

**Simplistic by Intentional Design**

Oftentimes, when I sit down to write—its futility I feel I should pen but my hand won't deliver. Not today. I need to let you know that I too, sometimes wonder if techno-transcendence is unstoppable, if we really are so mire-rutted there's no retracting, if collapse really is inevitable; if this series is all for naught. There. Just want you to know unfailing hopefulness isn't a standard option here; that hopelessness can be found simmering even in this optimist's vault. But, when I went to list the messes we've no chance to lessen, that's when I realized: ***futility exists—only in my thoughts.***

Shrinks may attribute a host of convolutions are what's at work behind the doggedness any 10-year endeavor such as this might take, but what comes to stay my hand from writing futility is quite basic; shows itself when I go to type the word *if*. That's when my hands pull back long enough for one simple memo to re-color my thoughts; a reminder about how big the word—*if*—truly is.

Simplistic by intentional design. That's how I coerced myself into believing I could deliver this message. Just stay true to the commoner I am, and the pureness of my intent will be better appreciated, flaws forgiven even, and this contribution might actually make a difference. Maybe, maybe not but how would I know if I didn't at least try? I want you to know this is where I'm at. How about you? Does any of this matter? Should it?

**All on Our Watch.**

We know a sun flare is unstoppable—not Superintelligence. We still hold the keys to slow Baby-G down and if we will, at least we won't be the ones that threw it all away. This is the single quandary I was able to list on the futile side that might just be—insurmountable. Maybe, maybe not. Truly, how will we know if we don't at least try? However, the laundry list of defugilities that we can and must attend to is long. Possibly, this list began a 100, or even 1000 years ago but for certain—*it's largely gone unattended for the past 30 years.* These are the years we've allowed trillions of debt to start sinking our ship. The years when we slept through the banishment of term limits and merely yawned when corporations came to buy our democracy. When they did, Super PACs pinned the final latching's down upon our nobly envisioned rise. Meanwhile, income disparity grew wider than The Grand Canyon and the fluidness of social mobility running through it, slowed to a trickle. ***While slumbering, an Oligarchy usurped our Democracy—all on our watch.***

Whose watch? Who slumbered? I figure anyone wearing adult lapels when the 1950's rolled in, all the way to those wriggling into puberty by the time the 1980's rolled out—took a 30-year nap. So math isn't my strong suit. Basically, those most responsible for the debacles we now face were adults at some point during 80's and 90's. Do your own calculating but if you add in those born much after the 80's—math isn't your strong suit either. I bring this up cuz I still can't believe how many of us blame today's young adults for the defugilities we face! Hell, that bunch was hardly outta diapers when this list got double underlined in jet black bold!

**Societal Acceptance.**

History will only serve us reminders of human tendencies and like it or not: ***we are the testing ground era for AI.*** And, I'd guess an awareness to this reality has been trying to surface for the past twenty years; probably about the time we finally accepted sci-fi futuristic stuff was actually happening. My own dawning came on about the time satellites started beaming pictures of our families standing right outside our homes, to anyone—anywhere in the world. Today, about 2500 satellites are out there mingling with the stars and I truly am—***confusing stars with satellites*** ~NB.

Drones now make windows *not curtained*—as useless as yesterday's backyard privacy fences. Without much ado, we've accepted the uses of video and audio tracking our every move—***now within our own homes via smartphones for hells sake!*** In less than 30 years, the meaning of privacy has

been completely stripped away. It looks as if sensors and every other embedding being hatched to track our virally connected lives will also slide right in without much ado. But before we blindly accept more insidious, safe-safe sells, we need to think back to yesterday. Think about what preventive measures we rallied for then to ensure future-freedoms were being attended to now. Think about how irreplaceable we once believed we were. If we think Smartphones can't get any smarter, that today's monitoring and replacement technologies are finally maxed; that Baby-G has gorged to the brim on our lifelines—think again. The all of this is just beginning. 3-D printed nightmares and Virtual Reality toys are now here and who knows after that. ***What we couldn't fathom yesterday, are exactly the pre-greasers we are experiencing today for a truly unfathomable tomorrow.***

I thought about this last night after dining at a local pub. Three guys down the row were discussing *the all of it*, which luckily and finally, I hear us hash over more and more. First guy said he was irreplaceable at work but that in his private life he was taking precautionary measures. Said he bought a 71 Chevy truck so *they* couldn't track him. A vision of old trucks hitting the streets immediately came into view followed by a vision of fretful auto-industry honchos scampering about their vast inventories sitting, collecting dust. I chuckled. Next guy said he was also irreplaceable at work but that he too was taking personal measures. Said he only talks smack to *Siri* just to trip her up; made a crack about hiding bodies and I got the idea that *Siri* is now well-versed in locating mortuaries. When I envisioned a bunch of 71 Chevy's in a traffic jam down at the mortuary—I chuckled again. Third guy assured his buds that autonomous autos are just another part of all that's unstoppable so if they want *Siri* to take them somewhere other than mortuaries—they best start taking her more seriously! Okay. It's impossible not to overhear beer chatter so when my last chuckle escaped me and three heads turned my way, all I could think to say was bravo! Like I said—*at least we're starting to talk about the all of it!*

Their chat nearly dittos any conversation I've heard us have about the all of it so we should work out some of the kinks. For starters—*Siri isn't a she*. Next, we are all—replaceable. *They*—have heavily invested into making sure we are. Finally, not only are we buying into *their* unstoppable sell—we're promoting it for them! Jeez! We might be awakening but in order to see clearly we still have to take our blinders off!

Anyway and in their witty way, these guys were talking about societal acceptance. Had visions of 71 Chevy's in a stakeout down at the mortuary not sidetracked me I probably would have spelled out societal acceptance to the guy preaching the unstoppable sell because—*we damn sure don't have to accept it all!* I could get used to driving an old truck again, how 'bout you? Already, I refuse to own a phone that wants to chat with me and other than screaming vulgarities until a live operator comes to my rescue—I don't chat with VRS-Siberia either! Also, I figure if I need a vehicle to back up for me, then maybe I shouldn't be driving. As for in-house surveillance at our fingertips so we can keep track of our kids, c'mon! I refuse to think we are so shallow as to believe this is actually how good parenting works!

Maybe we won't all be driving 71 Chevy's but I still chuckle when I think about that guy's solution because it made me visualize something else—*once we quit buying that unstoppable sell. Imagine all the clever ways we'll come up with to show exactly how we spell societal acceptance!* Man I can't wait!

## **The Singularity.**

Anyone been thinking about why the skies are silent? Ray Kurzweil's book made me realize we can't afford to keep hoping ruling elites will steer clear from the techno-transcendence just ahead; an abyss that most likely—***other lifeforms never made it through.***

Our recession was supposed to be over in June of 09 yet unemployment refused to shrink. When it finally did, *The National Law Project stated*: "low-wage occupations paying less than \$13.83 per hour have utterly dominated the recovery with 58% of the job gains since 2010." How much of

this is due to *them* taking advantage of post-recession opportunities by slaughtering higher-pay job markets? How much is due to a post-techno industry cuspung its own knee-curve paradigm shift? Don't know; that's just one more report I can't find so back to predictor extraordinaire Ray and his law of accelerating returns: ***the economic imperative of a competitive market place driving technology forward.*** Ray explains how he spells societal acceptance. "An analysis of the history of technology shows its change is exponential contrary to the common sense intuitive linear view. We won't experience 1000 years of progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; it will be more like 20,000 years of progress (at today's rate). Returns such as chip-speed and cost-effectiveness also increase exponentially. There's even exponential growth in the rate of exponential growth! Within a few decades, machine intelligence will surpass human intelligence leading to *The Singularity: technological change so rapid and profound—it represents a rupture in the fabric of human history.* The implications include the merger of biological and nonbiological intelligence, immortal software-based humans, and ultra-high levels of intelligence that will expand outward in the universe at the speed of light."

Wow! I forgot it's not easy to quote Ray—though chills easily trickle down my spine when I do. Do we actually think pureform humans can remain intact as the kings of this amazing hill; *still hold onto decent paying lifelines to afford our civilized existence all with a formidable techno-wolf pounding down our door? Ray's law doesn't take into account the rate we adapt and the consequences of what's sure to happen when that rate finally collides with Baby-G's! Is Singularity something we truly think we can afford to entertain?* If not, then we must quickly come to fully appreciate that societal acceptance is still—cupped right within the palm of our hands. If, if, if. *The we factor*; shrink-wrapped into two measly letters.

### **Corralling Fine.**

Acceptance logic about how irreplaceable we are goes something like this. At the onset of the Industrial Revolution, workers weren't keen about replacement either but it turned out just fine! Menial jobs upgraded to skilled, skilled ushered in unions, unions ushered in a strong middle-class, and we all know the health of a governed society is gauged by how fat the middle is! Sure, unions got carried away but things got trimmed up and the techno-revolution maintained the middle so things worked out just fine! Well fine! Already mindlessly gorging on mid-wage jobs, low-wage jobs are where *fine* is now getting a workout and *if* we don't get a handle on Ray's Law, Baby-G will devour those too! We are already seeing how *fine* Baby-G looks—all decked-out as a waitress.

Time to digress on *fine*; its part of what's insidious. Humans are animals; a product of part nature, part nurture. We're supposed to be a sort of outdoorsy creature. But now, concerned for their safety, parents raise their kids indoors on pixels. A sedate setting with fake outdoor sensory enhancements like it's the finest thing to do! Really? I'm truly grateful my kids got to actively make their mud-pies bare-assed naked. The feel, taste, smell, the bugs—are just a few bonuses of life learned outside. *A learning in which most of what a human digests, happens in the first eight years of life. Mud-pie years.*

Billions are made tapping parental fear from all the imaginative products invented from someone else's brain—*not our kids' backyard inventions.* The hype behind these billions? Kids can *safely*, still be imaginative by interacting with techno-gadgets indoors. To a degree, I'm sure it's true. However, we don't have much data-proof yet as to whether this is a good trade but just because our tots aren't auto-spewing colorful PowerPoint charts to show what 8-outside years of learning looks like, it damn sure doesn't mean something amazing isn't going on inside those wee noggins. *Mother Nature has provided us, and every kid before us, one amazing playground for wee noggins to busy-busy build their own cache of subjective experience; a foundation for a lifetime more of learning to adhere to. By supporting a burgeoning, artificial substitute-making industry at the risk of impeding crucial human development, ergo; original thought, imagination, natural physical*

***responsiveness and creativity—is the trade today’s parents now face. The real price of that trade? Wholly unknown.***

I guess we can simply visualize what sedate indoor-living will mean for cubically-stuck adults. Oh wait, this is already happening! Here’s another insidious, oh-so fine sell: *our cubicle-future replaces repetitive, dangerous and boring jobs.* To this I’m thinking about how I’ve spent years now, sitting in front of this screen, my butt’s hurt, and I can’t remember the last time I’ve done anything this repetitious! Plus, I bet I’ve gained 15 pounds! Guess we’re conditioning our overweight and imaginatively stunted progeny for their sedate, robotic—cubicle life. Grrr...

Free advice; if I were raising kids today, I’d stick to the old-fashioned outdoor active stuff and skip much of the sedate indoor fakery—just in case. ***Can you see like a child? ~STP.*** This is one irreplaceable treasure we can’t afford to lose. Ps. enjoy parenting. I love watching young parents actually parent which truly is—*just fine.*

**What we have here is a Failure to Communicate.**

We make comments about how technology connects or disconnects us. Well, we’re certainly connected! We can blog, text, post, twitter, tweet, blither or blather to anyone including the person sitting right in front of us and I’ll confess, when I witness this happening—I think we may well be hopeless! Anyway, netting credible information damn sure hasn’t gotten easier.

In *Times* October 21<sup>st-2013</sup> edition, Joe Klein writes about the current political mess upon us and lays blame on “the radical nihilist minority of the Republican Party and the GOP’s craven leadership.” Klein says; “these radicals, as it is wildly inaccurate to call them conservatives, are a pestilence feeding on ignorance and cynicism, preying on fear as a period of unprecedented prosperity wanes.” Obviously Klein likes to knock the right but what’s scary is a regarded journalist minimalizing the rough times ahead by implying that any period having to follow an unprecedented prosperity spurt will obviously look gloomy. Receiving credible signaling aint easy but even without Superintelligence thrown into the big picture, while we still can, please feel your way to regard your own wary, intuitive pings—*the pings all this clamor sure seems bent on snuffing.*

Our debt: the one that’s expected to just keep on ballooning, the one we already can’t service but want to find comfort in believing our kids can—checks in way beyond gloomy. So regardless of which side is swinging: ***it’s time to put a big X on reports minimalizing the mess we’re in; especially by bashing those questioning where we’re headed as though we are little more than fearful, ignorant folk.*** Just one page previous in the very same issue, Rana Foroohar writes about three actuality indicators Klein overlooked.

1) “Interest rates will rise as they can’t go down any further.” Well, this seems logical since 0% interest on items such as new cars has been going on for some time. But, “as rates go up, the price of everything from homes and cars to consumer goods rise. The future return on nearly every asset is going down. *This is called the new normal.*”

2) “Stocks displace bonds as the safety asset of choice. Markets believe companies’ ability to pay each other back is a safer bet than the trust and faith in the U.S. government.” Well, when we learned that our nation’s credit was downgraded, I’d guess this would be some of that fallout.

3) “Both the economy and politics will become more volatile. Politicians play chicken with the country’s credit, borrowing rates go up—growth goes down. Politics will become even more polarized.” Now there’s one fact everybody agrees on! Pre-election speculation showed Foroohar pegged this one dead-on. However, anytime we want—***we can stop being so damn predictable.***

In this very same issue, James Poniewozik ties in how signal manipulation contributes to our stall; the precursor to decay. *Titled Tuned In—Unfair and Balanced*, here’s a recap: “When a journalist puts the impetus of the news where it accurately belongs, they run the risk of being tagged a biased reporter. Therefore, blaming both sides is the safe bet but—it’s not necessarily accurate journalism. ***Both sides report to us a balanced diet of inaccurate news.*** Also, self-serving angles

come into play; open access to pols and parties is necessary, not alienating readers and viewers is critical, but not offending the all-mighty advertiser—crucial. In the end: ***looking fair becomes more important than being fair.***

Not only is netting credible news all jacked up, but in our personal connecting—our failure to communicate is largely due to what we want to convey is getting lost in wireless translation. ***Humans use emotions. Our conveyances are best delivered and received via intrinsic sensory. And, I am utterly certain that a diluting of our intrinsic sensory—isn't forward adaption.*** Easily, we could retract here too; U-turn our acceptance back towards a truly guarded appreciation as to what it actually means to be human! We can even speed this process up a bit by simply stretching for some signs worth accentuating. For instance, I've noticed a few celebrity idols have informed us; our youth—they no longer tweet. Now if there's a group that can impact fads—this would be the one! For parents—not so easy. I have noticed most of us are now requiring smartphones to be left elsewhere during dinner—not pocketed. Honestly, we don't have all the time in the world anymore! We need to start voicing en masse what's acceptable cuz rolling our eyes just isn't working!

### **Pocket It.**

Remember, corralling spark-retardant thoughts is on my list of things to do. When workforce monitoring/replacement technologies really got going, we couldn't quite put a finger on why these agendas came with such an ominous feel because we had yet to accept that we were all candidates for replacement. We were however, able to point a finger at those suspicious others. So if you don't consider yourself bad, then you do what the German mass did when informed they had lots of bad neighbors. You await authorities to muck-out the ones that are! I thought of this the other day when I heard on the radio: ***87% of any workforce does not come to the defense of their coworkers.*** Wow. That's one finger that needs pocketed—now.

Today's kids are lazy. Really? Since they are tomorrow's future, we should more fairly consider this slapstick assessment but even if they are—who'd they cop this example from? Anyway, I have employed many kids for years so I've come to see this as another finger that needs pocketed.

There's a few drawbacks that came with our Cultural Revolution. For starters, it brought about an era that had both parents hitting the streets. Of one unsavory result: about 50% of today's young adults came from split homes. ***Your momma kept you but your daddy left you ~BK.*** Maybe they witnessed long enough, the heavy price their family paid when their folks left home to clamor for higher rungs. Maybe they've concluded that to trade family stability for the extra frenzied buck of longer hours and longer commutes isn't worth it. I agree.

It warms my heart to see the young fathers I work with puff with pride to say: "this job pays well enough that my wife gets to stay home to raise our kids!" It seems like only yesterday when husbands were embarrassed to say their wives, the mothers of their children—stayed home. And the heat would rise in the cheeks of these wives when asked, what do you really do—besides tend to the kids? Didn't the show *Nine to Five* depict this?

***Today's youth are the offspring of the workhorse generations.*** We were absent during the teaching process of work ethics. As a result—***our kids run shy of work skills.*** I find myself fantasizing about parents insisting to pay me for their kid's first work-month fully aware that I must teach them *how-to* before they can! Also, farms—the place where nearly every yesterday's kid learned to work, is nearly non-existent now. And yes, child labor laws are good but without much flexibility, employers are hesitant to give even nieces and nephews a leg up.

I don't offer these observations as accountability excuses. Rather, I just see the lazy slapstick assessment about our kids no differently than the hopelessly complacent one about us. ***No mass has experienced such an easy-living existence as the one we have.*** Back-breaking labor from dust to dawn is not our reality. We've all gotten soft; we all suffer bouts of laziness and that includes our kids. We are where we are. However, that existence now includes a Baby-G being programmed to

outperform our every output so it's quickly, that we must regroup and elevate where we are. *All of us need to make a few home-plate improvements.*

### **While on a Roll.**

Litigation went crazy. Took TV commercials with it. Insurance companies obviously picked up on the idea that we want a safe-safe experience! Other commercials; those which begin obscurely, are generally ads from energy companies selling integrity—*for a lasting tomorrow*. Of course the ads for the latest techno must-haves run constantly and now I'm confused. Should I buy a tablet or pad and do these latest tricked-out gadgets make smartphones now dumb? However, no commercial screams ridiculously absurd more than those from drug companies. I try to count all the side-effects these drugs come with but I run out of fingers. Seriously, who actually wants to deal with a 4-hour erection, breath better but risk not breathing at all, or slip a mommy's little helper down fully aware there's a possibility you may want to off yourself? But! No commercial screams slimy more than law firms trolling to snag someone to call *1-800-you-probably-won't-get-rich* (but we will if you'd just call!) I bring these absurdities up for several reasons:

- 1). ***A sue-happy existence has played a hefty role in replacing workers with machines.***
- 2). Such ridiculousness is not only offensive—it's embarrassing. Folks from other countries must think we really are becoming hopeless.
- 3). They may be onto something. The next time you watch TV, just notice what kind of ads run over and over and over again. That's us: ***spelling out our acceptance—for all the world to see.*** Yep. Our brand of bourgeois is on a mini runaway. Nothing unstoppable. We just have to nurture a few hopeful seeds and then poof! We'll be off in a different direction. Now I can't say if we'll choose a path less absurd, but I do know commercials are sure to point where our acceptance then heads! FYI: please but please think twice before rushing to buy 3-D Mayhem Bakers or those really cool Virtual Reality Goggles; *2 items that by scrambling to buy tons of, provides Baby-G a really affordable smorgasbord for two very primary, must-have, growth developments.*

### **Jaded Lazy.**

There's some inconvenient truths shaping how our watch is going down and ambivalence seems to work well when confronted with them. Though most of us are still employed; concerned about the many that aren't and hoping things will soon get better, many of us still point to the misfortunate as those who bring it on themselves. So, is that true? Harvard Professor Niall Ferguson doesn't think so. He writes; "Social Mobility is now lower in America than most other developed countries, has declined markedly in the past 30 years and it's still falling." In America, the place we fondly like to think is still the promised land of yesterday—isn't. Misfortune now—can so easily turn anyone's way. However—***some behaviors intensify misfortune.***

Along the trek to that last rest, old traditions held honor in some sort of customary, final journey for their aged and decrepit. Today, working-bee stints pay forward. And I believe most of us accept our contributing turn here since anything less would be unconscionable now. And along that trek, we all grapple with bouts of misfortune so most of us can and do—empathize for those who are currently in the grips of misfortune. These two markers; paying forward and offering a lending hand is—*what's acceptable in our society*. From left to right and all folks in-between; there's no ideology divider on compassion. There is however, a clear distinction between what weight any of us will gladly carry and what weight tax-paying hands want, or responsibly should—pull back from.

Possibly, a techno-zoned physicality created a glut of lazy kin but however it's happening: ***we can't afford to enable debilitating behaviors.*** When a draining behavior grows to become so obvious its pegged-name becomes familiar to all, we must appraise that behavior because it's an indicator as to where our acceptance is being tugged. ***Entitlement mentality is—gang mentality.*** Any age, race or creed can succumb. ***The common behavior-denominator is laziness.*** It's an

insidious taproot unconcerned about who it ensnares. So like Ferguson, I don't see this root sprouting in society's bottom rungs but rather, a lack of social mobility ensures more and more of us will get ensnared to there and once smack into *Fishtown*—it gets real hard to find the exit.

Though I slept through a few classes, I was awake for the one about a fundamental pillar that crashed down on the Roman Empire. Status was everything to Roman elite. The more wheat they brought from their farms to feed the mass, the greater was their stature. So at the expense of elitist stature, the mass became cripplingly dependent and as time went by, the mass, now accustomed to being fed, became angry when they weren't—*someone else was accountable*. Today's democracy seems to have learned part of that lesson. *Elites aren't crippling us to gain their lofty stature—we are crippling ourselves!* And if we stay on this road, lack of accountability will be dealt with by an evermore dominant rulership and I liken this to raising kids. Parents usually learn the hard way, the more we shoulder our kid's misbehavior—the more they'll reward us with more misbehaving.

Most of us view *Fishtown* residents through the filtering lens of compassion; their hollowed gaze symptomatic of some deeply-rooted environmental issues (like a bad childhood due to lazy parenting for instance), but somehow, our compassion helped create one jaded attitude: ***an existence bent on sitting around tallying-up justifications as to why Jaded-Lazy is entitled to do-nothing.*** Yes, I'll work on pocketing my finger here but there's a few things I'd like Jaded-Lazy to consider. First, nobody was actually raised by June and Ward Cleaver. Next, we all endure bouts of laziness but lucky for Lazy, we get over ourselves and get on with the messy business of living and you need to do the same because that stark lesson the Romans gave us about societal decay—shows your soft feet front and center.

Jaded-Lazy: this is a one shot deal for any of us. Don't be so quick to squander yours when the next bout of misfortune turns your way. Snatching bits of happiness along the way is not a game for the feeble so each time a hopeful sparking lands, then quickly paste a bit of purpose-belief onto the fact that for some reason—*you made it through whatever childhood misery you endured*. Then, commit a lifetime to nurturing that belief. The reward? A more gratifying, fulfilled—one shot deal. The end.

### **Ticking to Accountability.**

Lack of accountability plagues more than the conscious-less, Jaded-Lazy, or the basic run of the mill hoodlum who ticks to the timeworn copout; *why should they be accountable—authorities aren't?* Yes, we have presidents who side-step accountability, gluttonous CEO's that keep getting off with raping us, and a congress who writes rules for everyone to follow—except them. However, society-general is also racking up our own accountability tab; evidenced in part by watching litigation go crazy. I came to see the beginnings of this craziness about the time when millions were awarded to the woman who spilled hot java down her thighs. Jeez, if we want vendors to be responsible for keeping the pot turned down—can't we just say so?

Since 2007, it's estimated there's been over 6.4 million home foreclosures. Each year, credit card companies write-off billions in unrecoverable charges. Teachers are tired of parents holding them accountable for their kid's misbehaving's and schools are tired of being sued. But regardless of exorbitant rates or the occasional insufferable teacher, there's something insidious cropping-up as evidenced when we read: *banks should be held accountable for lending us too many loans, credit card companies for churning out too many cards to us. Schools even, as the dynamics have changed; both parents must now work.*

It's senseless to disregard these accountably justifications as unrelated to us since we raise our kids and pay our debts. Rather, the cumulative picture of what insidious looks like should alarm us greatly. We are communal and—*Fishtown is just around the corner and growing*. So before we get too comfy with expectations that our government must make more rules for those others to play by, we should consider what type of people more of us will become. ***Losing individual accountability***

***thus expanding, will undoubtedly come with heavier monitoring—in order to keep track of the growing number of unruly kids.***

### **Stature Rungs.**

Stature spoons with decadence. ***When the need for either hits excess-absurdity, they become just another telling precursor as to how great societies crumbled from within.***

Since antiquity, and all the way to old-money Gatsby-like Gold-Coasters, decadence and the need for stature played a hefty role. And the schemes to alleviate some of the weight of gluttony like sphinx robbing to ransom, are as large and varied as the hordes of riches themselves. So if we want to curtail decay, then it's back to looking for hopeful signs to accentuate. For instance, Bill and Melinda Gates bundled up much of their hordes to become—the philanthropists' of our century. My esteem for Warren Buffet grew when I read that he still lives in the same old house, still drives the same ole truck; maybe a 71 Chevy? Angelina Jolie is far more than a rich, beautiful face. Wealthy celebrities in general, don't gallivant around dripping with diamonds. *Many of today's who's who—don't live in gross decadence.*

For us, from the rungs in which we swing; (so long as we overlook our fevered desire to palm the latest app'ed-out whatever), our need for stature seems to be subsiding too. Remember, an acorn can grow into a large tree once the seed gets planted and nurtured so here's a seed. Maybe it was the corporate ladder frenzy or the harried state of trying to keep up with the Jones that helped replace bourgeois with uh—a full pendulum swing to grunge but whatever the reason: *grunge became more than music. Today's young adults seem to possess a healthier equanimity of materialistic well-being.* Possibly, we are witnessing an adaptation in-the-making; something forceful enough to alter tomorrow's predestined fate—if nurtured. And what-if the wealthy tally the riches of life seen only in piled hordes? ***If our youth are headed towards a tallying of life's riches without those hordes, that damn well is—one seed worth nurturing.***

### **Tawdry Dance.**

The role of our government is for a Free Humanity; *a happy kind of pursuit of life and liberty.* When deviations from this focal-point veer to such a degree that laws, subsidies and entitlements are being hatched faster than the busy worker-bee can pay for it all, it means we've gotten off track and need to regroup. Period.

As it stands: ***our country is set to decline. This does not yet spell inevitable collapse.*** However, a commerce-based Democracy does mean accountability is a double-edged expectation; the assurance our ruling cadre practice accountability, can only come from a mass practicing the same. Sure, supporting the idea that today's political rulers have good intentions is healthy but lax attentiveness to keep it that way—damn sure isn't.

I'd guess most of us believe our governed system is trustworthy but I'd also guess most of us question our ruling cadre's individual accountability and we should. But since they don't appear crazed; overtly obsessed with the power we've instilled in them, then I'd guess we remain hopeful that really—they are doing their best to serve us. This seems logical except there's a continual stream being caught, corporate-elites included, being investigated for ethical indiscretions every day. Who knows what happens along their power-tripping way but their fall from grace is as human as ours—it's just that they signed-up and swore to uphold theirs. FYI: it's a role for humanity not machinity. Treating a society's workforce like some inept and replaceable entity, treating it's citizenship as though we deserve to be monitored because we are all suspect of something, is not only insulting—it's inexcusable. It's also a guaranteed recipe for disaster. ***Whatcha gonna do when it all breaks up? ~SM.***

Glaring-at-us evidence points to high seas complicity from one entrenched, crony politickin' of an Oligarchy! Trillions shuffle between that hill and that street. Pelosi alone, dressed up in the color blue to the tune of a \$34 million increase in stock revenues; *a 62% gain over 2009.* Pelosi must be a

financial wizard! She made something like a 203% gain from a Visa investment alone! Curiously: **during a time when credit card reform was working its way through the house.** When confronted, she became rather indignant; refused an interview request for the *60 Minute* segment which aired in November 2011 titled *Insiders*—a follow-up on Schweizer's 2011 book *Throw Them All Out*. John Boehner also declined. Now why would public representatives refuse accountability requests? Schweizer never accused even one, oath-swearing skyrocketing-millionaire crony, that they were indeed—*illegally capitalizing on insider manipulation*. Kroft from *60 Minutes* didn't either. His words had something to do with those sculpting legislation: **are perfectly positioned to profoundly influence the fate of stocks via legislation.** In fact, Schweizer dug and dug for verifiable proof to accuse those perfectly positioned—**but all he could find was a whole lot of incredibly opportune, perfectly timed heyday gains.** And, that's the point: **"they have legislated themselves as untouchable."** C'mon! Powerful oath sworn leaders caught with their fingerprints smeared all over the cookie jar and all they have to do is lash back at us like we've no right to question their accountability? Guess it doesn't take much for us to roll right over nowadays.

In so many ways, we have a great governed country. Just look at our infrastructure; roads and bridges, education, beautiful cities, first-class irrigated and potable water systems. The FDA ensures every edible product to reach our shores meets our expectations. We have the finest damn military in the world and we swell with pride knowing honor compels them. My own son has done 3 tours in the mid-east now and I'd just like to know the folks who decree that our kids risk their lives—also roil in integrity. So how does our governing cadre get so many things right, yet succumb to such a tawdry dance at their crony party on the hill? Truly, does it really all just boil down to forsaking accountability because their lust for stature is just too intoxicating?

We can do better but so can they. Meanwhile, we are still this country's oxen; busily churning the big wheels forward leaving scant time to turn around and be this country's watch-dog to ensure the folks we hire to provide responsible leadership are doing just that. **Obviously, the messes we've been led into means the ones we pay to responsibly guide us are not keeping up their part of the bargain simply because they can't—or won't. So, which is it?**

## January 24<sup>th</sup> 2012.

It is now January 2019. I'm leaving this 2012 observation in because we're about to get a full-on rerun about how politics now work us over. Besides, *Newsweek's* observation about our attention span still prickles; "we rejoiced in the streets to the news of Bin Laden's finality for a day and a night. Then—moved on." **I want an eye for an eye. I woke up this morning to an empty sky ~BS.**

So it was here, back in 2012 when I thought I was finalizing this installment but alas, I've since learned something about writing. Anyway, I'd turned the light off in my wee typing room to then plop on the couch for any mind-numbing selection when the remote happened upon—*The State of the Union Address*. Yes, I was sorely tempted to tune-out and turn elsewhere. Well afterwards, I made myself return to that wee room and jot down my thoughts about the address—**untainted by the tweaking of our opinion that lies ahead.** Maybe my view was a solid take, maybe not but like most, I watched the address just once; a first glance connection then. Will my intuition stand the test of time? Who knows, but it's what we all drew from, at least for one hour on January 24<sup>th</sup> 2012.

Wow! The prez has one helluva speech writer! I was captivated; found myself fantasizing about having the money to hire someone to write this damn series. Overall, I was moved. I'll go out on a limb and say Obama's address will eventually go down in history as one of the finest. However, in-spite of one commanding delivery—I grew wary.

First, the president kept inferring the fix-all department is mostly located on the hill. This does little more than give us our do-nothing but vote ticket. **If our intention is to actually tick off a few defugilities on our laundry list, then it's gonna take a whole lot more than hoping our hijacked**

**partisan ride will do it for us!** Besides, call it socialism or whatever you want but any brand of more overlording will always be—backwards.

Next, the president's rosy view about the state of this union was a bit much—even for me. However, alarms went off when his rosy-rally included re-charging what fueled yesterday's economy. "*We must continue to fund technological advancements and stay committed as the premier world leader in this exciting future!*" Well, something like that anyway. Remember, I was watching—not recording. ***Dammit! Every ruling elite knows insanity goes hand-in-hand with this exciting future so where are the guides who will even acknowledge this?***

### **Flip Side.**

Mitch Daniels then gave the republican rebuttal and within moments, he craftily tore down the President's commanding delivery. ***Scratch all your impact away ~JJ.*** Now, had Daniels offered some fix-all remedy—*other than a hill full of republicans*; had he even thought to show a smidgen of skepticism about this exciting techno-future, then maybe I'd have appreciated his rebuttal. Instead, it was politics as usual. ***Two-fork partisan rivalry vying for premier power carries more weight than fixing this great country together as one shared — power entity.***

Sure, Daniels rebuttal was impressive too and had it not been for his scornful undertones: ***I'd have missed where his fix-alls differed much from Obama's other than replacing the flavor.*** This is when I began to notice something. It was almost as if both speeches had similar tones—only transposed, and I wondered if this is how a song might sound if played simultaneously, right side up—flip side down. Maybe I got it all wrong but that night I was certain this had to be one of the finest displays of perfectly rehearsed—layered duplicity. All for our benefit even! And to think our opinion doesn't matter!

I then watched commentators slice and dice, hoping they would tell me what I just witnessed was true—***that we really aren't nearly as divided as others would have us believe.*** Well, that wasn't in the cards so I tuned-out, turned-off. Besides, I wanted to hang onto my own feelings and thoughts. This reminded me of a tidbit in *Deadly Spin*. "By 1942, the power of propaganda hit so hard and fast—*The Institute for Propaganda was formed to try to contain PR and defuse propaganda.* This effort later fizzled but left a near-lasting legacy called the *PR Code of Ethics* which provided some ability to enforce ethics—right up until it was formally eliminated in 2000." Well, maybe their motto will find a more lasting legacy: ***Teach people how to think rather than what to think.*** Yeah, I'm gonna hold onto what I felt and thought—that night of January 24<sup>th</sup> 2012.

### **Goose and Gander.**

My analogies are starting to run over each other and I'm way over sitting here plucking away. A mere two-century experiment of *Freedom for the People* now has a replacement-wolf pounding down our door. We've got to stop pretending we don't know what the wolf wants. Ready or not it's now or never. In order to effect the direction we want the techno-future to take our own progeny: ***now is the time and we are the generations that must expand our delusory and myopic view about the techno-future.***

On a *Real Time segment*, Mr. Maher asked the group for their thoughts about technology and the conversation then hit on—*the some of it*. One comment has it ruining our culture, to which someone quipped—what culture? Another comment has us living through a transition; that we will adjust. Another said social media is the gatekeeper for the big media industry to which someone said that's not working; we're becoming less informed. One guy said that we must learn to use technology to our best interest; that right now—we're like kids with a new toy. That guy is right. We just have to learn to use it to our best interest—*quickly*. After watching this segment, I sent a letter to Mr. Maher asking him to shed intensity onto—*the all of it*. Well, bright-idea 2,560 didn't work. So, I'm starting 2019 off with my fingers and toes crossed in hopes that somebody will come along and save me from

the disseminating-maze of trying to get this out to—*the all of us. I'm pullin' in all the faith I can find ~BS.*

No man has all the right answers nor the best laid plans but everyone understands the power of a united mass and I'd bet decent ruling elites would love our help. The mounting challenges we now face dictate that we must upgrade ourselves as bosses, workers, as societal beings—quickly. We may never get back our jobs that went overseas or the ones that Baby-G already gobbled-up but unless we fully appreciate what's good for the goose is good for the gander—we're all sunk. Realize, there are few countries with a middle class. Imagine then, living in one—without. ***If we will simply nurture a belief that necessary change is truly in the air—we'll be on our way.***

I'm calling it a day. A beautiful song floats in the background. It ends with a bit of Clarence's soul. I always thought this album should have won the Grammy that year oh-so long ago. The one forever known as 9.11.01.

***Yeah, if we could just start talkin' ~ don't know when this chance might come again ~BS.***

Sincerely and always, Publius