such as LensCrafters, the largest optical retailer in the US (which is owned by Luxottica), or John Lewis Opticians in the UK (which is run by Luxottica), or Sunglass Hut (which is owned by Luxottica) is to make the marketplace

feel more varied than it actually is. ... Now they are becoming one. On 1 March, regulators in the EU and the US gave permission for the world's largest optical companies to form a single corporation, which will be known as EssilorLuxottica. The new firm will not technically be a monopoly: Essilor currently has around 45% of the prescription lenses market, and Luxottica 25% of the frames. But in seven centuries of spectacles, there has never been anything like it. The new entity will be worth around \$50bn (£37bn), sell close to a billion pairs of lenses and frames every year, and have a workforce of more than 140,000 people. EssilorLuxottica intends to dominate what its executives call "the visual experience" for decades to come. ... The creation of EssilorLuxottica is a big deal. It will have knock-on consequences for opticians and eyewear manufacturers from Hong Kong to Peru. But it is also a response to an unprecedented moment in the story of human vision – namely, the accelerating degradation of our eyes. For several thousand years, human beings have lived in more or less advanced societies, reading, writing and doing business with one another, mostly without the aid of glasses. But that is coming to an end. No one is exactly sure what it is about early 21st-century urban living – the time we spend indoors, the screens, the colour spectrum in LED lighting, or the needs of ageing populations – but the net result is that across the world, we are becoming a species wearing lenses. The need varies depending where you go, because different populations have different genetic predispositions to poor eyesight, but it is there, and growing, and probably greater than you think. In Nigeria, around 90 million people, or half the population, are now thought to need corrective eyewear. ... In the 1950s, between 10% and 20% of Chinese people were shortsighted. Now, among teenagers and young adults, the proportion is more like 90%. In Seoul, 95% of 19-year-old men are myopic, many of them severely, and at risk of blindness later in life. ... The first glasses were almost certainly made in northern Italy in the last decades of the 13th century. (Lenses are called lenses because they looked like lentils.) But for centuries after their invention, spectacles and other magnifying lenses were mostly rejected by medical men, who warned of their unnaturalness and recommended potions to correct people's eyesight instead. In *The Perfect Oculist*, of 1666, Robert Turner, a London doctor, recommended turtle's blood and the powdered head of a bat for the treatment of squints. For weak eyesight, you might try wearing cow's eyes around your neck. ... I took *A Man Who Sees Far* back to my hotel. Even in the company's hagiography, Del Vecchio comes across as improbably driven and unfeeling. The biographer struggles to get a few words with Il Presidente as he crosses the tarmac to his private jet. (Del Vecchio rarely gives interviews; he declined to speak to me.) "There were no kisses, no cuddles," his eldest daughter, Marisa, recalls in the book. "Frankly, we were scared of him.")

18.05.04 NYT, *How to Survive Your 40s*, Pamela Druckerman

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/04/opinion/sunday/how-to-survive-your-40s.html> (The seminal journey of the 40s is from "everyone hates me" to "they don't really care." ... What have we aged into? We're still capable of action, change and 10K races. But there's a new immediacy to the 40s — and an awareness of death — that didn't exist before. Our possibilities feel more finite. All choices now plainly exclude others. It's pointless to keep pretending to be what we're not. At 40, we're no longer preparing for an imagined future life. Our real lives are, indisputably, happening right now. We've arrived at what Immanuel Kant called the "Ding an sich" — the thing itself. Indeed, the strangest part of the 40s is that we're now the ones attending parent-teacher conferences and cooking the turkey on Thanksgiving. These days, when I think, "Someone should really do something about that," I realize with alarm that that "someone" is me. It's not an easy transition. I'd always been reassured by the idea that there are grown-ups in the world out there curing cancer and issuing subpoenas. Grown-ups fly airplanes, get aerosol into bottles and make sure that television signals are magically transmitted. They know whether a novel is worth reading and which news belongs on the front page. In an emergency, I've always trusted that grown-ups — mysterious, capable and wise — would appear to rescue me. I'm not thrilled about looking older. But what unsettles me most about the 40s is the implication that I'm now a grown-up myself. I fear I've been promoted beyond my competence. What is a grown-up anyway? Do they really exist? If so, what exactly do they know? Will my mind ever catch up with my face?)

18.05.04 LAT, *Once L.A.'s hottest mall, the Westside Pavilion is dying, and shoppers are bummed*, Melissa Etihad <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-westside-pavilion-20180504-story.html> (Nearby, Ilene Schwartz watched her 7-year-old daughter, Jocelyn, dance around the first floor of the mall from a nearby table. For years, the duo have come to Westside Pavilion at least a few times a week, preferring its indoor environment and affordable prices to that of more expensive retailers such as nearby Century City. As her eyes remained fixed on her daughter twirling in circles, Schwartz said she's saddened that in a few years her daughter won't experience this any longer. "Part of her childhood that she could have had here will be gone," Schwartz explained. Despite the mall's desolate feel, Schwartz remains steadfast in continuing her tradition for as long as she can. "It feels weird to come here, but we want to come here until it's gone." Owen Rooney shares similar views. As he rode the escalator up to the third floor, his son ran ahead into GameStop, a video game store. "That's his favorite place to go," Rooney said of his 12-year-old son, Owen Jr. "It's a tradition to come here." Like most nearby residents, Rooney said he's been coming to the mall at least once a week since his son was born, but says in recent years the mall has felt different. "It'll be different when we can't come here anymore.")

18.05.02 Munchies, *The Weird Science Behind Chain Restaurant Menus*, India Mandelkern https://munchies.vice.com/en_us/article/bjp9xv/how-chain-restaurant-menus-get-made (Her enthusiasm didn't surprise me. The client's old menu had suffered from a paradox of plenty. It had presented the illusion of choice, while, in reality, nearly every entree was a familiar Chinese-American concoction of syrupy proteins and starchy rice. To solve this problem, we had transformed the old stalwarts—the Kung Pao, Mongolian Beef, and so on—into cosmopolitan “rice bowls” that guests could customize with vegetables and grains. To top it off, we introduced a series of gestures to other Asian cuisines. A salmon-avocado chirashi bowl. A Korean BBQ steak bibimbap. A nod to ramen. A nod to pho. A “family menu” replete with blistered green beans and sesame broccoli. A beverage program that boasted Vietnamese coffee and Thai iced tea.)

18.04.21 NYT, *An American Woman Quits Smiling*, Lisa Ko <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/21/opinion/sunday/an-american-woman-quits-smiling.html> (Does America's emphasis on smiling say something about a desire for happy endings, for appeasement and artifice? Or do we smile more as a way to cope with our troubles, as a source of comfort? A 2015 study concluded that people in Canada and the United States, countries with a long history of immigration, do smile more than those in other countries, as smiling is a form of nonverbal communication between those who don't share a language. In The Journal of Nonverbal Behavior, a 2016 study found that cultures with a “low uncertainty avoidance,” in which the future is judged to be relatively unpredictable and social conditions are regarded as uncertain, view smiling too much as unintelligent. The more corrupt a society is, the more its citizens see smiling as suspicious.)

18.04.20 Vox, *Here's the real nightmare scenario for self-driving cars: The ad-supported business model that ruined the internet could come for transportation next.*, David Roberts <https://www.vox.com/energy-and-environment/2018/3/27/17163264/autonomous-car-self-driving-advertising-business> (There are no longer any practical limits on the supply side: Content production is cheap and online space is infinite. The only remaining constraint on revenue is on the demand side. Humans only have so many hours in the day and so much attention to give. So every app is competing not just with other apps but with Netflix and cooking and sleep and work and exercise — anything else that might take your attention off the app. Consequently, the engineers of these tools are growing increasingly adept at exploiting human cognitive and emotional quirks, providing short-term dopamine bursts that prove addictive. ... The history of digital technologies offers a clue as to what “free” means in this context, and where it leads. Companies still have to make money. And the only way to monetize customers without charging them is to make them the product, i.e., to sell their attention through advertising. Once fleet owners start grasping around for other

sources of revenue, they will inevitably seize on it. It would be nice to think that people wouldn't put up with it, that they would buy a subscription or pay an extra fee for an ad-free transportation service (TaaAFS). But that isn't what history seems to show. Rather, customers have shown again and again that when it comes to services, they will go for the cheaper option, brand loyalty (and personal privacy) be damned. Look at airlines, where customers put up with discomfort and nickel-and-dime fees in exchange for cheap base rates. Look at media, where the ad model dwarfs the subscription model. Look at the popularity of "member club cards" at grocery stores and retail outlets, via which customers exchange their private information for discounts. Look at Facebook to Google, which we allow 360-degree surveillance of our lives ... If vehicles do become rolling smartphones, "platforms" for a variety of ad-supported videos, apps, games, and services, we can expect the same incentives to take over transportation that dominate online services like Facebook or Candy Crush. To wit: Cars will want more of your time and attention. The only way to spend time with a car is to drive somewhere in it. Insofar as they get revenue from advertising, owners of shared vehicle fleets will want more people to go more places in cars. Their revenue will rise with VMT, so they will strive to maximize VMT. Hitching ad revenue to VMT would put the industry squarely in opposition to other, non-car modes of transit and make it an enemy of good urban planning. It would strengthen short-term gratification and weaken long-term foresight — and foresight is already difficult enough to come by in transportation planning.)

18.04.18 Vox, *Why a leading political theorist thinks civilization is overrated*, James

Scott <https://www.vox.com/conversations/2017/11/22/16649038/civilization-progress-humanity-history-technology> (Modern industrial life has forced almost all of us to specialize in something, often in mundane, repetitive tasks. This is good for economic productivity but not so good for individual self-fulfillment. I think this has created a narrowing of attention to the larger world. Moving from hunting and gathering to working on an assembly line has made us more machine-like and less attuned to the world around us because we only have to be skilled at one thing. Sean Illing I want to press you a bit on this question of whether we're any happier now. We live mostly isolated lives in a culture that prizes growth over sustainability. We're encouraged to own more things, to buy more things, to define and measure ourselves against others on the basis of status and wealth. I think this has made us less happy and more self-conscious. How do you see it? James Scott I'd say two things. The first is that once we had sedentary agriculture, we then had investment in land and therefore property that could be taxed. We then had the basis for inherited property and thus the basis for passing wealth from one generation to another. Now, all that matters because it led to these embedded inequalities that were enforced by the state protection of property. This wasn't true for hunter and gatherer societies, which regarded all property as common property to which everyone in the tribe had equal access. So the early agricultural societies created the basis for systematic class distinctions that could be perpetuated between generations, and that's how you get the kinds of massive hierarchies and inequalities we see today.)

18.04.11 CNBC, *This 43-year-old running for president in 2020 wants to give everyone \$1,000 a month in free cash*, Catherine Clifford

<https://www.cnbc.com/2018/04/11/andrew-yang-wants-to-run-for-president-promising-free-cash-handouts.html>

(Under Yang's plan, the UBI payment would be funded by a "new tax on the companies that are benefiting most from automation," he says in a video on his campaign's website. That tax, he explains, would be a value-added tax (VAT) of 10 percent on goods and services a company produces. (Europe already has a VAT, with rates ranging from 17 percent in Luxembourg to 27 percent in Hungary as of Jan. 1, 2018, according to the European Commission.) The idea of a VAT will become ever more important, according to Yang's campaign, "because you cannot collect income tax from robots or software." "Because our economy is so vast, this would generate between \$700 and \$800 billion in revenue," said Yang on Reddit. ... As a relative unknown with just \$250,000 raised (including \$1,000 from Tony Hsieh of Zappos) and no political experience, Yang is fighting an uphill battle. A candidate must go through a process of state primaries and caucuses collecting delegate votes leading up to the party's national convention just to be the nominee. And each state

has its own uniquely complex rules and processes for getting on the primary ballot. But fundamentally, says Yang, he's running for President because he sees a problem that needs to be solved. "I'm an entrepreneur ... so you want to try and solve problems. The problem I saw was that we're going to automate away millions of jobs ... so then the question is how can you realistically solve for that?" Yang tells CNBC Make It. "There's a very limited range of things you can do if you're genuinely trying to solve that problem, and so that's how I arrived at running for president.")

18.04.02 Vox, *It's harder for Democrats to gerrymander effectively*, Matthew

Yglesias <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/4/2/17173158/democrats-gerrymander-segregation> (America's white majority tends to vote Republican while its nonwhite minority backs the Democrats. But the parties are electorally competitive because the GOP tilt of the white population is much less severe than the Democratic tilt of the nonwhite population — Trump won 57 percent of whites while Clinton got 74 percent of nonwhites, according to the 2016 exit polls. If the racial mix of the country was flat across the entire landscape, that would be irrelevant. But, of course, it isn't flat. America's social geography is characterized by enormous amounts of neighborhood-level racial segregation. This translates into partisan politics and means that essentially any form of district drawing that is based on geography will be heavily influenced by the way black and Latino neighborhoods (and Indian reservations) serve as Democratic vote sinks. It's common among redistricting analysts to refer to this sort of thing as a "natural" aspect of American geography, though obviously there's nothing especially natural about the dynamics that replicate neighborhood-level segregation over and over again across the country. That means Republicans inherently have the upper hand in the gerrymandering game.)

18.04.01 Wired, *The dizzying story of Symphony of the Seas, the largest and most ambitious cruise ship ever built*, Oliver Franklin-Wallis

<http://www.wired.co.uk/article/ms-symphony-of-the-seas-royal-caribbean-largest-cruise-ship> (The essential consideration when designing a cruise ship is flow of human traffic. "They have a relatively high density of population. How can you spread the people and make sure they find their way?" asks Kulovaara. "Understanding how people behave, anticipating how they behave, is key." With nearly 9,000 people on board including crew, distributing attractions evenly across the ship is crucial. Hence, Symphony's two main theatres are at opposite ends. The casino is central, but below the Royal Promenade. (A rule of thumb is that it takes the first two days of a cruise just to get your bearings.) Perhaps even more important is the movement of the ship's 2,200 crew, who must be able to access galleys and stores in the bowels of the ship easily. There are safety considerations, too: today's megaships are split vertically into six or more fire zones, which can be isolated in case of an emergency. Muster stations (usually large public areas) must be evenly spread. Even corridor width is calculated for the necessary flow of passengers in the event of an emergency. Once the major spaces are sketched out, there's the onerous task of plumbing. "The big part of building a ship, 85 per cent, is what you don't see. It's the air conditioning, the electric systems, the water systems, power generation," says Kulovaara. Cruise ships are built using concurrent design: while the keel and lower hull are being cut, the top of the ship is still being laid out. "We do the conceptual design and the architectural design," says Kulovaara. "The naval architects think about hydrodynamics, hydrostatics, hull forms. Then we transfer that to the shipyard and they do the final engineering.")

18.04.01 LAT, *In fighting homeless camp, Irvine's Asians win, but at a cost*, Anh

Do <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-homeless-asians-20180401-story.html> (Chunzhu Yu, a dentist with offices in Irvine and Orange, said he paid about \$5,000 to sponsor seven buses, taking half a day off from seeing patients to air his views. "We had to go to defense mode to keep trouble away," Yu said. WeIrvine, a Chinese internet services company with about 40,000 members, used its social media platform to spread the word about the plan to locate one of the emergency shelters in Irvine. ... Parrisa Yazdani, an Irvine mother of

two of Japanese and Iranian descent, launched a Facebook page called "Irvine Tent City Protest" that ballooned to more than 5,000 members in a few days. ... Irvine is an affluent, fast-growing and ethnically diverse city, so it's no surprise that the protesters would be diverse as well. Asians make up 45.7% of Irvine's 258,000 residents, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, while whites and Latinos make up 38.2% and 7%, respectively. Among its residents, 65% are college graduates. Irvine boasts a median home value of \$740,000. The residents rejected the idea that they are being elitist, arguing that they were simply trying to protect their city — and their families. "All of us came here and stayed here for one reason — family. No tent city — that's our message. Irvine never said, 'no homeless people,'" Yazdani said. "I'm not closed-minded," added Alex Lu, a pharmaceutical scientist from Irvine. "I want to listen to all sides, and when I went to the protest I tried talking to the homeless advocates. We really welcome hearing about what they need." "Yes, we totally welcome discussion," added accountant Spring Chen, who participated in the protest along with her 69-year-old mother, who brought two friends, ages 76 and 82. "This is tax season — my busiest season of the year — but I haven't worked for days because I could not ignore this." Joe Yan, a WeChat community leader, paid for two buses and said that part of the reason Irvine succeeded is because its master-planned communities allow easy connection between "one village to another." ... "They need to put them somewhere, maybe somewhere else in California," resident Angela Liu, who owns a legal services company, told the Board of Supervisors. "I really don't know where they can go. But Irvine is beautiful, and we don't want it to get destroyed." ... "We have compassion, don't doubt it," Alex Lu said. "None of us are rich. We all have mortgages. We all work hard to have what we have, and we want to assist finding a long-term solution for the homeless.")

18.04.01 LAT, *As China puts the brakes on overseas investment, Los Angeles' development boom takes a hit*, Roger Vincent <http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-chinese-property-sale-20180401-story.html> (Chinese companies have been among the biggest commercial real estate investors in the Los Angeles area in the last five years, spending more than \$5 billion to buy property in the region during that time, according to brokerage Cushman and Wakefield. That includes the sites of billion-dollar condominium, hotel and retail complexes being built downtown and large airport-area hotels that have been upgraded by their Chinese owners. But they are withdrawing from some high-profile ventures as leaders in Beijing constrict the flow of money out of the country. In August, China's State Council laid down new regulations on outbound investments to reduce the risk of runaway debt and to blunt capital flight. Also dramatically on the wane is Chinese investment through the federal EB-5 program, which allows foreigners to apply to become legal U.S. residents in exchange for investing \$500,000 or more in a business that creates or preserves at least 10 jobs. Millions of dollars raised by individual Chinese investors angling for green cards in past years have paid for such major projects as the trendy Dream Hotel complex in Hollywood and the Courtyard Los Angeles L.A. Live in downtown Los Angeles. "There has been a huge fall-off in EB-5 funding," said Los Angeles attorney Jim Butler, who helps arrange investments from overseas through the program.)

18.03.30 Politico, *My 72-Hour Safari in Clinton Country*, Adam Wren <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/03/30/red-blue-america-clinton-trump-country-217760> (I asked Early, the SoulCyclist, what she made of the parts of the country that, as her candidate suggested, were "looking backwards." Had she ever visited? No, Early told me. "But I've flown over it," she said. Hearing herself, she paused, and offered a disclaimer. "I am in a bubble," she told me. "But now, I don't want to get out of it.")

18.03.29 Munchies, *The Surprising Reason that There Are So Many Thai Restaurants in America*, Myles Karp https://munchies.vice.com/en_us/article/paxadz/the-surprising-reason-that-there-are-so-many-thai-restaurants-in-america (Using a tactic now known as gastrodiploamacy or culinary diplomacy, the government of Thailand has intentionally bolstered the presence of Thai cuisine outside of Thailand to increase its export and

tourism revenues, as well as its prominence on the cultural and diplomatic stages. In 2001, the Thai government established the Global Thai Restaurant Company, Ltd., in an effort to establish at least 3,000 Thai restaurants worldwide. At the time, Thai deputy commerce minister Goanpot Asvinvichit told the Wall Street Journal that the government hoped the chain would be “like the McDonald’s of Thai food.” Apparently, the government had been training chefs at its culinary training facilities to send abroad for the previous decade, but this project formalized and enhanced these efforts significantly. The McDonald’s of Thai food never quite materialized as a government-operated megachain, but the broader goal of a government-supported increase in the number of Thai restaurants abroad has. The Thai government has continued earmarking funds for the global proliferation of galangal root and fish sauce, and it’s paid off. The strategies for achieving this increase were manifold, run in parallel by various departments of the government. The Ministry of Commerce’s Department of Export Promotion, most likely run by bureaucrats rather than restaurateurs, drew up prototypes for three different “master restaurants,” which investors could choose as a sort of prefabricated restaurant plan, from aesthetic to menu offerings. Elephant Jump would be the fast casual option, at \$5 to \$15 per person; Cool Basil would be the mid-priced option at \$15 to \$25 a head; and the Golden Leaf prototype would cost diners \$25 to \$30, with décor featuring “authentic Thai fabrics and objets d’art.” (Does your favorite Thai spot have objets d’art? The restaurant may have been built from a government prototype.) The Department of Export Promotion also matched and set up meetings between Thai and foreign business people, conducted market research on local tastes around the world, and sent representatives from Thai cooking institutes abroad to train chefs at foreign restaurants. Meanwhile, the Export-Import Bank of Thailand offered loans to Thai nationals hoping to open restaurants abroad, and the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Bank of Thailand set up an infrastructure for loans of up to \$3 million for enterprise in the food industry, including foreign Thai restaurants. The Public Health Ministry published a book in 2002 called *A Manual for Thai Chefs Going Abroad*, which provided information about recruitment, training, and even the tastes of foreigners.)

18.03.26 NYT, *Can Jim Mattis Hold the Line in Trump’s ‘War Cabinet’?*, Robert F.

Worth <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/26/magazine/can-jim-mattis-hold-the-line-in-trumps-war-cabinet.html>(

Trump, his aides say, is feeling newly liberated to ignore cautious advice, and his nominee for secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, is said to be fully in tune with his rowdier impulses. And on March 22, Trump announced that he was replacing McMaster with John Bolton, the hawkish lawyer who published an op-ed in The Wall Street Journal in February on “the legal case for striking North Korea first.” If events spin out of control, Mattis could be forced to choose between his loyalty to the chain of command and the moral imperative to avert a catastrophic war. “This gets to a fundamental question,” I was told by a retired senior officer who knows him well. “Can Mattis win the president over in the most important debate we’ve had in decades, maybe centuries? I believe there is a moral hazard with this president, he will take everybody to the cliff. ... If Mattis is able to prevail, that is what God put him on earth to do. It’s that serious.” ... The root of the problem is not a lack of sophistication or experience in Trump’s national security team. It is more basic than that: No one, from Mattis on down, could say what terms the United States would accept in any of these negotiations. And that is because not a single person in the government can confidently say what Trump will say or do tomorrow. This unpredictability came up again and again in my conversations with foreign diplomats. Several of them said it has profoundly rattled governments that have long looked to the United States — whatever their differences with it — to abide by its commitments and thereby undergird a wider sense of global order.)

18.03.26 Nautilus, *The Key to Good Luck Is an Open Mind*, Teresa lafolla

<http://nautil.us/blog/-the-key-to-good-luck-is-an-open-mind> (Wiseman didn’t stop there. He turned these findings into a “luck school” where people could learn luck-inducing techniques based on four main principles of luck: maximizing chance opportunities, listening to your intuition, expecting good fortune, and turning bad luck to good. The strategies included using meditation to enhance intuition, relaxation, visualizing good fortune, and talking to at least one new person every week. A month later, he followed up with participants.

Eighty percent said they were happier, luckier people. “I thought if Wiseman can train people to be lucky, you can certainly teach those skills to our kids, and they have other really good side effects too,” says Carter, like better social skills and a stronger sense of gratitude. She came up with a few basic strategies for parents to teach their kids, including being open to new experiences, learning to relax, maintaining social connections, and (yes) talking to strangers. All of these techniques had one theme in common—being more open to your environment both physically and emotionally. It makes sense. The more observant you are of your surroundings, the more likely you are to capture a valuable resource or avoid tragedy. Lucky people don’t magically attract new opportunities and good fortune. They stroll along with their eyes wide open, fully present in the moment (a problem for people glued to phone screens). This also means that anything that affects our physical or emotional ability to take in our environment also affects our so-called “luckiness”—anxiety, for one. Anxiety physically and emotionally closes us off to chance opportunities. “If you’re anxious that you won’t find a parking place, then literally your vision narrows,” says Carter. “You lose your peripheral vision the more anxious you are because your flight-or-fight mechanism creates binocular vision.” Anxious people bias their attention to potential threats, and are predictably less likely to converse with strangers. “We teach our kids not to talk to strangers and we teach them to fear other people, and that shuts them down to the opportunities that people might bring, but also creates anxiety,” says Carter.)

18.03.26 NYT, *After Stormy Daniels, Republicans Face a Referendum on Trump's Conduct*, Jonathan Martin <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/26/us/politics/stormy-daniels-trump.html> (This widening chasm has created a dilemma for Republicans, especially in liberal and swing states. If they stay faithful to Mr. Trump they risk incurring the wrath of many in the political center during the general election, likely dooming their campaigns. But if they disavow the president, they risk depressing turnout from their core Republican voters and watching their pool of volunteers evaporate overnight. “It’s a political Catch-22,” J. Tucker Martin, a Virginia Republican strategist, said. “Candidates can’t win without their base. But what it takes to satisfy a pro-Trump base in 2018 will make Republican candidates in many states unacceptable to large swaths of the electorate.” ... But as Mr. Costello, the representative not running for re-election in Pennsylvania, noted, Mr. Trump’s persona did not just fuel liberal activism — it also made it nearly impossible to talk about Republican policy goals. “He blocks everything out,” Mr. Costello said of the president. “What fuels the energy isn’t the issues. It’s the personality.”)

18.03.23 The Atlantic, *This Is So Much Bigger Than Facebook: Data misuse is a feature, not a bug—and it’s plaguing our entire culture.*, Ethan Zuckerman <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/03/data-misuse-bigger-than-facebook/556310/> (I’ve referred to this bargain, in which people get content and services for free in exchange for having persuasive messages psychographically targeted to them, as the “original sin” of the internet. It’s a dangerous and socially corrosive business model that puts internet users under constant surveillance and continually pulls our attention from the tasks we want to do online toward the people paying to hijack our attention. It’s a terrible model that survives only because we haven’t found another way to reliably support most internet content and services—including getting individuals to pay for the things they claim to value. ... When platforms address them, they run the risk of breaking their business models. It’s hard for YouTube to fix a recommendation engine that leads us toward conspiracy-theory videos without breaking a system that encourages us to surf from one popular video to the next, racking up ad views in the process. It’s hard—though not impossible—to fix harassment and bullying on Twitter when many of Twitter’s most engaged users are opinionated and sharp-tongued and their arguments are some of the most compelling content on the service. And it’s impossible for Facebook to protect us from manipulative advertising targeted to our psychographic profile when their business model is built on selling this particular form of persuasion ... Users of the internet have been forced into a bargain they had no hand in negotiating: You get the services you want, and platforms get the data they need. We need the right to opt out of this bargain, paying for services like Facebook or YouTube in exchange for verifiable assurances that our usage isn’t being tracked and that

our behavioral data is not being sold. We need an ecosystem that encourages competitors to existing social-media platforms, which means ensuring a right to export data from existing social networks and new software that lets us experiment with new services while maintaining contacts on existing ones. We need to treat personally identifiable information less like a resource to be exploited and more like toxic waste, which must be carefully managed, as Maciej Ceglowski has proposed. This may require a digital EPA, as Franklin Foer, Paul Ford, and others have argued—a prospect that would be more appealing if the actual EPA wasn't currently being gutted. Critically, we need the scholars, philanthropists, and policy makers who've woken up to the problems of bad actors on the internet to pay attention to the known bugs as well. Addressing the effects of echo chambers, polarization, and psychographic persuasion may not be as sexy as unmasking Russian botnets, but the botnets are a merely a symptom of a much larger problem.)

18.03.20 The Atlantic, *Marriage Has Become a Trophy*, Andrew

Cherlin <https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/03/incredible-everlasting-institution-marriage/555320/> (

In this sense, these gay couples were falling right in line with the broader American pattern right now: For many people, regardless of sexual orientation, a wedding is no longer the first step into adulthood that it once was, but, often, the last. It is a celebration of all that two people have already done, unlike a traditional wedding, which was a celebration of what a couple would do in the future. Consistent with this shift in meaning, different-sex couples, like the many of the same-sex couples who have married recently, are starting their marriages later in their lives. According to the Census Bureau, the median age at first marriage—the age at which half of all marriages occur—was 27.4 for women and 29.5 for men in 2017. That's higher than at any time since the Census began keeping records in 1890. It is six years higher than when I got married in 1972 (at the typical age of 24). In my era, a young couple usually got married first, then moved in together, then started their adult roles as workers or homemakers, and then had children. (I scandalized my parents by living with my future wife before I married her.) Now marriage tends to come after most of these markers are attained. ... Nevertheless, the last-step view of marriage is common across all educational groups in United States. And it is being carried to the nth degree in Scandinavia. In Norway and Sweden, a majority of the population marries, but weddings often take place long after a couple starts to have children, or even after all of their children are born. The median age at first marriage in Norway is an astounding 39 for men and 38 for women, according to a recent estimate—six to eight years higher than the median age at first childbirth. In Sweden, one study found that 17 percent of all marriages had occurred after the couple had had two children. Why do they even bother to marry at such a late stage of their unions? Norwegians told researchers that they view marriage as a way to demonstrate love and commitment and to celebrate with relatives and friends the family they have constructed. This is capstone marriage: The wedding is the last brick put in place to finally complete the building of the family.)

18.03.06 Vox, *Why Buddhism is true: Robert Wright on the wisdom of mindfulness meditation.*, Robert

Wright <https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2017/8/23/16179044/buddhism-meditation-mindfulness-robert-wright-interview> (In fact, the two, as you've said, I've written about evolutionary psychology, I wrote a book

called *The Moral Animal* a long time ago, and one thing I emphasize in that book is that we're clearly not designed to be happy, and we're not designed to see the world clearly. Natural selection just wants to get genes into the next generation. I say "wants to" and personifying natural selection, obviously it's not really a conscious process, but if you look at its priorities, it's designing organisms that get genes into the next generation. If illusions will help them do that, then illusions there will be. If suffering will help them do that, then suffering there will be. That's why things like anxiety, fear, unpleasant feelings are natural to begin with and even exaggerated anxieties and fears. In other words, fearing things more often than it's going to turn out to be warranted. All that is natural, but then you put us in a modern environment and things get even worse. You're right, we're kind of doubly cursed.)

18.03.06 The Atlantic, *Why So Many of Us Die of Heart Disease*, Olga

Kazan <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2018/03/heart-disease/554951/> (When they first discovered blood pressure, physicians thought that high blood pressure was necessary for blood to reach the most remote or the most difficult-to-reach parts of the body. It was actually the insurance companies who, in millions of their beneficiaries, are collecting data showing that high blood pressure was associated with more people dying. Yet, none of this information was ever followed by the scientific, the cardiology experts of their time. It took almost decades of almost missionary zeal, not only from the insurance companies, but also from the researchers, to convince the established cardiology community that in fact treating high blood pressure was the right thing to do. Famous cardiologists like William Osler were almost militantly opposed to lowering blood pressure. At one point, around the second World War, one in two Americans died of high blood pressure, but at that time the leading voices in cardiology actually felt that lowering blood pressure would do more harm than good. It wasn't until the '60s, '70s, and '80s when this mind-set was fully changed. The question is, what are the false ideas that we believe today? An expert is someone who has mastery of current knowledge, not of future knowledge. I think we have to find a balance between having people who have expertise, but also understanding that not every time is an established idea the right thing.)

18.03.05 Vox, *What Donald Trump understands about conservatism*, Ezra Klein

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/3/5/17077742/donald-trump-conservative-cpac> (In his book *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Donald Trump*, political theorist Corey Robin offers a very particular definition of conservatism. It is, he says, "the felt experience of having power, seeing it threatened, and trying to win it back." In this telling, the core of conservatism is an attachment to a certain social order and an assault against those who would seek to upend it. ... People who aren't conservative often fail to realize this, but conservatism really does speak to and for people who have lost something. It may be a landed estate or the privileges of white skin, the unquestioned authority of a husband or the untrammelled rights of a factory owner. The loss may be as material as money or as ethereal as a sense of standing. It may be a loss of something that was never legitimately owned in the first place; it may, when compared with what the conservative retains, be small. Even so, it is a loss, and nothing is ever so cherished as that which we no longer possess. ... Trump always and everywhere speaks for the experience of having power, of seeing it threatened, and of being determined to win it back. His project is not to make America great; it is to make America great again, to return to a past moment when he and the people at his rallies felt like they were winning. This is the core of his conservatism. And there is a reason it is flourishing now. ... Demographic change drives political and cultural change. In the past decade, America has seen its first African-American president, the constitutional recognition of a right to same-sex marriage, and a new discourse on gender identity and workplace harassment. Movies like *Black Panther* and *Get Out* are celebrated, the new *Star Wars* made a point to have a diverse cast and a female lead, and cultural products are criticized for being too white and too male. All of this generates a backlash among those who liked the distribution of power the way it was and fear where it's going. A 2011 survey found that "whites believe that they have replaced blacks as the primary victims of racial discrimination in contemporary America." And yet it's important not to overstate how much has changed. The racial wealth gap has grown in recent decades, the gender wage gap remains deep, and the commanding heights of both the business and political worlds are overwhelmingly white and overwhelmingly male. The sense of power being lost is real, but so too is the sense of privilege perpetuating itself at the top. ... We find ourselves in an unprecedented moment of pervasive tribal anxiety. For two hundred years, whites in America represented an undisputed politically, economically, and culturally dominant majority. When a political tribe is so overwhelmingly dominant, it can persecute with impunity, but it can also be more generous. It can afford to be more universalist, more enlightened, more inclusive, like the WASP elites of the 1960s who opened up the Ivy League colleges to more Jews, blacks, and other minorities — in part because it seemed like the right thing to do. Today, no group in America feels comfortably dominant. Every group feels attacked, pitted against other groups not just for jobs and spoils but for the right to define

the nation's identity. In these conditions, democracy devolves into zero-sum group competition — pure political tribalism. We're in an era when the core conflict between conservatism and liberalism is between a whiter, older, and more male coalition trying to hold on to its power against a younger, more diverse, and more female coalition that is nearing a durable political majority for the first time. This isn't a clash over any one policy, but over political, cultural, and economic power going forward. Trump viscerally understands contemporary politics in those terms and connects to his coalition on that level. And this is why his form of conservatism triumphed over the visions offered by his establishment Republican challengers. What the conservative base feels is being lost has nothing to do with tax rates or regulations. It's a cultural war, and Trump, unlike many other Republican politicians, is willing to fight it.)

18.03.03 NYT, *What if Republicans Win the Midterms?*, Charlie Savage

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/03/sunday-review/what-if-republicans-win-the-midterms.html> (We are lucky that so far 2018 does not look like a new 1968. But the relative calm may be like an unexploded bomb, its volatility not so much defused as contained by the thought that Trump Republicans will be punished in the Nov. 6 midterm elections. These expectations are widespread. After the big Democratic special election victories in places handily carried by Mr. Trump in 2016, from Virginia and Alabama to Wisconsin, Republican lawmakers in purple districts are retiring to avoid ending their careers in humiliating defeats. ... But a significant Democratic wave may not materialize. Good economic news, for example, tends to blunt anti-incumbent sentiments. The country is still mostly using House districts that were redrawn after the 2010 census, just as Republicans' big 2010 midterm wave victory gave them an unusual degree of control over state legislatures. Beyond deliberate partisan gerrymandering, the impact of a Democratic turnout surge would be partly diluted by their voters' disproportionate concentration in cities, piling up extra votes in districts Republicans would have lost anyway.)

18.03.01 Longreads, *How to Write a Memoir While Grieving*, Nicole Chung

<https://longreads.com/2018/03/01/how-to-write-a-memoir-while-grieving/> (Most of what Dad knew of my book was what Mom read to him. When they told me they were through the first half and liked it so far, I was relieved beyond measure. That was the half I feared might upset them — because I wrote about facing racism I never told them about; because I mentioned information about my birth family, which I learned they had hidden from me; because I devoted an entire chapter to their own history and how they came to be my parents, together. I told the truth with love, but I told it as a story. I pictured my mother telling me I had no right to do this, no right to turn them into characters. ... In one of the last phone conversations we had, around the holidays, my dad called my rough, imperfect manuscript “a great Christmas present.” I think about that every day, too. Not because my book was the most important thing between us, not because it is the full or final word on our relationship, but because it is such a deep and personal expression of who I am — including some parts that I have sometimes, to my own shame, actively hidden from my adoptive family. Showing my book to my parents meant showing them who I am, with no spin, no soothing, no apologies, no disclaimers. I was afraid they'd reject it, reject me. Instead, their response was, We see you.)

18.03.01 Fast Company, *How Bitcoin Ends: Is the cryptocurrency just going to end up reenforcing the financial system it was supposed to disrupt?*, Douglas Rushkoff

<https://www.fastcompany.com/40537404/how-bitcoin-ends> (During the Crusades, however, many European communities adopted the more flexible market money systems they had seen used in Moorish territories. Market money was virtually worthless: like a poker chip or IOU that was redeemed for a loaf of bread or dozen eggs at the end of the day. Unlike gold, which was no good for transactions because it was too scarce, market moneys existed only to enable trade, and often expired at the end of the day. They couldn't be stashed. But this sort of money was fabulous for trade, which was the whole point of money, anyway. Everybody who had a way of creating value—whether making shoes or growing grain—now had a way of exchanging that value with

others. The use of market moneys led to a century or two of wealth creation unlike any we've ever seen since. The former peasants of feudalism became the merchant middle class, working just three or four days a week, and exhibiting a level of skeletal growth (a sign of health) larger than at any time in the history of humanity, until the 1980s. ... The wealth disparity in bitcoin is worse than that of central currency, with 4% of users owning 96% of bitcoin. So much for breaking the banking monopoly; this is just hackers seizing the banking industry for themselves. The money itself is worthless. Less than worthless, in fact. We are spending massive amounts of machine cycles and electricity, burning fossil fuels for no reason other than to prove our commitment to the coin. It's not like we don't already have enough problems generating energy to operate our highly industrialized civilization. Now we're spending billions of dollars and millions of gallons of fossil fuel in a symbolic act of securitization. What if the "proof of work" for coin were based on something good for the world, rather than aiming so directly for ecological self-destruction?

18.02.22 Vox, *The immigration debate is about whether Latinos are "real Americans"*, Will Wilkinson
<https://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2018/2/22/17040286/immigration-daca-white-nationalism-ethno-trump-racist-latino-citizenship> (To the ethno-nationalists, this capitulation to the inevitability of demographic takeover is tantamount to treason, making it an urgent matter of national self-defense to stymie the majority's will. In making that judgment, the populists redefine "the people" to exclude practically everyone on the other side of the issue. Donald Trump, simply by having taken DREAMers hostage while insinuating repeatedly that they (and the legal immigrant communities they represent, too) represent a dangerous, un-American threat to the interests of real Americans, has done grave damage to social harmony and equal liberty. He has commanded the immense cultural authority of the bully pulpit to tell Americans of all stripes how they stack up in the eyes of the American state. White Americans anxious about retaining their cultural and political dominance have been told that, yes, they are the American-est and that they matter most. Hispanic Americans get the mirror-image message: their existence here is a problem, their origins throw a cloud of suspicion over their status as members of "the people," and their moral/cultural claim to equality under the law is weak.)

18.02.20 (accessed) Winter 2018 Columbia Journalism Review, *Billionaires gone wild: The American media landscape, like the rest of the country, is being reshaped by the whims of the ultra-rich*, Alex Pareene
https://www.cjr.org/special_report/rich-journalism-media.php (New economic rules determine new forms. We're already seeing market forces that have nothing to do with audience preference—let alone "public interest"—drive changes in how news is gathered and reported. After building what resembled newsrooms of yore, Mashable, Mic, and Vocativ eliminated dozens of editorial jobs in the now familiar "pivot to video," in spite of the fact that readers, being readers, prefer text: Most literate adults can read a paragraph much faster than it takes for a preroll advertisement to load and then hear that paragraph get read aloud over stock photography. But major brands have expressed their spending preferences for video inventory and thus media companies seek to satisfy their demand. No one really believes it'll work, where "work" means preserve thousands of jobs gathering news as opposed to crafting branded content videos tailored to the latest Facebook algorithm changes. This is the dark timeline: Journalism-agnostic media investors learn news can't "scale" and then jump ship just as soon as they've finished killing off both the corporate and independent legacy press businesses, leaving the fate of the industry to ungodly rich people with very idiosyncratic personal agendas. What's happening to the press is reflective of the broader transformation of our society. Rule by supposedly benevolent technocratic elites is giving way—in large part due to the fecklessness of those technocrats—to straight plutocracy. And really, that only makes sense in an era in which everyone feels like their lives are, in important and fundamental ways, in thrall to the whims of a few mega-rich people. Our cities promise to remake themselves to please Bezos. A few GOP donors threaten to close their checkbooks, and the entire federal tax code is sloppily rewritten. Chris Hughes sneezes, and The New Republic catches a cold.)

18.02.19 Farnam Street, *Your First Thought Is Rarely Your Best Thought: Lessons on Thinking*, Shane Parrish <https://www.fs.blog/2018/02/first-thought-not-best-thought/> (Thinking time is non-linear. The time you spend thinking – walking around a problem in a three-dimensional way and exploring all of the various perspectives and mental models – pays you back tenfold in the end. The problem for those who are shortsighted is that this time will appear as a negative for a while because it looks like nothing is getting done. This situation is a great example of what I call first-order negative, second-order positive. A lot of things in life are first-order positive and second-order negative. Heroin is an obvious one, sugar less so. We have trouble delaying gratification, so we do a lot of things that are first-order positive, second-order negative. We buy bigger houses than we need, only to find that rising interest rates make the mortgage payment untenable. We buy the sexy car only to discover later that it depreciates faster than the commuter car. A real advantage is conferred on people who can do things that are first-order negative, second-order positive. Especially if these first-order negatives are very visible costs with no immediate benefit in the short term and a non-linear benefit at some future time. Intuitively we know the value of delayed gratification. We tell our kids that they need to get an education, which is nothing more than preparation for life. And yet once we get out of school and start working full time, we are conditioned to think in terms of today and tomorrow, rather than months or years ahead. Suddenly, everything we do is supposed to provide an instant and visible benefit to the organization. At an individual level, this means that for your organization to value you more, you must run faster and faster. At a corporate level, this means you're ripe for disruption from a competitor willing to play the long game. Making time to think is a great example of something that's first-order negative with some future payoff that's not easily visible. However, when you think through problems, you'll not only come to better decisions on the whole but you'll also avoid a lot of problems.)

18.02.19 Vox, *The brutal mirror: What the psychedelic drug ayahuasca showed me about my life.*, Sean Illing <https://www.vox.com/first-person/2018/2/19/16739386/ayahuasca-retreat-psychedelic-hallucination-meditation> (Buddhists, cognitive scientists, and philosophers have all made persuasive arguments that there is nothing like a “fixed self,” no thinker behind our thoughts, no doer behind our deeds. There is only consciousness and immediate experience; everything else is the result of the mind projecting into the past or the future. But this is a difficult truth to grasp in everyday life. Because you're conscious, because it's like something to be you, it's very easy to believe that a wall exists between your mind and the world. If you're experiencing something, then there must be a “you” doing the experiencing. But the “you” in this case is just an abstraction; it's in your mind, not out there in the world. ... I see myself as a child groveling for attention from the “popular kids.” I see my 12-year-old self throwing a tantrum in the mall because my dad wouldn't buy me the Nautica shirt that all those popular kids were wearing. I see myself in high school pretending to be something I was not, and I see all the doubts piling up inside me. I see all the times I self-censored purely out of fear of judgment. I see myself building my identity based on what I thought would impress other people. On it went — one trivial act after another building up an edifice of falsehood. I should note how unpleasant it is to see yourself from outside yourself. Most of us aren't honest with ourselves about who we are and why we do what we do. To see it so clearly for the first time is painful. The movie rages on into college and adult life, with my self-consciousness expanding. I see myself not looking into the eyes of the person I'm talking to because I'm playing out all the ways they might be judging me. I see myself pretending like my hair wasn't thinning years ago and all the times I tried to hide it. And every time, the reason for posing was the same: I cared too much about what other people thought. The experience made me aware of how often we all do this. We do it at home, at work, at the grocery store, at the gym. Most interactions are either transactional or performative. No one wants to make eye contact, and most of the time people freak out if you really try. We're too self-conscious to listen. We're thinking about what we'll say next or how we're being perceived. All the posturing destroys any chance for a genuine connection. The movie ends, and I'm exhausted. The meaning of the previous two nights is clearer now. I needed to feel small and connected before I could appreciate the absurdity of self-involvement. I had to relive those fleeting moments of union to see what made them so

transcendent. And I had to go straight through my shame and regret to get beyond it. ... I'm not in my head, and so things aren't happening to me; they're just happening. It's probably too much to say that my ego was gone — I don't think it works like that. But seeing myself from a different perspective offered a chance to reassert control over it. ... And what of the self and the ego? I believed these things to be illusions before I took ayahuasca, and now I'm certain that they are. But what does that actually mean in day-to-day life? Not as much as it should. The ego might be a fiction or a construct or whatever you want to call it, but the sensation of it is near impossible to shake. Even after taking what is arguably the most powerful ego-dissolving medicine on the planet, I still live in a world that reinforces the story of me all the time. There's no easy way around all that.)

18.02.18 NYT, *Bitcoin Thieves Threaten Real Violence for Virtual Currencies*, Nathaniel

Popper <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/18/technology/virtual-currency-extortion.html> (Mr. Lopp will go even further later this year when he, his girlfriend and his dog move to a new home. He plans to “go dark” — not providing the address to anyone and using a post office box for deliveries. But he said even that will not fully banish his concerns. “If you are rich and you own real estate, or stocks or a sports team, somebody can't mug you and take your sports team away,” he said. “Having liquid crypto assets makes you much more attractive for that type of criminal attack.”)

18.02.17 The Atlantic, *Airbnb and the Unintended Consequences of 'Disruption'*, Derek

Thompson <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2018/02/airbnb-hotels-disruption/553556/> (But Airbnb's success also encouraged dubious behavior on the part of “commercial” power users—property owners who listed downtown units (especially second residences) all year long, as if they were hotel rooms. Why would that be a problem? Open apartments occupied for much of the year by Airbnb-using travelers reduce the number of available homes to people who want to move into that building. High demand, plus lower supply, leads to higher prices. Several studies—including research from Harvard, MIT, UCLA, USC, and the University of Massachusetts Boston—have come to the same conclusion: Airbnb altogether drives up the price of rent in many neighborhoods. (It's only fair to point out that some of the most strident conclusions came from studies sponsored by the hotel industry.) When I asked Airbnb about these claims, a spokesperson pushed back against them in several ways, arguing that the company doesn't have a wider effect on rental prices. First, he said the vast majority of Airbnb's users are merely renting out primary residences rather than filling otherwise vacant units with tourists. Second, he said Airbnb has worked with several cities to write rules that crack down on commercial users who try to turn their secondary residences into ersatz hotel rooms. Indeed, Airbnb doesn't account for enough downtown housing to be the major driver of rising rents in major metro areas. But the basic economics is relatively straightforward. Airbnb isn't just competing with hotels for travelers. It is often competing with locals for space. The company has shifted the burden of rising prices in crowded downtown areas from travelers to residents—pushing down prices for hotel rooms, while raising rents for city dwellers. Was that Airbnb's intent? Almost certainly not. But that is the outcome, anyway, and it is a meaningful—even, yes, disruptive—one. This outcome fits neither the Disrupt Story nor the Dud Story. Airbnb lowered prices for tourists, supplemented the income of renters, and simply made travel to major cities more fun. But upon inspection, it shares some things in common with more-controversial companies—albeit with less grave implications. Facebook and Twitter design for attention, but incidentally encourage mendacious outrage and trolling. eBay and Amazon design for open marketplaces, but incidentally encourage the frenzied resale of bulk-ordered toys around Christmas. Airbnb was supposed to challenge hotels by letting tourists pay renters. But its platform is unwittingly producing a subsidy of tourists, paid for by nonparticipating urban dwellers, who bear the cost of higher rental prices. Like just about every story these days about revolutionary tech platforms, Airbnb is a story both of democratized access to commerce and the unintended consequences of those democratizing efforts, even when they succeed on their own terms.)

18.02.17 Tech Crunch, *Digital nomads are hiring and firing their governments*, Danny Crichton <https://techcrunch.com/2018/02/17/digital-nomads-are-hiring-and-firing-their-governments/> (What, then, is local politics if residents are never actually there to commit their time, talents, and energy to improve a neighborhood? Who sits on an architectural review board, or on a school board or city council? What does representation mean? The pragmatic answer is that not everyone is migrating all the time (the pithy answer is “blockchain”). Migration is generally a youthful activity, and as people marry and have kids they are significantly less likely to move between countries on a regular basis. The idea that a majority of a city’s population is going to be cosmopolitan business travelers is a fantasy that simply doesn’t match reality. A far more challenging question though is what happens when times go bad. A recession hits, or a disaster takes place, and suddenly some of the most important professionals in an urban ecosystem flee to their next ideal city, leaving the rest of the population to try to fix the problem. That is the challenge of the narcissism of today’s digital nomad: it’s about freedom of movement, but not responsibility to engage. The loyalty of patriotism is replaced by a kind of brand loyalty, and there are dozens of other brands on the government shelf. There is a supposed mutualism between the digital nomad and the local population: the former brings prosperity and an innovative outlook, the latter provides for the quality amenities that attract the nomads. But ultimately, only one of these groups has the ability to leave. Governments are competing better to get talent into their countries, but now they need to work with nomads and global talent, and vice versa. We need to move toward a more expansive view that people can have multiple nations, and nations can share a single person. We all need to engage deeper with the places we live globally, and realize that it is not someone else’s job to make our neighborhood right.)

18.02.15 The Walrus, *Why It's so Hard to Actually Work in Shared Offices*, Nicholas Hune-Brown <https://thewalrus.ca/why-its-so-hard-to-actually-work-in-shared-offices/> (And here, beneath the aspirational jargon, is a nugget of truth: WeWork is in the personal-fulfillment business. Because it’s offering a service that can be provided by anyone who can wrangle together a few desks and a French press, the product it’s actually selling is the contact high of being part of something that feels revolutionary. WeWork is promoting a mythology for those in the brave new gig economy: You, precarious worker who will never have a pension, are not a simple cog in a machine. You are an artist, the CEO of your own company, and the face of a dynamic personal brand. Your work is not merely labour, for which you deserve decent pay and security, but an extension of your personality. You’re doing what you love and paying \$500 per month for the desk from which to do it. The appeal of that pitch can wear off quickly. When I spoke to Iconomopoulos in November, she told me that after three months at WeWork, she’d decided to move on. She had been trying to network—posting on the app, introducing herself in the common area, and even holding an event— but as a thirty-seven-year-old surrounded by enthusiastic people a decade younger, she felt old and slightly out of place. She looked at other co-working options and toured Workhaus and Verkspace (which takes its inspiration “from the Scandinavian way of life”). The buildings, she said, all felt strangely familiar: they had the same open kitchens, the same glass dividers, the same safely “offbeat” art on the walls. Near the end of the month, she opted for a private office in Spaces, which is owned by IWG. The company seemed to be looking for a slightly older demographic and had belatedly adopted some Silicon Valley razzle-dazzle of its own, promising tenants entry into a community of “thinkers, achievers and imagineers.” Perhaps personal fulfillment is a lot to ask of a workplace, but Iconomopoulos was going to give it another try.)

18.02.15 PAAC, *Lent Day 2 | John 1:29-51*, Surani Joshua <http://progressiveasianamericanchristians.org/lent-day-2/> (What then can we take from the passage of John 1:29-51, keeping in mind that it is the writing of one person who scholars would agree most likely never met Jesus as a living human being, wrote to serve a particular purpose in shaping the direction of Christianity and to respond to critics, yet also was a person that followed Jesus? We can see into the heart of truth through the lens of the writer called John, seeing darkly but yet with a purpose and calling. We can see that over 100

years later, Jesus is still remembered as a man set apart in a unique way. He was a man that John the Baptist waited for his whole life and pointed to when he met Jesus, choosing humility over the adulation and power that he could so easily have kept for himself. John-the-writer associated Jesus with a dove, angels, and the Holy Spirit descending on him. Without need for contrast with other faiths or holy figures, it is enough to say that there was something deeply special about Jesus, showing his sacredness and divinity. ... Nathanael in all his arrogance asks, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" and is quickly humbled by Jesus's response. For many Asian-American Christians our personal identity, racial identity, and faith identity are all intertwined through the history of the fundamentalist or mono-ethnic churches in which we grew up. Many of us know good people through those traditions who live their faith daily yet also hold beliefs or take actions that disturb us. For example, my Pentecostal pastor/fisherman/diver uncle literally gives the shirts off his back to clothe people and bandages street dogs (my mother frequently sends replacements to Sri Lanka for this reason), and I deeply admire him. Yet he would never agree to the universalist acceptance or affirmation of members of the queer community that are central to my belief in a loving God. It takes courage and discernment to help us deconstruct our old faiths and reconstruct a faith that we feel is even closer to the unconditional love of God. It takes humility to look past judgments that would be so easy, to live in community amidst diversity and a wide range of beliefs while still proclaiming with passion and purpose like John.)

18.02.13 NYT, *The Autonomous Selfie Drone Is Here. Is Society Ready for It?*, Farhad Manjoo <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/02/13/technology/skydio-autonomous-drones.html> (It's 2035, the Second American Civil War has been won by the other side, and you find yourself in a heap of trouble with Attorney General Logan Paul. (The future is very troubling.) He has dispatched an all-seeing eye-in-the-sky to tail you, an agile flying machine equipped with 13 cameras and a top speed of 25 miles per hour. The drone knows your face, your gait and your clothing. It hovers persistently behind your back, moving when you move, stopping when you stop, resisting every effort to shake it. You run into the woods, but you still can't lose it. So now what? Clip this article and save it as a guide for surviving our airborne future. In a woodsy park in San Francisco last week, I had an encounter with just such a self-flying drone, and I found only one trick for escape. Hint: It involved the indignity of repeatedly running around a tree. As the hapless chump in its cross hairs, I will tell you this: Being tailed by a 13-eyed flying machine has a way of focusing the mind. The drone chasing me, the R1, was created by a start-up called Skydio; it sells for \$2,499 and will begin shipping to customers in two to three weeks, the company says. It is the closest thing to a fully autonomous drone you can buy today. Autonomous drones have long been hyped, but until recently they've been little more than that. The technology in Skydio's machine suggests a new turn. Drones that fly themselves — whether following people for outdoor self-photography, which is Skydio's intended use, or for longer-range applications like delivery, monitoring and surveillance — are coming faster than you think. They're likely to get much cheaper, smaller and more capable. They're going to be everywhere, probably sooner than we can all adjust to them.)

18.02.12 Slate, *Why Uber and Google Went to War Over Almost Nothing*, April Glaser <https://slate.com/technology/2018/02/what-the-google-uber-fight-was-really-about.html> (And they weren't wrong. "This technology will have a massive impact on human existence," says Karl Brauer, an industry analyst and the executive publisher at Autotrader and Kelly Blue Book. "It will mean pure mobility and freedom when people can go wherever or whenever they want. I don't think the stakes of the Uber-Waymo case were super high. I think the stakes of the race are super high." The trial may not have been about much, but it was a proxy skirmish in a war that, to Uber and Alphabet, is about everything. ... Right now, it's extremely unclear who is winning the fight. One of the pieces of evidence that came out in the trial was a 2015 internal presentation from Google's self-driving car project that showed how it wanted to "consume" all of Uber's profits, as well as a memo from Chris Urmson, a former Google self-driving car engineer, about how Uber was hiring people he suggested Google hire but didn't. That evidence and Kalanick's texts to Levandowski about how "going slower is NOT an option anymore" offer a portrait of two companies that weren't exactly confident

in their standing as leaders of a driverless tomorrow. And since 2015, Waymo has lost a plenty of talent from its self-driving team, including early engineer Chris Urmson, who started his own self-driving car company, Aurora, as well as Levandowski, who left for Uber only to be subsequently fired as the Waymo lawsuit gained heat. There's also Bryan Salesky, another Google self-driving car engineer, who is now the CEO at Argo, an autonomous vehicle company backed by \$1 billion from Ford, and Dave Ferguson, another Waymo engineering alum who is behind the wheel of yet another self-driving transportation startup called Nuro. It's not a stretch to imagine that Waymo—which got years of adoring press for the self-driving Google cars it had tooling around Northern California—feels it is losing or has even lost its advantage in the self-driving race. Meanwhile, with Uber still cleaning up the mess its former CEO made, the company might not be on top of its game with self-driving technology right now, either. To really understand why a huge company like Alphabet would want to take on Uber in court, it's important to consider how messy the birth of autonomous driving tech was. When the U.S. military's innovation arm, DARPA, held a self-driving car competition more than a decade ago, many of the people who are now set against each other at rival companies were on the same team. "There were lots of overlaps and informal sharing and all kinds of personalities early on," says Bryant Walker Smith, a law professor at Stanford who specializes in automated driving technology. The Uber-Waymo case can be seen, he says, as "tidying up loose ends dealing with the remnant messiness from the beginning," said Smith. Still, just because the case is settled doesn't mean the road that lies ahead for automated driving is any less rocky.)

18.02.12 NYT, *The End of the Two-Party System*, David

Brooks <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/12/opinion/trump-republicans-scarcity.html> (The scarcity mentality always ends up eating the host philosophy because it operates on a more fundamental level of the psyche. All of this would be survivable if the mentality was going away in a few years. But it is not going away. The underlying conditions of scarcity are only going to get worse. Moreover, the warrior mentality builds on itself. As the right pulverizes the left, the left feels the need to pulverize back, and on and on. This is a generational challenge. Trump will be succeeded by some other warrior. Eventually, conservatives will realize: If we want to preserve conservatism, we can't be in the same party as the clan warriors. Liberals will realize: If we want to preserve liberalism, we can't be in the same party as the clan warriors. Eventually, those who cherish the democratic way of life will realize they have to make a much more radical break than any they ever imagined. When this realization dawns the realignment begins. Even with all the structural barriers, we could end up with a European-style multiparty system. The scarcity mentality is eventually incompatible with the philosophies that have come down through the centuries. Decent liberals and conservatives will eventually decide they need to break from it structurally. They will realize it's time to start something new.)

18.02.11 BuzzFeed, *He Predicted The 2016 Fake News Crisis. Now He's Worried About An Information Apocalypse.*, Charlie Warzel

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/charliewarzel/the-terrifying-future-of-fake-news> (Imagine, he suggests, phishing messages that aren't just a confusing link you might click, but a personalized message with context. "Not just an email, but an email from a friend that you've been anxiously waiting for for a while," he said. "And because it would be so easy to create things that are fake you'd become overwhelmed. If every bit of spam you receive looked identical to emails from real people you knew, each one with its own motivation trying to convince you of something, you'd just end up saying, 'okay, I'm going to ignore my inbox.'" That can lead to something Ovadya calls "reality apathy": Beset by a torrent of constant misinformation, people simply start to give up. Ovadya is quick to remind us that this is common in areas where information is poor and thus assumed to be incorrect. The big difference, Ovadya notes, is the adoption of apathy to a developed society like ours. The outcome, he fears, is not good. "People stop paying attention to news and that fundamental level of informedness required for functional democracy becomes unstable." Ovadya (and other researchers) see laser phishing as an inevitability. "It's a threat for sure, but even worse — I don't think there's a solution right

now," he said. "There's internet scale infrastructure stuff that needs to be built to stop this if it starts." Beyond all this, there are other long-range nightmare scenarios that Ovadya describes as "far-fetched," but they're not so far-fetched that he's willing to rule them out. And they are frightening. "Human puppets," for example — a black market version of a social media marketplace with people instead of bots. "It's essentially a mature future cross border market for manipulatable humans," he said. Ovadya's premonitions are particularly terrifying given the ease with which our democracy has already been manipulated by the most rudimentary, blunt-force misinformation techniques. The scamming, deception, and obfuscation that's coming is nothing new; it's just more sophisticated, much harder to detect, and working in tandem with other technological forces that are not only currently unknown but likely unpredictable. For those paying close attention to developments in artificial intelligence and machine learning, none of this feels like much of a stretch. Software currently in development at the chip manufacturer Nvidia can already convincingly generate hyperrealistic photos of objects, people, and even some landscapes by scouring tens of thousands of images. Adobe also recently piloted two projects — Voco and Cloak — the first a "Photoshop for audio," the second a tool that can seamlessly remove objects (and people!) from video in a matter of clicks. In some cases, the technology is so good that it's startled even its creators. Ian Goodfellow, a Google Brain research scientist who helped code the first "generative adversarial network" (GAN), which is a neural network capable of learning without human supervision, cautioned that AI could set news consumption back roughly 100 years. At an MIT Technology Review conference in November last year, he told an audience that GANs have both "imagination and introspection" and "can tell how well the generator is doing without relying on human feedback." And that, while the creative possibilities for the machines is boundless, the innovation, when applied to the way we consume information, would likely "clos[e] some of the doors that our generation has been used to having open.")

18.02.08 (accessed) 13.07.28 Seeking Alpha, *Leveraged ETFs For The Long Term: Rockets To The Poorhouse?*, Coin Toss Investor

<https://seekingalpha.com/article/1578782-leveraged-etfs-for-the-long-term-rockets-to-the-poorhouse> (What are the invisible risks, here? Well, our approach doesn't allow daily declines greater than 22%. An emerging-market index or a sector-specific one might be capable of worse things, which could wipe out a leveraged fund. One-day catastrophes aren't the only worry, either; extremely heavy losses over a longer period can also produce more or less irrecoverable losses (consider the example of UYG in 2008-2009). This suggests that, if you were going to seriously consider buying and holding a leveraged fund, you'd want to pick a broad, developed-market one. Looking at end-points also, of course, obscures the fact that returns would be terrifyingly volatile. You'd have to be prepared to occasionally take absolutely stomach-churning losses. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the ability of ETFs to truly return 2x daily returns over long periods is uncertain. SSO has done a reasonable job most of the time, but the variation has sometimes been troubling. This makes long-term investments in leveraged funds a gamble on the ability of the managers to produce, and the willingness of the relevant markets to provide, the right leverage at the right price.)

18.02.08 Raw Story, *An insider explains how rural Christian white America has a dark and terrifying underbelly*, Forsetti's Justice

<https://www.rawstory.com/2018/02/insider-explains-rural-christian-white-america-dark-terrifying-underbelly/> (For us "coastal elites" who understand evolution, genetics and science, nothing we say to those in flyover country is going to be listened to because not only are we fighting against an anti-education belief system, we are arguing against god. You aren't winning a battle of beliefs with these people if you are on one side of the argument and god is on the other. No degree of understanding this is going to suddenly make them less racist, more open to reason and facts. Telling "urban elites" they need to understand rural Americans isn't going to lead to a damn thing because it misses the causes of the problem. Because rural Christian white Americans will not listen to educated arguments, supported by facts that go against their fundamentalist belief

systems from “outsiders,” any change must come from within. Internal change in these systems does happen, but it happens infrequently and always lags far behind reality. This is why they fear change so much. They aren’t used to it. Of course, it really doesn’t matter whether they like it or not, it, like evolution and climate change even though they don’t believe it, it is going to happen whether they believe in it or not. ... Gays being allowed to marry are a threat. Blacks protesting the killing of their unarmed friends and family are a threat. Hispanics doing the cheap labor on their farms are somehow viewed a threat. The black president is a threat. Muslims are a threat. The Chinese are a threat. Women wanting to be autonomous are a threat. The college educated are a threat. Godless scientists are a threat. Everyone who isn’t just like them has been sold to them as a threat and they’ve bought it hook, line and grifting sinker. Since there are no self-regulating mechanisms in their belief systems, these threats only grow over time. Since facts and reality don’t matter, nothing you say to them will alter their beliefs. “President Obama was born in Kenya, is a secret member of the Muslim Brotherhood who hates white Americans and is going to take away their guns.” I feel ridiculous even writing this, it is so absurd, but it is gospel across large swaths of rural America. Are rural Christian white Americans scared? Damn right they are. Are their fears rational and justified? Hell no. The problem isn’t understanding their fears. The problem is how to assuage fears based on lies in closed-off fundamentalist belief systems that don’t have the necessary tools for properly evaluating the fears. ... Do you know what does change the beliefs of fundamentalists, sometimes? When something becomes personal. Many a fundamentalist has changed his mind about the LGBT community once his loved ones started coming out of the closet. Many have not. But those who did, did so because their personal experience came into direct conflict with what they believe. My father is a good example of this. For years I had long, heated discussions with him about gay rights. Being the good religious fundamentalist he is, he could not even entertain the possibility he was wrong. The church said it was wrong, so therefore it was wrong. No questions asked. No analysis needed. This changed when one of his adored stepchildren came out of the closet. He didn’t do a complete 180. He has a view that tries to accept gay rights while at the same time viewing being gay as a mortal sin because his need to have his belief system be right outweighs everything else. This isn’t uncommon. Deeply held beliefs are usually only altered, replaced under catastrophic circumstances that are personal. ... How do you make climate change personal to someone who believes only god can alter the weather? How do you make racial equality personal to someone who believes whites are naturally superior to non-whites? How do you make gender equality personal to someone who believes women are supposed to be subservient to men by god’s command? How do you get someone to view minorities as not threatening to people who don’t live around minorities and have never interacted with them? How do you make personal the fact massive tax cuts and cutting back government hurts their economic situation when they’ve voted for such policies for decades? I don’t think you can without some catastrophic events. And maybe not even then. The Civil War was pretty damn catastrophic, yet a large swath of the South believed—and still believes—they were right and had the moral high ground. They were/are also mostly Christian fundamentalists who believe they are superior because of the color of their skin and the religion they profess to follow. There is a pattern here for anyone willing to connect the dots. ... What I understand is that rural Christian white Americans are entrenched in fundamentalist belief systems; don’t trust people outside their tribe; have been force-fed a diet of misinformation and lies for decades; are unwilling to understand their own situations; and truly believe whites are superior to all races. No amount of understanding is going to change these things or what they believe. No amount of niceties will get them to be introspective. No economic policy put forth by someone outside their tribe is going to be listened to no matter how beneficial it would be for them. I understand rural Christian white America all too well. I understand their fears are based on myths and lies. I understand they feel left behind by a world they don’t understand and don’t really care to. They are willing to vote against their own interests if they can be convinced it will make sure minorities are harmed more. Their Christian beliefs and morals are only extended to fellow white Christians. They are the problem with progress and always will be, because their belief systems are constructed against it.)

18.02.08 Big Issue, *How the public is “being deceived” over GDP*, David Piling

<https://www.bigissue.com/opinion/public-deceived-gdp/> (One of the most obvious problems of elevating GDP to the king of measures is that it tells us nothing about distribution. An economy could be roaring along, but that is not much use to ordinary people if all that extra income, production and consumption is being enjoyed by a privileged elite. Until the crash of oil prices in 2014, the Angolan economy was growing at more than 10 per cent a year, a blistering pace it maintained for more than a decade. But at the end of all that growth, the majority of the population remained desperately poor. Angola has among the worst infant mortality and life expectancy in the world. All that oil money had enriched a tiny sliver of society. Angola may be extreme. But its lessons are recognisable in the rich world too. In the US, median income has barely budged in 30 years. In many respects, the lives of those without a college degree have gone backwards, so much so that life expectancy has actually fallen for the past two years. Much of American growth has gone to the top one per cent, or even the top 0.1 per cent, of the population. ... Like nations, many corporations have put growth (of profits and of shareholder returns) ahead of broader goals. This has caused a backlash. People are asking of both their governments and their multinationals, growth at what cost, for whom and to what end? As Kuznets warned more than 70 years ago, growth should always be a means to a desired end. It should never be an end in itself. Anything else is deluded.)

18.02.08 (accessed) 17.11.25 NYT, *Inside the Revolution at Etsy*, David

Gelles <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/25/business/etsy-josh-silverman.html> (Etsy will likely grow with Mr. Silverman as chief executive, but it may never again be the sensitive community fostered by Mr. Kalin and nurtured by Mr. Dickerson. Once a beacon of socially responsible business practices with a starry-eyed work force that believed it could fundamentally reimagine commerce, Etsy has over the past year become a case study in how the short-term pressures of the stock market can transform even the most idealistic of companies. “There’s only so much wiggle room as a public company,” said Mr. Stinchcomb, the early employee. “If you really want to build a company that works for people and the planet, capitalism isn’t the solution.” Mr. Wilson, the chairman of the board, dismisses that as sentimental hooey. “To all the people who say taking Etsy public was a mistake, I say that’s ridiculous,” Mr. Wilson said. “There are some people who will say, ‘Well, it’s not right for me. I like the old culture.’ Well, I’m sorry about that. Going public was the best thing that ever happened to this company.”)

18.02.05 New Yorker, *What Does It Mean to Die?*, Rachel

Aviv <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/02/05/what-does-it-mean-to-die> (Shewmon began researching similar cases, and found a hundred and seventy-five people, many of whom were children or teen-agers, who lived for months or years after they were legally dead. The longest survivor was a boy who had been declared dead after contracting meningitis, when he was four. His heart beat for twenty more years, during which time he grew proportionally and recovered from minor wounds and infections, even though he had no identifiable brain structure and the outside of his brain had calcified. In 1997, in a paper called “Recovery from ‘Brain Death’: A Neurologist’s Apologia,” Shewmon disavowed his earlier views. He acknowledged that “dissenters from the ‘brain death’ concept are typically dismissed condescendingly as simpletons, religious zealots or pro-life fanatics,” and announced that he was joining their ranks. Shewmon’s research on what he calls “chronic survival” after brain death helped prompt a new President’s council on bioethics, in 2008, to revisit the definition of death. The council’s report referred to Shewmon’s research thirty-eight times. Although it ultimately reaffirmed the validity of brain death, it abandoned the biological and philosophical justification presented by the 1981 President’s Commission—that a functioning brain was necessary for the body to operate as an “integrated whole.” Instead, the report said that the destruction of the brain was equivalent to death because it meant that a human being was no longer able to “engage in commerce with the surrounding world,” which is “what an organism ‘does’ and what distinguishes every organism from nonliving things.” In a personal note appended to the end of the report, the chairman of the

council, Edmund Pellegrino, expressed regret regarding the lack of empirical precision. He wrote that attempts to articulate the boundaries of death “end in some form of circular reasoning—defining death in terms of life and life in terms of death without a true ‘definition’ of one or the other.”)

18.02.05 New Yorker, *The Trippy, High-Speed World of Drone Racing*, Ian

Frazier<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/02/05/the-trippy-high-speed-world-of-drone-racing> (At twenty-six years old, Temkin still has the sweet, serene manner of a not-spoiled kid whose parents adore him. He is six feet tall, dark-haired, part Asian; he wears black jeans, a black T-shirt with a small silver logo on it that says “DRL,” a dark-blue zip-up hoodie (usually unzipped), and white-and-yellow running shoes. When people ask him what he does for a living, he says he races toy helicopters. He has found this to be an effective shorthand description for a brand-new calling. Temkin is a professional drone-racing pilot, one of the top earners in the sport. Flying in the mountains as much as he can is how he practices.)

18.02.03 New Yorker, *How Delivery Apps May Put Your Favorite Restaurant Out of Business*, Elizabeth

Dunn<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/annals-of-gastronomy/are-delivery-apps-killing-restaurants> (For a sense of why a thirty-per-cent delivery-service charge is so problematic, consider that in the restaurant world, notorious for its slim profit margins, an industry-standard budget apportions thirty per cent of revenue for the cost of ingredients, thirty per cent for the cost of labor, and the remainder for “everything else”—rent, utilities, insurance, supplies, credit-card fees, and profit. One way of solving this equation might be to retool the basic restaurant business model to better suit the demands of delivery. That’s what the chef David Chang, of Momofuku, and the venture investor Hooman Radfar attempted to do with Ando, a fast-casual restaurant that they founded, in 2016, as a delivery-only experience. The plan sounded simple: a production kitchen on Fourteenth Street would make sandwiches, salads, and such, and Ando would sell them exclusively as delivery orders through a proprietary app; all the costs of running a dine-in restaurant—front-of-house staff, décor, pricey real estate in a desirable location—would be eliminated. After a little more than a year, though, Ando scaled back this initial vision, giving the kitchen a conventional retail façade so that patrons could also order takeout. Around that time, I spoke to the restaurant’s C.E.O., Andy Taylor. He said that no matter how much he was able to save by forgoing a traditional dining room, the cost of delivering food was too high, in part because he anticipates courier costs increasing as a result of rising minimum wages and a historically tight labor market. “I don’t think a pure delivery model can be profitable,” Taylor said. Last month, Ando ceased operation, and a note on its Web site announced that its team and technology had been acquired by Uber Eats. Large chains or venture-backed endeavors like Ando can afford to undertake such experiments. At Sweetgreen, for instance, forty per cent of orders are now placed for pickup through a proprietary app, and the company is about to pilot a delivery service. It is small businesses, which lack the leverage to negotiate third-party fees, or the resources to adapt their facilities, that are made most vulnerable by delivery’s growth. A representative for Curry-Ya, a Japanese restaurant in Harlem that has become one of my favorite spots for delivery, told me that “sometimes it seems like we’re making food to make Seamless profitable.” At the same time, she said, “it’s really becoming a bulk part of our business, so it’s not something we can cut.” Another New York restaurant owner told me that a colleague described delivery as “like crack cocaine,” an income stream that his business had become dependent upon but that might ultimately be running them into the ground. Many of the restaurant owners I spoke to knew that their percentage of deliveries was rising along with their costs, but they were unsure of how that was affecting their profitability. “We kind of think that it all balances out, but, honestly, we don’t know,” Tom Birchard, the owner of the popular Ukrainian restaurant Veselka, which has been serving late-night borscht and pierogi to East Villagers for more than sixty years, told me. “We don’t have the capacity to really analyze the economics of it carefully. We’re in the dark.”)

18.02.03 New Yorker, *The Philosophy of the Midlife Crisis*, Joshua

Rothman<https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/the-philosophy-of-the-midlife-crisis> (Is it disappointing

that “Midlife” arrives at the conclusion that “living in the present” is the solution to middle-aged unhappiness? A little. One might wonder if all that philosophy was really necessary. Setiya has the whole history of thought at his disposal. Drawing on Heidegger, he could have urged middle-aged people to find new ways of “disclosing” the world to themselves, perhaps by acquiring new or deeper skills. Adapting the work of Derek Parfit, he could have argued that selves are less real than we think, and that midlife crises are, therefore, about nothing. With Douglas Hofstadter, he might have concluded that it’s relationships that matter, since the patterns of thought and feeling encoded in our neurons will repeat themselves in the brains of the people we love, like musical echoes. Who knows what other intriguing suggestions Setiya might’ve come up with if he’d pillaged the history of philosophy with abandon? While reading “Midlife,” I yearned for such strange and counterintuitive ideas. But perhaps it’s right that they were missing. There’s something a little midlife-crisis about insisting on an entirely new way of thinking; maybe the answers are just the answers, and are actually quite simple. If that’s the case, then “Midlife” teaches a lesson about midlife: it’s sometimes best to go with the flow.)

18.01.31 WaPo, *Why you cannot quit Amazon Prime — even if maybe you should*, Geoffrey Fowler <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-switch/wp/2018/01/31/why-you-cannot-quit-amazon-prime-even-if-maybe-you-should/> (You can hear it in the way Prime members talk, Witcher said. They don’t buy things from Amazon; they “just get it from Amazon.” The “just” makes all the difference. Why don’t folks who love Prime “just” buy things online on [Walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com/), especially when there’s free shipping with no upfront cost? America’s largest retailer is Amazon’s biggest competitor yet online does a small fraction of its business. The infrastructure to deliver so many products so quickly is one problem. Our confidence is another: Walmart says its commitment to free shipping is permanent, but many still don’t think of it as an alternative. Something happens to our behavior when we join Prime that makes us loyal to a fault. Members are “motivated to make their membership worthwhile, by using it for more orders,” CIRP analyst Josh Lowitz says. We start spending a lot more: an average of \$1,300 per year on Amazon, compared with \$700 for non-member customers. This is where the Prime effect really starts to make us look as if we’re wearing blinders. Less than 1 percent of Amazon Prime members even consider other sites in the same shopping session, according to market research consultancy Millward Brown Digital.)

18.01.30 NYT, *A Paper Tears Apart in a City That Never Quite Came Together*, Tim Arango <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/30/us/los-angeles-times.html> (There are many reasons for this problem. Los Angeles County is made up of 88 different cities, including the City of Los Angeles, rolling across 4,571 square miles that stretch from the ocean to the desert. People here are more likely to identify themselves with the city or neighborhood where they live — be it Glendale, Compton, Beverly Hills or Whittier — rather than Los Angeles. The worsening traffic has encouraged people to stay close to the places where they live and work. “It’s so vast,” said William Deverell, a historian of California at the University of Southern California. “L.A. was self-consciously designed to be a decentralized place. What we call sprawl in the 21st century was part and parcel of the decentralized nature of the place.” ... Geography may be seen as an impediment to strong institutions, but it is also a central piece of Angeleno identity — a landscape of beaches, mountains, valleys, open skies and clusters of buildings. “Geography is part of our values,” said Zev Yaroslavsky, a former member of the county board of supervisors and a professor at the Luskin School of Public Affairs at the University of California, Los Angeles. “We don’t want to live on top of each other, like in New York or Philadelphia.” Southern Californians, he said, “want to be independent.” Bill Boyarsky, a former editor at The Los Angeles Times and the author of “Inventing L.A.: The Chandlers and Their Times,” a book on the newspaper, described the idea that people in Los Angeles “can’t see beyond their block” as an East Coast stereotype. “I always thought geography was an unusual but true way of binding the city together,” he said.)

18.01.29 NYT, *Scientists Discover a Bone-Deep Risk for Heart Disease*, Gina

Kolata <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/29/health/heart-disease-mutations-stem-cells.html> (They have learned that a bizarre accumulation of mutated stem cells in bone marrow increases a person's risk of dying within a decade, usually from a heart attack or stroke, by 40 or 50 percent. They named the condition with medical jargon: clonal hematopoiesis of indeterminate potential. CHIP has emerged as a risk for heart attack and stroke that is as powerful as high LDL or high blood pressure but it acts independently of them. And CHIP is not uncommon. The condition becomes more likely with age. Up to 20 percent of people in their 60s have it, and perhaps 50 percent of those in their 80s. ... To their great surprise, the teams converged on the same phenomenon. Unexpectedly large numbers of study participants had blood cells with mutations linked to leukemia — but they did not have the cancer. Instead, they had just one or two of the cluster of mutations. "This clearly wasn't happening by chance," said Steven McCarroll, a geneticist at the Broad Institute and Harvard Medical School. "We knew we were onto something, but what were we onto?" The investigators quickly guessed the broad outlines. White blood cells, the attack dogs of the immune system, arise from stem cells in the bone marrow. Every day, a few hundred such stem cells spew out blood cells that begin dividing rapidly into the 10 billion needed to replace those that have died. Sometimes, by chance, one of those marrow stem cells acquires a mutation, and the white blood cells it produces carry the same mutation. "Some mutations are just markers of past events without any lasting consequence," said Dr. David Steensma, a blood cancer specialist at Harvard Medical School and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. But others, especially those linked to leukemia, seem to give stem cells a new ability to accumulate in the marrow. The result is a sort of survival of the fittest, or fastest growing, stem cells in the marrow. "Some mutations may alter the growth properties of the stem cell," said Dr. Steensma. "Some may just make the stem cell better at surviving in certain less hospitable parts of the bone marrow where other stem cells can't thrive.")

18.01.28 NYT, *Olympic Dreams of a United Korea? Many in South Say, 'No, Thanks'*, Choe Sang

Hun <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/28/world/asia/koreas-olympics-reunification.html> (A survey found that more than 72 percent of South Korean adults overall — and more than 82 percent of those in their 20s and 30s — were not enthusiastic about the hockey team. More than 54,000 people signed a petition opposing it, and many expressed anger that some South Korean players would cede their positions to North Koreans. "I am taken aback," said Kim Sung-hwan, a former South Korean foreign minister. "Young people seem to think of North Korea as strangers who barge into their party bringing with them nothing but empty spoons." Such pushback would have been expected from conservatives, who have long been suspicious of efforts to engage the North. But younger South Koreans tend to be politically progressive and supportive of Mr. Moon on other issues. Analysts said that years of increasingly provocative nuclear and missile tests have darkened South Korean perceptions of the North and its young leader, Mr. Kim. Actions like Mr. Kim's executions of his own uncle and his half brother have also made the regime look brutal and grotesque. ... Key members of Mr. Moon's presidential office and governing party are progressives in their 50s, who went to college in the 1980s. Then, campuses were rife with anti-American activism, partly driven by resentment over the division of the Korean Peninsula after World War II. Students defied the authorities by sending a "unification envoy" to the World Festival of Youth and Students, alternative games that North Korea held in Pyongyang in 1989 to counter the previous year's Summer Olympics in Seoul. Progressives in that era believed in a peaceful process of reunification, built on the expansion of economic and social exchanges. Today, many of that generation see the North's nuclear weapons program as a desperate attempt to protect itself from the United States and the South, with which it is still technically at war. Reunification is also a personal matter for Mr. Moon, 65, who was born in a refugee camp after his parents fled their native North Korea during the 1950-53 Korean War. ... But Choi Sang-hwan, 73, a retired auto-component maker, lamented the new attitude. "Our generation knows how tragic war can be; it can take everything away," said Mr. Choi, who is also an Olympic volunteer. "It's our duty to let our future generations live peacefully in a unified Korea.")

18.01.27 Politico, *Millions of Americans Believe God Made Trump President*, Amy Sullivan <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/27/millions-of-americans-believe-god-made-trump-president-216537> (From early in Trump's presidential candidacy, his biggest religious supporters—indeed, his only religious supporters for a while—were charismatic Christians like pastors Paula White and Darrell Scott. They were drawn to Trump, and he to them, because of their embrace of the prosperity gospel. Also sometimes referred to as “health and wealth” theology, this belief holds that God rewards faith with good health and financial success. By those very simple metrics, a billionaire like Donald Trump, whether his fortune came from family, scams or a higher power, must be a very faithful man. Other religious conservatives, Strang argues, supported Trump in 2016 for reasons familiar to any Fox News viewer: a fear of globalism, the deep state, George Soros the former Nazi collaborator, wide-scale election fraud. They liked Trump because he said he liked them, told them they were persecuted, and vowed to stand up for them. He said he would bring back “Merry Christmas.” He told them they were important. But there were other, more spiritual reasons as well. Strang outlines a string of charismatics who had visions—or who now retroactively claim to have had visions—that Trump would one day win the White House. A Catholic holy man named Thomas Zimmer who spent much of his life in Italy even claimed to have received a prophesy in the 1980s that Trump would “lead America back to religion.” And the book is filled with testimony after testimony from Christian leaders who were amazed to find themselves supporting Trump in 2016, who each claim that he was their very last choice up until he won the Republican nomination. In fact, while some conservative Christians speak about Trump's defeat of Hillary Clinton as the work of God, it seems the real divine intercession was in clearing the GOP field for Trump. The unspoken assumption for each of the religious figures Strang references—from Franklin Graham to Robert Jeffress to Kenneth Copeland—is that God would only want a Republican president and so if Trump captured the GOP nomination, then ipso facto he must be God's choice. And the more unlikely the selection, the better proof it is of divine intent. “Millions of Americans,” declared Jeffress at a July 2017 event his First Baptist Church of Dallas sponsored in Washington, D.C., “believe the election of President Trump represented God giving us another chance—perhaps our last chance to truly make America great again.” Once it became clear to the community of conservative charismatics that Trump was God's candidate, they mobilized to support his campaign.)

18.01.26 Aeon, *How Schopenhauer's thought can illuminate a midlife crisis*, Kieran Setiya <https://aeon.co/ideas/how-schopenhauers-thought-can-illuminate-a-midlife-crisis> (Hence one common figure of the midlife crisis: the striving high-achiever, obsessed with getting things done, who is haunted by the hollowness of everyday life. When you are obsessed with projects, ceaselessly replacing old with new, satisfaction is always in the future. Or the past. It is mortgaged, then archived, but never possessed. In pursuing goals, you aim at outcomes that preclude the possibility of that pursuit, extinguishing the sparks of meaning in your life ... If the crisis diagnosed by Schopenhauer turns on excessive investment in projects, then the solution is to invest more fully in the process, giving meaning to your life through activities that have no terminal point: since they cannot be completed, your engagement with them is not exhaustive. It will not subvert itself. Nor does it invite the sense of frustration that Schopenhauer scorns in unsatisfied desire – the sense of being at a distance from one's goal, so that fulfilment is always in the future or the past.)

18.01.26 The Atlantic, *The Startling Link Between Sugar and Alzheimer's: A high-carb diet, and the attendant high blood sugar, are associated with cognitive decline.*, Olga Kazan <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2018/01/the-startling-link-between-sugar-and-alzheimers/551528/> (In some cases, the path from sugar to Alzheimer's leads through type 2 diabetes, but as a new study and others show, that's not always the case. A longitudinal study, published Thursday in the journal *Diabetologia*, followed 5,189 people over 10 years and found that people with high blood sugar had a faster rate of cognitive decline than those with normal blood sugar—whether or not their blood-sugar level technically made them diabetic. In other words, the higher the blood sugar, the faster the cognitive decline.

"Dementia is one of the most prevalent psychiatric conditions strongly associated with poor quality of later life," said the lead author, Wuxiang Xie at Imperial College London, via email. "Currently, dementia is not curable, which makes it very important to study risk factors.")

18.01.26 NYT, *What to Say When You Meet the Angel of Death at a Party*, Kate

Bowler <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/26/opinion/sunday/cancer-what-to-say.html> (A tragedy is like a fault line. A life is split into a before and an after, and most of the time, the before was better. Few people will let you admit that out loud. Sometimes those who love you best will skip that first horrible step of saying: "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry this is happening to you." Hope may prevent them from acknowledging how much has already been lost. But acknowledgment is also a mercy. It can be a smile or a simple "Oh, hon, what a year you've had." It does not ask anything from me but makes a little space for me to stand there in that moment. Without it, I often feel like I am starring in a reality program about a woman who gets cancer and is very cheerful about it. After acknowledgment must come love. This part is tricky because when friends and acquaintances begin pouring out praise, it can sound a little too much like a eulogy. I've had more than one kindly letter written about me in the past tense, when I need to be told who I might yet become. But the impulse to offer encouragement is a perfect one. There is tremendous power in touch, in gifts and in affirmations when everything you knew about yourself might not be true anymore. I am a professor, but will I ever teach again? I'm a mom, but for how long? A friend knits me socks and another drops off cookies, and still another writes a funny email or takes me to a concert. These seemingly small efforts are anchors that hold me to the present, that keep me from floating away on thoughts of an unknown future. They say to me, like my sister Maria did on one very bad day: "Yes, the world is changed, dear heart, but do not be afraid. You are loved, you are loved. You will not disappear. I am here.")

18.01.24 NYT, *The Mysterious Interior World of Exercise*, Gretchen

Reynolds <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/24/well/move/the-mysterious-interior-world-of-exercise.html> (So recently, an international group of scientists from the Garvan Institute of Medical Research in Sydney, Australia, and other institutions began to consider vesicles. Vesicles are microscopic globules within cells that contain tiny bits of biological material. Released into the blood, they once were thought to hold cellular garbage, as if the cells were heaving out their trash. But scientists now know that vesicles also can contain useful matter, including tiny amounts of genetic material and proteins that convey biological messages to other cells. Some researchers have speculated that exercise must cause an upsurge in such vesicles, resulting in inter-body communications that allow the body to keep moving. But that idea had remained speculative until, for the new study, which was published this month in *Cell Metabolism*, the Australian scientists and others applied new technologies to the blood of exercising people. ... In essence, the scientists had found that exercise prompts the creation of vesicles that somehow know to head for the liver and tell it to ramp up energy production. "This study reveals a huge amount of complexity in the circulating blood during exercise that we might have previously underestimated," says Martin Whitham, a biologist at the Garvan Institute who, with his fellow Garvan researcher Mark Febbraio, led the new study. The results also provide some new insights into how exercise pervasively affects our metabolisms, Dr. Whitham says. It has not been altogether clear before, for instance, how the liver knows that exercise is underway and that cells far, far distant from that organ need energy. This study provides added clarity about that issue. Still, many questions remain, Dr. Whitham says, including what specific tissues are creating these vesicles and what else the little bubbles probably contain, including portions of genes or even bits of fat that could convey their own unique messages to other cells. But the fundamental message of the findings is that our bodies contain a different interior world when we move than when we do not.)

18.01.24 FiveThirtyEight, *Are White Evangelicals Sacrificing The Future In Search Of The Past?*, Daniel

Cox <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/are-white-evangelicals-sacrificing-the-future-in-search-of-the-past/> (For

young white evangelical Christians, this unyielding stance can be a source of considerable tension. If you are under the age of 30, it is increasingly difficult not to know someone who is gay or lesbian. Young white evangelicals are caught between their peers, who are predisposed to embrace cultural pluralism and express tolerance for different personal behaviors, and an evangelical tradition that staunchly resists changes in social, cultural and religious norms. But this type of theological flexibility is what many younger evangelicals want. Nearly half (48 percent) of white evangelical Protestants under 30 say that their church should adjust traditional beliefs and practices or adopt modern beliefs and practices. Few older evangelicals agree. More than 7 in 10 (71 percent) white evangelicals over the age of 65 say their church should preserve its traditional beliefs and practices.)

18.01.24 Inc., *Steve Jobs Knew How to Write an Email. Here's How He Did It*, Justin

Bariso<https://www.inc.com/justin-bariso/steve-jobs-how-to-write-great-email.html> (No one wants to feel like they're being pressured into a decision, or that power is being taken away from them. That's why the final line in this email the most powerful: "Maybe I'm missing something, but I don't see any other alternatives. Do you?" With two simple sentences, 13 words, Jobs simultaneously communicates confidence and humility. He throws the ball back into Murdoch's court, giving him an opportunity to push back or offer solutions. Within two days HarperCollins would agree to Apple's terms. Takeaway: Make sure your communication partner feels they're a part of the process, not just a pawn in your game. Be willing to listen to others, to consider their concerns, and acknowledge mistakes. By doing so, you'll instill trust. Not only will you move matters along more quickly, you'll do so efficiently--by addressing problems and concerns head-on.)

18.01.23 NYT, *Selling Airborne Opulence to the Upper Upper Upper Class*, Gideon

Lewis-Kraus<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/23/magazine/selling-airborne-opulence-to-the-upper-upper-upper-class.html> ("So, Steve," the businessman asked, with the merest hint of vulnerability, "what would you buy?" Varsano shrugged; he was used to the question. He also knew exactly what the businessman should buy — he could size that up within minutes — but was careful never to seem pushy. "I would buy the B.B.J. if I was taking long flights all the time and bringing along my kids and their nannies and whatever animals." He paused. "On the other hand, you can't fly directly to Aspen," because the runway is too short. "You'd have to fly to Rifle, and then drive 45 minutes. In London, you couldn't fly in and out of Northolt at maximum weight, but you'd be O.K. in Farnborough and Luton." "What about the Gulfstream?" "Well, you'd get to L.A. an hour faster, but you'll drive yourself crazy with the kids and the nannies and the animals." The businessman, who had both grown children and still-nannied children, said nothing. "But the thing is," Varsano continued, "you have to fly on one of these yourself — and that means chartering one and taking the whole family to L.A., not just taking an empty one to Milan alone. You won't have the real experience that way." "Well, I love the idea of a B.B.J., but I don't like the noise, the cabin volume." He paused again. The pretense that this was simply a fun half-drunken near-midnight exercise had been openly abandoned. "This is coming up. I have to do it sooner rather than later.")

18.01.23 NYT, *For South Korea's Hockey Women, Unity With North Is a Bitter Burden*, Motoko

Rich<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/22/sports/olympics/south-korea-hockey-north-olympics.html> (While the South Korean government views the inter-Korean team as a steppingstone to talks that could slow down the North's nuclear program, the South Korean players say they are dismayed by the last-minute decision to insert North Korean players onto the team roster. "All of us had to give up something in our lives, but we've been striving toward one goal: to play in the Olympics," starting goalie Shin So-jung told the newspaper Chosun Ilbo on Friday. "We could bear it all because we're proud to represent our country. That's why we feel so devastated now." ... With the official announcement on Saturday that 12 North Korean players would be added to the Olympic women's team roster, with three of them mandated to dress for each game, some of the South Korean athletes fear losing playing time or being benched for some games. "It's hard because the

players have earned their spots, and they think they deserve to go to the Olympics,” the women’s coach, Sarah Murray, told the South Korean news media last week. “The players said in June not to make them a political statement and that they just want to play the game,” Ms. Murray added. “I agreed with them.” Within South Korea, criticism of the government’s decision to field an inter-Korean team has undermined the approval ratings of President Moon Jae-in, who has vocally supported the North’s inclusion in hockey. ... “Can abstract values like ‘peace’ and ‘unification’ get ahead of individual freedom?” one commenter on the petition wrote. “South Korea is a free liberal country, not a socialist country. I hope the government will not force individual sacrifice.” ... Some analysts said the decision was simply sexist. “There is a degree of gendered notion that women’s sports aren’t as important and that they can be used in this soft cultural approach,” said Benjamin Young, a Ph.D. candidate in modern Korean history at George Washington University. “The South Korean government is not having two inter-Korean hockey teams, male and female. They are kind of making explicit their gender bias known. I can certainly understand why the team players, coaches and public are upset.”)

18.01.22 Aeon, *Are you sleepwalking now?*, Thomas Metzinger

<https://aeon.co/essays/are-you-sleepwalking-now-what-we-know-about-mind-wandering> (I should come clean at this point and confess that I don’t believe in any such entity or thing as ‘the self’. At best, we have an inner image or representation of ourselves as a whole, made up of many functional modules and layers. At its most basic, this self-model is based on an internal model of the body, including affective and emotional states, and grounded in inner-body perceptions such as gut feelings, heartbeat, breath, hunger or thirst. On another, higher layer, the self-model reflects a person’s relationships to other people, ethical and cultural norms, and sense of self-worth. But in order to create a robust connection between the social and biological levels, the self-model fosters the illusion of transtemporal identity – the belief that we are a whole and persisting entity based on the narrative our brain tells itself about ‘our’ past, present and future. (I think that it was exactly the impression of transtemporal identity that turned into one of the central factors in the emergence of large human societies, which rely on the understanding that it is I who will be punished or rewarded in the future. Only as long as we believe in our own continuing identity does it make sense for us to treat our fellow human beings fairly, for the consequences of our actions will, in the end, always concern us.))

18.01.22 Slate, *When Your Mom Is “Tiger Mother”* Amy Chua, Lulu Chua-Rubenfeld

<https://slate.com/human-interest/2018/01/my-parents-work-life-balance-featuring-lulu-chua-rubenfeld-daughter-of-tiger-mother-amy-chua.html> (Do your parents work on the weekends at all? Oh, yeah. For my mom, the work never stops. She can’t take breaks, really, from work. For some people, that would be really stressful, but I think my mom just really enjoys having something to do. She’s a very active person. For example, vacations in the Caribbean are her worst nightmare. She can’t stand the idea of just sitting idle and tanning. She needs to be doing something even if it’s walking my dogs or going on a run or sending emails, talking to her parents on the phone. ... Whereas I need time to just veg. Are you more like your dad in that way? Yes. My mom hates that my dad will watch the Yankees game with me. My dad and I are big baseball fans. He plays little Scrabble games on his computer. My mom would not do that. My dad loves the outdoors and lakes and peaceful environments and beautiful mountain scenes, and my mom just sees no appeal in that. So your mom does not love beautiful mountain scenes. My mom is not a lover of the great American expanse. She always says, “I love infrastructure. I love infrastructure and bridges.” When we’re driving into New York, she’ll look at all the bridges and be like, “My favorite thing about America is how we were able to build all these amazing bridges. That’s why America is the best country in the world.” When you were growing up, did your parents have rules for you around screen time? I wasn’t allowed to watch TV until college. That’s a weird fact. I didn’t discover Netflix until freshman year and my mind was just absolutely blown.)

18.01.18 Bloomberg, *The Fall of Travis Kalanick Was a Lot Weirder and Darker Than You Thought*, Eric Newcomer

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2018-01-18/the-fall-of-travis-kalanick-was-a-lot-weirder-and-darker-than-you-thought> (Somehow, amid the dysfunction, Uber hired Khosrowshahi, who impressed the board with a thoughtful PowerPoint presentation that included a slide that read, “There can be only one CEO at a time.” Khosrowshahi was all that Kalanick wasn’t or couldn’t be: humble, a good listener, and a diplomat. In a pointed reversal of Kalanick’s mantra, he would say: “We don’t have a PR problem; we have an ‘us’ problem—we have behaved poorly.” And when the city of London revoked Uber’s operating license in September, Khosrowshahi visited, met with taxi regulators, and published an open letter. “On behalf of everyone at Uber globally, I apologize,” he wrote. “We will appeal this decision on behalf of millions of Londoners, but we do so with the knowledge that we must also change.” It would be Khosrowshahi’s responsibility to find capital infusions (such as the recent investment by a consortium led by SoftBank), cut the company’s burn rate (2017 losses: \$4 billion), settle some of its legal problems (lawyer fees over two years: an estimated \$500 million), and march toward a 2019 initial public offering. Kalanick has privately told people he thought the apology tour was a mistake. But his opinion no longer matters—Uber’s new COO, Barney Harford, says he was hired without ever meeting him. The SoftBank deal will make Kalanick a billionaire. Friends say he’s trying to keep busy. He’s setting up a family office and spending time with his father in Los Angeles. And he’s getting very good at 2048, the single-player smartphone puzzle game.)

18.01.16 NYT, *BlackRock’s Message: Contribute to Society, or Risk Losing Our Support*, Andrew Ross Sorkin
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/15/business/dealbook/blackrock-laurence-fink-letter.html> (“Society is demanding that companies, both public and private, serve a social purpose,” he wrote in a draft of the letter that was shared with me. “To prosper over time, every company must not only deliver financial performance, but also show how it makes a positive contribution to society.” It may be a watershed moment on Wall Street, one that raises all sorts of questions about the very nature of capitalism. “It will be a lightning rod for sure for major institutions investing other people’s money,” said Jeffrey Sonnenfeld, a senior associate dean at the Yale School of Management and an expert on corporate leadership. “It is huge for an institutional investor to take this position across its portfolio.” He said he’s seen “nothing like it.” In a candid assessment of what’s happening in the business world — and perhaps taking a veiled shot at Washington at the same time — Mr. Fink wrote that he is seeing “many governments failing to prepare for the future, on issues ranging from retirement and infrastructure to automation and worker retraining.” He added, “As a result, society increasingly is turning to the private sector and asking that companies respond to broader societal challenges.”)

18.01.16 (accessed) 15.11.20 EricKimPhotography, *Live a Life of Leisure*, Eric Kim
<http://erickimphotography.com/blog/2015/11/20/live-a-life-of-leisure/> (Imagine you are stranded in a desert and you are dying from thirst. You see a stream of water, but it will only flow for a minute. You rush over, and swallow all the water your stomach will hold, because you know it won’t flow anymore. This is a good metaphor for life (credit Seneca in his letter, “On the Shortness of Life”). Life is a limited stream. Sooner or later, the stream will no longer flow. So why waste our time and our lives chasing distractions (pleasures, material things, fame) which will no longer exist when we’re dead? ... In “The Paradox of Choice” psychologist Barry Schwartz brings up a concept of “satisficing” (a combination of the word ‘suffice’ and ‘satisfy’). To satisfice is to be okay with “good enough.” On the other hand, there is a concept of “maximizing” where you want the absolute best. So when you buy a smartphone, you aren’t satisfied with “good enough”—you want the absolute best. I am a maximizer—I always want the best. I don’t like “settling.” I do shitloads of research on every camera, smartphone, laptop, smartphone out there—to not have the fear that I am “missing out.” But honestly at the end of the day; all of our material possessions will fade and crumble into dust. ... No matter how rich you are; you can never buy more time. Protect your time like the stream won’t flow any longer. ... Wake up early (4:30am) and do some early-morning shooting, do some writing, or reading. Go to work

(drink lots of coffee) and grind through the day. Get off work immediately at 6pm, go shoot, read more, write more, paint, or pursue your art. Have a nice meal with a friend, turn off your smartphone, and savor every second of your conversation. When you go home, don't watch Netflix, don't go on Facebook, Instagram, or check your email. Pass the fuck out (after a long-day deserved of your hard work) and sleep early (9pm). Then you will have sufficient time to pursue your passions (even while having a 40-hour work-week). ... A life of leisure is to spend every minute of your day not being a slave. You can still be a "free man" while having a 9-5 job; just don't be married to your job. Don't fall victim to wanting to "advance in your career" (if you dislike your job). Just see your job as something that pays the bills— that enables you to not be homeless, and to have some money to pursue your passion in photography. Now go forth friend; a life of leisure awaits you.)

18.01.16 (accessed) 17.12.14 NYT, *To Unlock the Brain's Mysteries, Purée It*, Ferris Jabr
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/14/magazine/to-unlock-the-brains-mysteries-puree-it.html> (The brain-soup technique further revealed that the human brain, contrary to the numbers frequently cited in textbooks and research papers, has 86 billion neurons and roughly the same number of glia — not 100 billion neurons and trillions of glia. And humans certainly do not have the most neurons: The African elephant has about three times as many, with a grand total of 257 billion. When Herculano-Houzel focused on the cerebral cortex, however — the brain's wrinkled outermost layer — she discovered a staggering discrepancy. Humans have 16 billion cortical neurons. The next runners-up, orangutans and gorillas, have nine billion cortical neurons; chimpanzees have six billion. The elephant brain, despite being three times larger than our own, has only 5.6 billion neurons in its cerebral cortex. Humans seemed to possess the most cortical neurons — by far — of any species on earth ... The cerebral cortex is the difference between impulse and insight, between reflex and reflection. It is essential for voluntary muscle control, sensory perceptions, abstract thinking, memory and language. Perhaps most profound, the cerebral cortex allows us to create and inhabit a simulation of the world as it is, was and might be; an inner theater that we can alter at will. "The cortex receives a copy of everything else that happens in the brain," Herculano-Houzel says. "And this copy, while technically unnecessary, adds immense complexity and flexibility to our cognition. You can combine and compare information. You can start to find patterns and make predictions. The cortex liberates you from the present. It gives you the ability to look at yourself and think: This is what I am doing, but I could be doing something different." ... Cooking liberated our ancestors from this same physiological straitjacket and put us back on track to develop brains as large as expected for primates our size. And because primates have such dense brains, all that new brain mass rapidly added a huge number of neurons. It took 50 million years for primates as a group to evolve brains with around 30 billion neurons total. But in a mere 1.5 million years of evolution, the human brain gained an astounding 56 billion additional neurons. To use the metaphor of our time, cooking tripled the human brain's processing power.)

18.01.16 (accessed) 17.12.29 The Atlantic, *The Places That May Never Recover From the Recession: The Rust Belt isn't the only region left behind by the economic recovery. The suburbs of the American west are struggling, too.*, Alana Semuels
<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/12/suburban-poverty-and-recession/549350> (In the end, Hemet is stuck. The city itself can't convince companies to pay better wages, and it has no control over the rents in big cities that are pushing people out to the suburbs. It has tried to force absentee landlords to keep up their homes, but has limited resources to do so, and struggles to smooth over its transition from a community of homeowners to one of renters. Like many other suburbs and small cities across the country, the economic tide has turned against its residents, leaving them seemingly no path back to vitality. As Hemet and many suburbs like it are finding, growing poverty can lead to even bigger problems—lower tax revenues, fewer businesses able to stay put, worse services like schools and police. This, of course, makes them even less attractive for people who have other choices about where to live. Over time, the situation only gets worse.

As nearby cities prosper, and the recession appears as just a bump in the road in the rearview mirror, distressed areas are still there, unable to move ahead.)

18.01.16 (accessed) 17.12.31 Politico, *Does the White Working Class Really Vote Against Its Own Interests?*, Joshua Zeitz <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/12/31/trump-white-working-class-history-216200> (Yet Trump has also, arguably more than any other candidate for president in the past hundred years (excepting third-party outliers like Strom Thurmond and George Wallace), played to the purely psychological benefits of being white. From his racially laden exhortations about black crime in Chicago and Latino gangs seemingly everywhere, to his attacks on an American-born federal judge of Mexican parentage and on Muslim gold star parents, he has paid the white majority with redemption and revanchism. Trump might be increasing economic inequality, but at least the working-class whites feel like they belong in Trump's America. He urged them to privilege race over class when they entered their polling stations. And it didn't just stop there. As Ta-Nehisi Coates argues, Trump swept almost every white demographic group, forging a "broad white coalition that ran the gamut from Joe the Dishwasher to Joe the Plumber to Joe the Banker." It's not just blue-collar white people who seem blithely willing to sacrifice economic rationality for racial solidarity. After all, it arguably took a special kind of stupid for upper-middle class suburbanites in high-tax states to support a party that just raised their taxes. (No, this wasn't a bait-and-switch. The GOP leadership has talked openly about eliminating deductions for state and local taxes since 2014.) Unless, that is, you account for the wages of whiteness.)

18.01.15 New Yorker, *The Psychology of Inequality*, Elizabeth Kolbert <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/01/15/the-psychology-of-inequality> (Sherman's first discovery about the wealthy is that they don't want to talk to her. Subjects who agree to be interviewed suddenly stop responding to her e-mails. One woman begs off, saying she's "swamped" with her children; Sherman subsequently learns that the kids are at camp. After a lot of legwork, she manages to sit down with fifty members of the haut monde in and around Manhattan. Most have family incomes of more than five hundred thousand dollars a year, and about half have incomes of more than a million dollars a year or assets of more than eight million dollars, or both. (At least, this is what they tell Sherman; after a while, she comes to believe that they are underreporting their earnings.) Her subjects are so concerned about confidentiality that Sherman omits any details that might make them identifiable to those who have visited their brownstones or their summer places. "I poked into bathrooms with soaking tubs or steam showers" is as far as she goes. "I conducted interviews in open kitchens, often outfitted with white Carrara marble or handmade tiles." A second finding Sherman makes, which perhaps follows from the first, is that the privileged prefer not to think of themselves that way. One woman, who has an apartment overlooking the Hudson, a second home in the Hamptons, and a household income of at least two million dollars a year, tells Sherman that she considers herself middle class. "I feel like, no matter what you have, somebody has about a hundred times that," she explains. Another woman with a similar household income, mostly earned by her corporate-lawyer husband, describes her family's situation as "fine." "I mean, there are all the bankers that are heads and heels, you know, way above us," she says. A third woman, with an even higher household income—two and a half million dollars a year—objects to Sherman's use of the word "affluent." "'Affluent' is relative," the woman observes. Some friends of hers have recently flown off on vacation on a private plane. "That's affluence," she says. This sort of talk dovetails neatly with Payne's work. If affluence is in the eye of the beholder, then even the super-rich, when they compare their situation with that of the ultra-rich, can feel sorry for themselves. The woman who takes exception to the word "affluent" makes a point of placing herself at the "very, very bottom" of the one per cent. "The disparity between the bottom of the 1 percent and the top of the 1 percent is huge," she observes. Sherman construes things differently. Her subjects, she believes, are reluctant to categorize themselves as affluent because of what the label implies. "These New Yorkers are trying to see themselves as 'good people,'" she writes. "Good people work hard. They live prudently, within their means. . . . They don't

brag or show off.” At another point, she observes that she was “surprised” at how often her subjects expressed conflicted emotions about spending. “Over time, I came to see that these were often moral conflicts about having privilege in general.” Whatever its source—envy or ethics—the discomfort that Sherman documents matches the results of the University of California study. Inequity is, apparently, asymmetrical. For all the distress it causes those on the bottom, it brings relatively little joy to those at the top.)

18.01.15 New Yorker, *Under Trump, a Hard Test for Howard University*, Jelani Cobb

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/01/15/under-trump-a-hard-test-for-howard-university> (“Howard has always been different, which is why I wanted to be part of it. It was designed that way and it has remained that way. A safe space, especially for those who face the oppression and the challenge of being black in America.” He ended his comments to sustained applause. When I asked him later about the event, he laughed and said, “I’ve never given a speech where people were shouting ‘Comey is not my homie.’” Then he added, “Howard is dealing with this, like a lot of universities: How do you both embrace energy and protest and dissent and maintain an open environment where people can have hard conversations?” Frederick was no less sanguine. “Institutions like the F.B.I. and the White House have a tortured history among minorities,” he said. “But we didn’t blame Barack Obama for every ill of the White House’s history. It’s the same with Comey.” Frederick had brought him to campus not despite the strained relationship between minority communities and law enforcement but because of it. “The dialogue is important because minorities are being killed by law enforcement, and I thought it important for my students to be asking him about that directly.” The protest and counterprotest reminded me yet again of the apparent paradox at the heart of H.B.C.U.s, where pragmatists are in the business of producing new generations of fierce idealists. Ralph Ellison’s Bledsoe delighted in the idea that he might alchemize power from deference. Booker T. Washington denounced racial equality to powerful segregationists, but he also secretly funded efforts to defend black civil rights. Howard’s militancy has been underwritten by its compromises. One afternoon, when I spoke to Frederick by phone, he told me about a student who had harshly criticized his decision to attend the White House meeting, but later came to his office seeking financial assistance to pay for his final year. To Frederick’s mind, the connection between his trip to the White House and his ability to aid the student was obvious. To his critics, such connections either are opaque or come at a cost that betrays the school’s founding mission. “People think we’re doing God’s work, on God’s time, with God’s money,” Frederick said. “The problem is, we don’t have access to the latter two.”)

18.01.15 New Yorker, *When Deportation Is a Death Sentence*, Sarah

Stillman <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/01/15/when-deportation-is-a-death-sentence> (Holding U.S. Customs and Border Protection legally accountable is difficult but not impossible. The day before *Maria S. v. John Doe* was filed, the A.C.L.U. brought a class-action case against officers from Border Patrol and ICE in Southern California, alleging the widespread use of coercion, threats, and deception to get immigrants to sign their own expulsion orders, including a form called the I-826. In 2014, the Department of Homeland Security and other defendants agreed to a settlement. A long list of reforms resulted, including a stipulation that prospective deportees could use a phone to call a family member, a legal-service provider, or a Mexican consulate before removal. The reforms, however, applied only to Southern California. Other suits are pending. Last July, a nonprofit called *Al Otro Lado* sued officials at the Department of Homeland Security and at Customs and Border Protection, alleging that asylum seekers are being “systematically turned away at ports of entry.” Last year, the city of Chicago sued Trump’s Justice Department over a plan to withhold federal public-safety funds from sanctuary cities. Harbury has become involved in still more cases. After Trump’s election, she began interviewing recent deportees in Reynosa about their experiences with U.S. immigration authorities, and gathered accounts of asylum seekers who’d been kidnapped or otherwise harmed after being turned away. She compiled her findings in a sworn legal declaration, and shared it with a national network of civil-rights attorneys. In September, she filed a suit against officers from ICE and other government entities on

behalf of a group of “young civilians who were forced to flee their homelands due to the ongoing violence.” These asylum seekers had come from places as diverse as Ghana, Guatemala, and Sierra Leone, but faced the same “danger of severe persecution” if deported. Although they had committed no crimes, the suit alleged, they had been “wrongfully denied parole and subjected to prolonged and arbitrary detention in prison-like conditions.” ... At the kitchen table, the boys played with an iPhone. “Siri, what is ten to the thousandth?” the youngest asked. “Siri, who am I?” “Who is my mommy?” “Who is Donald Trump?” “How old is Donald Trump?” The oldest chimed in, “Siri, can I call my mom?” Maria sometimes envies the boys’ approach to death. She told me that twice Laura’s eldest son had stood at the bus stop after school, craning his neck, waiting. “What is it?” she asked. “When is Mom coming?” he replied. “Mom’s not coming,” she told her grandson. “Remember where we left her?” she asked gently, pulling him close. “We left her on the other side of the border.”)

18.01.11 Aeon, *We Are Multitude: Women are chimeras, with genetic material from both their parents and children. Where does that leave individual identity?*, Katherine

Rowland <https://aeon.co/essays/microchimerism-how-pregnancy-changes-the-mothers-very-dna> (The self emerging from microchimeric research appears to be of a different order: porous, unbounded, rendered constitutively. Nelson suggests that each human being is not so much an isolated island as a dynamic ecosystem. And if this is the case, the question follows as to how this state of collectivity changes our conscious and unconscious motivations. If I am both my children and my mother, if I carry traces of my sibling and remnants of pregnancies that never resulted in birth, does that change who I am and the way I behave in the world? If we are to take to heart Whitman’s multitudes, we encounter an I composed of shared identity, collective affiliations and motivations that emerge not from a mean and solitary struggle, but a group investment in greater survival.)

18.01.10 (accessed) 17.11.21 Vox, Bill Kristof, *Bill Kristol thinks “people are just too unhappy with the status quo”*, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/1/10/16865502/bill-kristol-trump-status-quo> (That, I think, is really, for me, an open question, and more of an open question at the end of this year [2017] than it was at the beginning. I think if we had had this conversation 10 months ago, I would have said, “You know, I think we can get beyond Trump.” But now the degree of rationalization by Republicans, among Republicans, the degree of excuse-making for Trump, the degree to which Trump has changed, apparently, Republican voters’ views. That, I think, could be temporary, and yeah, they’re susceptible to that. Voters tend to follow the president of their own party that they voted for. But the degree to which he’s sort of changed conservative thinkers’ views, or seems to have, that’s unnerving and worrisome, and makes me think maybe we are in a more fundamental inflection point. ... The capitulation across the board on the right has been very striking to me. This was a movement that was full of people who had kind of proud memories of themselves or others standing up to the voters at times. And the whole point of conservatism, in a way, is not to believe that the people are always right. It’s not to believe that history goes in one direction. It’s not to believe the arc of history tells you what you should do. It’s to be a little bit resistant to all that. And because Trump wins one election with 46-point-something percent of the vote, we’re all supposed to just decide that everything we’ve studied for years, all the history we’ve read for years, all the people we’ve admired for years, that was all wrong. ... At that point, you can’t just sit there and say, “I’m just calling balls and strikes and I don’t care if the pitcher is, you know, stepping 20 feet off the mound and throwing spitballs and trying to bean the other team’s batters.” At some point, you have to say, “We have to defend the rules of the game.” ... It is right-wing identity politics. The left in America today is multicultural, multiethnic, younger, diverse, different from some of these Trump supporters’ view of America, and they look at that and they just recoil; then they decide they love Trump because he’s making [the left] very angry. That’s childish. And we all probably indulge that a little too much on the right. ... People are just too unhappy with the status quo, in my opinion. If you came down and looked at America and at the world, you’d say there’s a fair amount to be happy and be grateful for. And that’s always what conservatives were pretty good at, actually, was making the point to progressives that, “Hey, slow down

here. There's a lot to be grateful for, and you shouldn't take it for granted before you race off to change this or that." That's a kind of sensible conservative instinct. And it would be nice to have a bit of a return of that. ... There was a kind of, in retrospect, excessive tolerance of things that should have been denounced more firmly. I mean, I thought we denounced them. I will say, you know, the Weekly Standard was pretty unapologetically anti-birther and anti-Buchanan and anti-Ron Paul, and anti- so many things that Trump exploited. Pretty liberal on immigration, but maybe in retrospect we didn't take those things serious enough.)

18.01.09 NYT, *A Heart Risk Factor Even Doctors Know Little About*, Anahad

O'Connor <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/09/well/heart-risk-doctors-lipoprotein.html> (Since his heart attack, Mr. Harper of "The Biggest Loser" has embarked on a newfound mission to raise awareness about heart disease and to urge people to get tested for lp(a). His days no longer revolve around intense and grueling workouts, he said. Instead he believes the key to being healthy is managing stress, getting proper sleep, eating a balanced diet and enjoying life because it could end at any moment, an approach he has outlined in his new book, "The Super Carb Diet." "Being healthy is not about what you can do in the gym," Mr. Harper said. "It's not about what you can do on the outside. It's what's going on in the inside. I really needed to find out what was going on with me, and that's what this did. It woke me up.")

18.01.06 The Atlantic, *How Actual Smart People Talk About Themselves*, James Fallows

<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/01/how-actual-smart-people-talk-about-themselves/549878/> (Here are three traits I would report from a long trail of meeting and interviewing people who by any reckoning are very intelligent. • They all know it. A lifetime of quietly comparing their ease in handling intellectual challenges—at the chess board, in the classroom, in the debating or writing arena—with the efforts of other people gave them the message. • Virtually none of them (need to) say it. There are a few prominent exceptions, of talented people who annoyingly go out of their way to announce that fact. Muhammad Ali is the charming extreme exception illustrating the rule: He said he was The Greatest, and was.*Most greats don't need to say so. It would be like Roger Federer introducing himself with, "You know, I'm quite graceful and gifted." Or Meryl Streep asking, "Have you seen my awards?" • They know what they don't know. This to me is the most consistent marker of real intelligence. The more acute someone's ability to perceive and assess, the more likely that person is to recognize his or her limits. These include the unevenness of any one person's talents; the specific areas of weakness—social awkwardness, musical tin ear, being stronger with numbers than with words, or vice versa; and the incomparable vastness of what any individual person can never know. To read books seriously is to be staggered by the knowledge of how many more books will remain beyond your ken. It's like looking up at the star-filled sky. We can think of exceptions—the people who are eminent in one field and try unwisely to stretch that to another. (Celebrated scientists or artists who become ordinary pundits; Michael Jordan the basketball genius becoming Michael Jordan the minor-league baseball player.) But generally the cliché is true: The clearest mark of intelligence, even "genius," is awareness of one's limits and ignorance. * * * On the other hand, we have something known as the Dunning-Kruger effect: The more limited someone is in reality, the more talented the person imagines himself to be. Or, as David Dunning and Justin Kruger put it in the title of their original scientific-journal article, "Unskilled and Unaware of It: How Difficulties in Recognizing One's Own Incompetence Lead to Inflated Self-Assessments." Odds are that the world's most flamboyant illustration of this dangerous misperception, despite his claimed omniscience, would not even recognize the term, nor its ominous implications in his case.)

18.01.04 Politico, *The Real Future of Work: Forget automation. The workplace is already cracking up in profound ways, and Washington is sorely behind on dealing with it.*, Danny

Vinik <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/04/future-work-independent-contractors-alternative-work-arrangements-216212> (The repercussions go far beyond the wages and hours of individuals. In America, more than any other developed country, jobs are the basis for a whole suite of social guarantees meant to

ensure a stable life. Workplace protections like the minimum wage and overtime, as well as key benefits like health insurance and pensions, are built on the basic assumption of a full-time job with an employer. As that relationship crumbles, millions of hardworking Americans find themselves ejected from that implicit pact. For many employees, their new status as “independent contractor” gives them no guarantee of earning the minimum wage or health insurance. For Borland, a new full-time job left her in the same chair but without a livable income ... But there’s actually not much evidence that the future of work is going to be jobless. Instead, it’s likely to look like a new labor market in which millions of Americans have lost their job security and most of the benefits that accompanied work in the 20th century, with nothing to replace them. ... The scale of the change, for many economists, clearly suggests that it’s time for Congress to rethink the social contract around work, updating it for the new relationship between employers and workers in the 21st century. Letting it slide further risks hamstringing the country with an outdated system that hurts both middle-class workers and, experts fear, the economy that depends on them. The shift is already well underway. What’s far less clear is whether Washington is paying any attention.)

18.01.01 (accessed) 16.06.29 NY Mag, *How Exercise Shapes You, Far Beyond the Gym*, Brad Stulberg <http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2016/06/how-exercise-shapes-you-far-beyond-the-gym.html> (Maybe it’s that if you’re regularly working out, you’re simply too tired to care. But that’s probably not the case. Research shows that, if anything, physical activity boosts short-term brain function and heightens awareness. And even on days they don’t train — which rules out fatigue as a factor — those who habitually push their bodies tend to confront daily stressors with a stoic demeanor. While the traditional benefits of vigorous exercise — like prevention and treatment of diabetes, heart disease, stroke, hypertension, and osteoporosis — are well known and often reported, the most powerful benefit might be the lesson that my coach imparted to me: In a world where comfort is king, arduous physical activity provides a rare opportunity to practice suffering. ... For this reason, the author Charles Duhigg, in his 2012 bestseller *The Power of Habit*, calls exercise a “keystone habit,” or a change in one area of life that brings about positive effects in other areas. Duhigg says keystone habits are powerful because “they change our sense of self and our sense of what is possible.”)