

The New Hampshire Gazette

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The Fortnightly Rant

Media Landscape Somewhat Shaken

America's news landscape was shaken this past fortnight by four sizeable earthquakes. There should have been one more.

First, NBC News anchor Brian Williams got the hook for telling a war story. War stories are less dangerous than wars, but, for people working in an allegedly fact-based business, telling them is not without risk.

What Williams told was the world's oldest, most basic war story: "it was this close."

An ordinarily cautious person, somehow put in Williams' position, probably wouldn't have risked telling it. In an audience of millions of people, there might well be several who knew for a fact that it was not true.

But the limelight-loving Williams was no ordinary person. He was the highest-rated, best-paid, newsmen in the country. He was the most visible employee of a \$65 billion dollar corporation,* and was treated as such.

Diff'rent Strokes

Williams might inhabit, from time to time, the same space as any ordinary grunt — or almost the same space — but he would forever occupy a different world.

Perhaps Williams thought that, in his world, no ordinary grunt could gain entrée or have agency. If so, his privilege was more dangerous than he realized. It lured him into a fictitious war story where he got his job blown off.

As soon as that happened, a mystery arose — why had it taken

so long? A host of other dubious tales quickly turned up: he watched Katyusha rockets fly under his helicopter in Israel in 2006; he saw a drowning victim floating in a French Quarter street during Hurricane Katrina; he "embedded" with SEAL Team 6 in 2003. In retrospect, none of these stories seems to hold water.

The greater mystery is why such trivial matters have gotten so much attention, when the larger lies he told are never mentioned. For example, on April 2, 2003, he duly parroted the Pentagon line that the Iraq War was "the cleanest war in all of military history." Pay no attention to those several hundred tons of depleted uranium ...

How to Tell a True War Story

Curiously, Williams could have lost his job just as quickly if he'd ever dared tell a true war story from behind the anchor desk. True war stories have best been described by Tim O'Brien in his book, *The Things They Carried*.

"A true war story is never moral. It does not instruct, nor encourage virtue, nor suggest models of proper human behavior, nor restrain men from doing the things men have always done. If a story seems moral, do not believe it. If at the end of a war story you feel uplifted, or if you feel that some small bit of rectitude has been salvaged from the larger waste, then you have been made the victim of a very old and terrible lie. There is no rectitude whatsoever. There is no virtue. As a first rule of thumb, therefore, you can tell a true war story by its absolute and uncompromising allegiance to obscenity and evil."



After Williams' suspension, one of the nation's most-trusted newsmen said, "Never again will Brian Williams mislead this great nation about being shot at in a war we probably wouldn't have ended up in if the media had applied this level of scrutiny to the actual f___ing war."

That newsmen, of course, was Jon Stewart, whose recently announced departure from *The Daily Show* will be more momentous than Williams' by several orders of magnitude. Stewart and his team of merry pranksters have revolutionized the way Americans perceive the news, something Williams never dreamed of doing and could never have accomplished if he had.

Stewart is going out near, if not at, the top of his game and more beloved by his huge audience than ever.

The Tallest Leprechaun

Stewart will be back. David Carr, sadly, will not. The *New York Times*' media columnist also went out at the top of his game, but he did that the same way he had lived — the hard way.

Unlike Williams, Carr was obsessed with getting to the truth. Proof of that can be found in his 2008 memoir, *The Night of the Gun*, detailing his earlier life as a drunk and a crack addict.

One of Carr's last pieces was about Williams' fall. Characteristically, it was both astute and compassionate. "We want our anchors to be everywhere, to be impossibly famous, globe-trotting, hilarious, down-to-earth, and above all, trustworthy," he wrote. "It's a job description that no one can match."

Stephen Colbert, interviewing Carr, called him "something of

a standout" in *Page One*, a documentary film about the *Times*. "That's sort of like being the tallest leprechaun," Carr replied.

A True War Story

Bob Simon, who reported for CBS from innumerable war zones during an exemplary 47-year career, was killed when a one-armed driver who was probably speeding crashed his limo in his home town of New York City.

Something Completely Different

"I've been in combat," Bill O'Reilly once claimed on his radio show. A caller named Roger disputed that claim, since O'Reilly never served in the military. Roger even had the gall to use the phrase, "fair and balanced."

"Take your little 'fair and balanced' ... remark and shove it," O'Reilly barked. "You're not getting on this air" — and Roger was gone. O'Reilly, however, is still on.

The Alleged News®

Support Who?

Generals in the Pentagon are currently engaged in a fascinating fight. Their opponents are Members of Congress. Newspapers (and lesser media) are the battlefield.

As so often happens, innocent bystanders are being caught in the crossfire. In this case, those bystanders happen to be U.S. ground forces, aka "the troops," whom all Americans universally revere, and would do anything to "support." Except actually support them.

USA Today reported on February 5th that "according to data declassified and obtained" by that paper, "[t]he Air Force A-10 attack jet has killed more U.S. troops in friendly fire incidents and more Afghan civilians than any other aircraft flown by the U.S. military."

"Well, gracious sakes," the typical reader would surely

think. "Why haven't the generals grounded the damned things?"

That is exactly what the generals are trying to do — ground the A-10 "Warthog."

The proper question to ask, though, is why — because the damning "declassified data" seems to have been cooked to produce misleading results.

On February 9th, the Project on Government Oversight [POGO] released a report saying, in part, that the "Air Force manipulated data and omitted key stats in order to skew a comparison of civilian casualties and friendly fire deaths caused by close air support aircraft in Afghanistan."

"The stats, which were recently reported by *USA Today*, were intended to bolster the Air Force's campaign to retire the A-10 Warthog in favor of the much costlier and unproven F-35 Joint

Strike Fighter.

"However, POGO's analysis found that the A-10 is significantly safer than most of the other planes in the comparison. The POGO analysis notes that the Air Force manipulated the data to either exclude or include information that worked against the A-10." For instance, the Air Force's data left out a 2009 incident in which a B-1 bomber killed up to 147 civilians, and wounded many more.

"The Air Force cherry-picked and doctored the data that it released in an attempt to build a false narrative against the A-10," said Mandy Smithberger, director of the Straus Military Reform Project at POGO. "The Air Force is resorting to dirty tricks because it can't make a valid argument against the A-10, proven to be reliable, effective, and a favorite

of troops on the ground."

This is not a brand-new battle. During the first five months of 2014, Air Force generals were telling anyone who would listen that 80 percent of ground support missions in Afghanistan were being flown by aircraft other than A-10s. They cited the 80 percent figure as proof that "a variety of aircraft can do the critical mission of reinforcing ground forces with firepower from the air" — which all seemed a bit peculiar, since the A-10 "Warthog" is the only aircraft in the Air Force's inventory that was designed specifically for that task.

In May, 2014 PBS reported on the generals' 80 percent claim, and found that the facts did not support it. As with POGO's later report, PBS saw evidence that the generals were cooking the books to obtain their desired result.

"[A] number of observers challenge the Air Force's claim that 80 percent of close air support missions are really conducted by non-A-10 planes," PBS reported. "These observers assert that the service has deliberately manipulated the data to support its case."

The generals hate the "Warthog" because it's old, slow, and ugly, and because its only mission is to provide air cover for ground-pounders in the Army and Marine Corps.

Members of Congress love the thing because so many of their constituents are related to those lowly ground-pounders.

The ground-pounders love the Warthog because when someone is trying to kill you, few things are more reassuring than the sound of

Whither the Weather?

Ahh, New England — home of hardy inhabitants who long have boasted of the delights of its four distinctive seasons. This winter has been so distinctive it stinks.

For depressingly obvious reasons there has been a lot of loose talk lately about the weather and the climate. It's important to bear in mind the difference between the two.

Weather is the state of the atmosphere at any given time; the combined effect of a myriad of variable factors including air temperature, moisture, wind velocity and direction, &c, &c. Weather changes constantly, and often quite quickly. At least, it used to.

Climate is the overall pattern of weather, as it has accumulated over time — until such time, apparently now, when it finally exhausts our inner resources and crushes the life out of us.

This winter's weather began quite normally, as do so many horror movies. Through December and nearly through the month of January it was on the mild side, with a little snow here and there.

Then, of course, on January

26th, a two-day, two-foot blizzard began. It would have been a storm to remember, had it not been for the three or four blizzards which followed; eventually they all begin to run together.

We measure out our life with newspapers. Two newspapers ago, on Friday, January 23rd, the ground was bare. Snow has since fallen on 22 out of 28 days. Most of that snow fell sideways so it's difficult to understand how so much accumulated. Somehow, it did, though. Definitive figures are harder to find than one might think; our best estimate is somewhere between five and six feet. To make things more challenging the temperature has been so cold that every flake is still here. Since January 25th, the temperature has been above freezing for eight hours. On Monday morning the wind chill in Portsmouth was a bracing -30° and the winds atop Mt. Washington were clocked at 141 mph — even as San Francisco experiences its warmest winter in history.

Which raises the question: as the kids might put it, WTF?



Where Mumbo Meets Jumbo

The current theory, in so far as we are able to understand it, is that the reduced albedo, or reflectivity, of the North Polar region, due to a statistically irrefutable reduction in the area covered by North Polar sea ice, has led to the quasi-resonant amplification of poleward-propagating Rossby waves, which have thereby destabilized the path taken by the jet stream.

By meandering southward, the jet stream has formed what's called an Omega block — a northward-looping pattern whose characteristic persistence results in a never-ending series of blizzards blasting through here like commuter trains from some frozen existential hell. Speaking of which, don't go to Boston — their commuter trains have succumbed to the weather.

To the surprise of exactly no one, Portsmouth has run out of room on Pierce Island to stash this excess snow. GraniteGrok.com, one of the state's best barometers of Right Wing crazy outside

of the New Hampshire Republican State Committee itself, finds that hilarious.

"If I may offer a suggestion," writes Grotker Steve MacDonald, "how about Senator Jeanne Shaheen's yard? When you run out of room at the Shaheen compound and panty retailer [Note: *This is apparently a Republican in-joke, which we would explain if we could. — The Ed.*] we can send you a list of her fellow snow-less-winter doomsayers so you can dump it in their yards. They are currently warming themselves over burning piles of other people's money discussing how the newly settled Global Warming science causes it to snow more." Because only a fool would believe in science.

On Sunday, February 15th, the National Weather Service in Taunton, MA released a forecast predicting a "[p]otential midweek storm system mainly in the form of snow; continued bitterly cold; no break in the weather pattern; **next chance of warmth: sometime spring into summer.**" [Emphasis added.]

A Quantum of Solace

Fortunately, we can conclude this dismal report on an upbeat note. Here is the *Gazette's* two-pronged, sure-fire method of coping with these trying circumstances.

On odd-numbered days, practice denial. "It ain't happening, and we're paying it no attention. Snow? What snow?"

On even numbered days, let your morbid meteorological curiosity run wild. Root feverishly through online weather databases, searching desperately for any shred of evidence suggesting that Steve MacDonald is right and everything's just peachy.

When evening comes, whether odd day or even, relax before a fire of other peoples' money and read George R. Stewart's excellent *Ordeal by Hunger: The Story of the Donner Party*.

One last item: humor us, dear Readers, as we conduct a bit of market research. We are considering a name change. Please let us know — how does the name *The Barbados Gazette* sound to you?



Apparently dissatisfied with Portsmouth's staid traditional architecture, Mother Nature recently added an elaborate cornice to this building on Sheafe Street. A complaint has been lodged with the Historic District Commission.

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Vietnam War Full Disclosure

To the Editor:
This year marks the 50th anniversary of the landing of U.S. ground troops in Da Nang, Vietnam — the beginning of the American War in Vietnam. To observe it, the Pentagon is undertaking a multi-million dollar campaign to rewrite and whitewash the history of that war.

In response, Veterans For Peace (VFP) has announced the Vietnam War Full Disclosure project to offer a more truthful history.

VFP is asking all who were affected by the war to write letters addressed to "The Wall" (the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington) describing their experiences and sharing their grief over its devastating consequences with the 58,000 U.S. soldiers whose names are inscribed on it.

Here is the letter from Doug Rawlings, coordinator of the project, a founding member of VFP, and a Vietnam War veteran.

Dear brothers and sisters:
None of us can quite get it right. We keep trying to figure out what our relationship to you should look like. Psychologists, sociologists, historians, poets, painters, musicians, and sculptors have all thrown their hats into this ring of fire. It may be impossible. But we keep trying. For your sake. For ours.

Along the way, we put you into the hands of a brilliant young student, Maya Lin, to build us a wall. She has come the closest. Along

the way, some have wrestled with concepts like "survivor's guilt," "PTSD," and "moral injury" to seek some clarity, if not solace. They come close, too.

You see, we care about you. We want to keep you in the conversation. We want you to know that we still think you can offer us a great deal.

Personally, I wonder this: did any of you cross paths with me from July of 1969 to August of 1970? Up in II Corps, up in the Central Highlands, down by the Bong Son River. Do you remember? I went one way, you the other. I survived, you didn't.

Along the way over these years, along the way, I wrote this for you:

The Wall

*Descending into this declivity
dug into our nation's capitol
by the cloven hoof
of yet another one of our country's
tropical wars*

*Slipping past the names of those
whose wounds
refuse to heal*

*Slipping past the panel where
my name would have been
could have been
perhaps should have been*

*Down to The Wall's greatest depth
where the beginning meets the end
I kneel*

*Staring through my own reflection
beyond the names of those
who died so young*

*Knowing now that The Wall
has finally found me —
58,000 thousand-yard stares
have fixed on me
as if I were their Pole Star
as if I could guide their mute testi-
mony
back into the world
as if I could connect all those dots*

in the nighttime sky

*As if I
could tell them
the reason why*

So, okay, you would have thought that the grief from your loss and the many Southeast Asian lives lost would have compelled us to put an end to war. That we would no longer send young men and women into ill-begotten conflicts to appease the blood thirst of some self-appointed armchair avengers bent on protecting their warped version of the American way of life. You would have thought.

I'll spare you the details of wars mounted in our name since you left us. Trust me, though, that some of us have worked to stop them. We work to protect our children and grandchildren, to protect families we will never meet in lands far from here, to use your deaths as a means to say "no more." We have formed Veterans For Peace, partly in your memory, with the very lofty ambition of abolishing war. We oftentimes work in your name, for you. I'll admit that many times we feel like we are howling alone in the wilderness, but we will not desist. We owe that to you.

I'll be back, again and again, to walk alongside you for a short while. I will listen for your voices. I will touch your names and force myself to swing back through these many years and put myself in the place and time where and when we may have met. I promise you that I will take this opportunity to meld our spirits together, knowing that I grow stronger, in the doing so. And I will use that strength to abolish future wars. To stop the killing of innocents. In your name. That's the least I owe you. And the most.

Rest in peace.
Your brother,
Doug Rawlings
Chesterville, ME

Mash Notes, HATE MAIL,

Motivation for Interrogation

To the Editor:
The United States Government's use of "enhanced interrogation techniques" on detainees following the 9/11 attack was not done to provide intelligence but to provide evidence for a narrative upon which the Administration had settled.

The 9/11 attack was almost certainly planned by the four men who would have piloted the planes except one was unable to secure a United States student's visa. These men had become friends while living in Germany. One was from Yemen, another United Arab Emirates, one from Egypt, and one from Lebanon. During some years of living in Germany they had become embittered by the hypocrisy of Western claims to support human rights, democracy, and so forth. Many, though not all, Germans appeared to enjoy such privileges, but people in their home countries suffered brutal, western-backed dictators and in the case of Lebanon, the Israeli invasion and occupation.

The Lebanese man was apparently the most radical of the four — he had become so over their years together in Germany and his occasional visits home. He was also the most Westernized of the four and had attended an English-language high school in Lebanon. The same man studied aeronautical engineering at a German university in 1997 — long before the four men travelled to Afghanistan and were supposedly recruited by al Qaeda. (This information is from the 9/11 Commission report.)

The facts support a narrative of four men who are so upset with U.S. foreign policy that they strike at the institutions they believe are responsible for the policy. But such a narrative did not suit

the Bush Administration, which wanted justification to invade Afghanistan. So the Bush Administration wrote its own narrative.

The Bush Administration announced, and the corporate press dutifully repeated, that an organization called al Qaeda planned the 9/11 attack because they were contemptuous of America's values of freedom and democracy. This cartoon-like explanation was elaborated upon by referring to Sheik Mohamed as the "mastermind." Finally, the "enhanced interrogation techniques" were employed to convince Mr. Mohamed that he was responsible for an attack he knew nothing about.

Gregory Kalkanis
Oakland, CA
Gregory:
Orwell was right in 1946: "To see what is in front of one's nose needs a constant struggle."
The Editor

American Psychopath

To the Editor:
Dressing Ted Bundy in a military uniform would not have changed the fact that he was a psychopathic killer, a person who objectifies victims allowing him to torture or kill just to satisfy his sick mind filled [with] diabolical fantasies; and this is just what Chris Kyle was — a psychopath.

Doing a job because you are drafted is one thing, repeatedly volunteering for a job, and writing that you enjoy killing, does not make you a hero; especially when you do the killing in safety from 2,000 feet and not up close where you can smell the enemy. You are about as much a hero as those who kill via drone strikes from Colorado, or the person who mugs you in a dark alley.

And putting the story into the context of an illegal invasion of another country, a country that

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And Other Correspondence

was no threat to the United States, Kyle's action become even more cowardly, the only legitimate heroes being the ones who defend from such an attack.

If this is America's definition of a hero to be emulated it is no wonder that we have Columbo's.

John Dente
Wilmington, DE

John:
But ... but ... we're exceptional!
The Editor

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## Hello and Peace!

To the Editor:

I love *The New Hampshire Gazette*. I also love and am inspired by DemocracyNow! and many other progressive news outlets. But I think the time has come for a new practice. At the end of your inspiring articles, all progressive essayists should have to put at least two sentences on what the best next step is, or what we can do to fight against whatever injustice was so coherently just described in the article. Otherwise, the article is basically useless. Yes, we are all correct and after reading the articles can die happy drowning in our own self righteousness, but so what? Any whiff of change ends here unless we take the best next step. Does the reader really know what the best next step is? It should be the burden of the writer to tell us. To the progressive pontificators I say: secure your place in history by giving us the best next step.

For instance, I just read Hightower's article on Bezos and the *Washington Post*. Awesome. Loved it. After the end of the article he should have said, Best Next Step: Boycott the *Post*, or Send letters to the *Post* comments section letting them know you'll be boycotting the *Post*. I'm sure Hightower could provide much better suggestions. It makes the writer do

a little more work in terms of researching what citizens should do on this particular subject. As a progressive community, not only do we deserve this extra effort, we actually want it.

Good luck to you all and keep fighting,

Amy Hanmer  
Manchester

Amy:  
*Thanks for your kind words. Unfortunately, we cannot comply. Our lifetime supply of compliance was exhausted in August of '69.*

The Editor

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Ignorance, Not Books, Harms Children

To the Editor:

Quietly and unabatedly American book censorship is an everyday event. It takes only one person to launch a challenge because the book contains "sex," "violence," a "bad role model," or because it "denigrates religion," and on and on. The aim is to ban books from the classrooms and school libraries.

Nobel and Pulitzer prize winner Toni Morrison, and classics like *Huck Finn* and *Of Mice and Men* are still perpetually challenged.

Eloquent testimony abounds of the books' importance to many young readers with personal experience of sexual abuse, suicide, mental illness and family dysfunction. The authors address these topics because they value candor and honesty. They write not to frighten or sensationalize, but to tell the truth about the realities of life many would rather avoid discussing.

Ignorance, not books, harms children.

While individual views on the merits and value of such books vary widely, there is no evidence that kids are harmed by so called

"taboo" subject matter.

Not to say that every book is right for every child, or that parents shouldn't be involved in helping their children select books. Rather, the issue is whether any person has the right to be a self-appointed arbiter of taste and morality.

Students aren't required to accept any message in a book, any more than exposure to paintings of saints requires belief in a particular religious doctrine. Rather, an aim is to discuss opposing views respectfully.

Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden for tasting the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge ... message: knowledge is sinful and corrupting

Michael Kulla
Pleasant Valley, NY

Michael:
It's so good to receive a letter from you with which we agree completely! As a boy, the Editor was allowed to read anything his heart desired, and he turned out ... wait a minute. Let us rethink this

The Editor

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## Defending the Kingdom

To the Editor:

At the risk of appearing irreverent, I found myself scratching my head in disbelief when I read the following Tweet by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, stating his reaction to the passing of Saudi Arabia's monarch: "King Abdullah was a man of wisdom & vision. The U.S. has lost a friend & Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Middle East, and world has lost a revered leader."

It is certainly customary for the Secretary of State to say such things when the head of a "friendly" state to the U.S. dies, especially the head of the state with the world's largest oil reserves. Kerry's words could have just as easily emanated from the mouths of former Secretaries of State James Baker or Condoleeza

Rice, as evidenced by the two of them having been part of the U.S. delegation, which included President Obama and the First Lady, that visited the kingdom to pay respect to the dead king.

The Saudi King is said to have produced many reforms. I personally have no such knowledge of his "reform production;" however, I can definitively say that the nation he and his predecessors have ruled over (with his hereditary successor promising to preserve the status quo) has produced Osama Bin Laden, al Qaeda, and 15 of the 19 hijackers that attacked the U.S. on 9/11/2001. It is furthermore well documented that Saudi Arabia, where strict Sharia Law still rules the day, has one of the most atrocious records on the planet when it comes to freedom, tolerance and human rights (especially those of women).

I have no doubt that I'd be sentenced to 1,000 lashes and 10 years in prison, like civil rights blogger Raef Badawi, if I were to have written this letter from a desk in Riyadh. Therefore, one of the most persistent questions I have is: Why does the citizenry of the self-proclaimed world's greatest democracy, that severed ties with a king in 1776, accept its government using its taxes (lots) for its democratic nation to enable, protect and fight (and die) for any kingdom, let alone one that is so undemocratic?

Wayne H. Merritt  
Dover, NH

Wayne:  
*"Nations have no permanent friends or allies," said Lord Palmerston, "they only have permanent interests." Therefore, we need not be shamed by our association with Saudi Arabia. It's not as if they're our friends.*

The Editor

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Ayotte's Warped Perspective!

To the Editor:

How many times have we heard



that worn-out canard, releasing prisoners from Guantanamo will endanger our troops? I would applaud the concern of those who hold that view if I believed that it was genuine and not pure political posturing, not to mention that their focus is misplaced on a few individuals and not the big picture.

Hundreds of times our military and intelligence leaders have stated that the existence of the Guantanamo Bay prison is a major recruiting tool for terrorist groups. Yet those that claim concern for our troops continue to oppose the closure of the prison while thousands of young Muslims are recruited to fight in Syria and Iraq.

If their concern is really true, why do they worry about those transferred or released from Guantanamo and not the role the prison plays in the multitudes currently being recruited? The answer is political gamesmanship.

Our own Senator Ayotte is one of the worst offenders and a political pontificator of prodigious proportion. She is now all worked up over one individual who was released from Guantanamo and eventually rejoined ISIS as a recruiter.

Of the original 779 Gitmo prisoners 657 have been released and only a small percentage have rejoined Al-Qaida. The remaining 122 includes 50 who have been

More Hate Mail, &c.

to page six

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Northcountry Chronicle

Resurrection and Revision

by William Marvel

It is now nearly a dozen years since I drove over to Brunswick for John Pullen's funeral. In the last decade of his life we had grown quite friendly through our mutual interest in history, and whenever I spoke at the Joshua Chamberlain Civil War Round Table he and I would usually meet afterward for a meal or just a chat. It seemed strange for me to address that group as the visiting "expert" with him sitting in the audience, because in my teens he was one of the historians I admired most.

John would have turned 101 last month. He was born in North Amity, Maine, up in the County, where his grandfather regaled him with stories of serving in the Union army during the last months of the Civil War. Some of the men from Amity had served in the 20th Maine, and after his own service in World War II John started collecting material

on their story. His research culminated in *The Twentieth Maine: A Volunteer Regiment in the Civil War*, published in 1957. It was the first, and without doubt the best, in what became a flood of modern regimental histories using particular units as vehicles for recounting that war. After his book appeared, most of those who began writing about the military side of that conflict initially imitated John's technique, including me, but I know of no one who improved on either his writing style or his compelling content, including me.

I first encountered the book a couple of years later, in an anthology of *Reader's Digest* condensed titles at my grandmother's house, specially illustrated with wash drawings of those Maine soldiers in Prussian-blue uniforms. Despite the abridgement, it seemed to give me all the information I could want about Civil War soldiers and their armies. I didn't read the full book until Persis Berry

bought a copy for the Conway Public Library, at the beginning of the Civil War centennial, during which I borrowed it so many times I felt as though I owned it.

John flavored much of his book with the observations of Joshua Chamberlain, the onetime colonel of the 20th Maine, who was as imaginatively boastful as he was articulate, ambitious, and courageous. At his death a century ago Chamberlain left an eloquent memoir in which he claimed to have commanded the troops at the Appomattox surrender ceremony at the specific direction of Ulysses Grant, and when the dejected Confederates marched up to stack their weapons he ordered his own men to salute them. Almost none of that was true, and his recollection of the event was, I think, distorted by his own ego and by the memory of a national spirit of reconciliation that did not arise until years after the surrender.

As one of his more literal com-

rades pointed out, Chamberlain's incurably romantic spirit led him to heavily embellish some of his most dramatic accounts of the war. Although it was dated July 6, 1863, his grandiose report on the 20th Maine at Gettysburg was actually written decades later, after which friends recommended him for a Medal of Honor over his performance there. For all his bombast Chamberlain was indeed fearless and formidable in battle, enduring a severe wound that contributed to his death half a century later. He had no need to exaggerate but did so reflexively, for color.

Nevertheless, when his era had passed Chamberlain's name was virtually forgotten. A retired judge who summered next door to us in my youth remembered President-emeritus Joshua Chamberlain from the Bowdoin graduation ceremony in 1908, but Chamberlain went unmentioned in the big pictorial history published by American Heritage for

the centennial. It was John's book that prompted Michael Shaara to depict Chamberlain and the 20th Maine prominently in his *Killer Angels* in 1974, and in 1993 Ted Turner relied heavily on Shaara's historical novel in his movie *Gettysburg*. Since then, Chamberlain has become a rock star on the Civil War circuit, with imposing statues in Brunswick and Brewer, and an enviable reputation at Gettysburg.

My own research has led me to doubt many beloved myths from that era, including several that worked their way into John's book without his knowledge, but the saga of hardship and sacrifice he compiled seems even more appealing with the glorified veneer stripped away. Gracefully told, the truth can be much more enchanting than ornamented fable — as John remarked to me in somewhat different terms not long before he died.

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More Mash Notes, HATE MAIL, And Other Correspondence, from Page Five

cleared for release by the Guantanamo Review Task Force. The remaining 72 could easily be absorbed into our Federal Penitentiary System if their release is too dangerous to national security.

Guess what Senator — if Gitmo was not there it could not be used to rile up thousands of young Muslims to avenge their brothers imprisoned by the U.S. If you really cared about our troops you would listen to our military leaders and work to eliminate one effective tactic the terrorists are using.

Senator, you really need to adjust your perspective and focus

on the damage the thousands are doing and not the damage the remaining dozens might do. Really? A hundred prisoners are a bigger threat than 10,000 eager recruits?

Dave Potter
North Hampton, NH

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Everybody Gets a Gat

To the Editor,

Suppose the police pull a car over to the side of the road for a traffic violation. At present, if no gun is seen inside the car, the officer can feel his or her life is not in danger or that if the driver is carrying a concealed firearm, that person is a law-abiding citizen.

Since 1923, New Hampshire law has required a person to have a license to carry a concealed and loaded pistol. This law allows police departments to deny a license to people it believes are a danger to themselves or to others. New Hampshire currently is one of 46 states that require a permit to carry a concealed gun.

All that will change if SB 116, sponsored by Republican State Senator Jeb Bradley, becomes law in our state. SB 116 removes the requirement that a permit be issued before an individual can carry a concealed weapon. Should that come to pass, that police of-

ficer's life may be in danger. For that reason and others, the New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of Police testified against the passage of SB 116.

Despite the opposition of the police, New Hampshire Senate Republicans unanimously voted for SB 116, while all Democrats present voted against it. Included among the Republican votes was that of our State Senator, Nancy Stiles. Stiles enjoys an undeserved reputation as an independent Republican, yet as this vote and many others illustrate, when push comes to shove, Stiles routinely votes the Republican Party line.

This Republican bill will now go to the New Hampshire House for a vote. Surely, the law requiring a permit for a concealed gun that has served the public well for 92 years should not be overturned frivolously. One enlightened state senator noted that before a law is overturned, it is important to consider why it was necessary to pass it in the first place. The safety of the public is that reason.

Gary Patton
Hampton, NH

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He's Pro Life

To the Editor:
I am pro-life and anti-war. Now

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Meet a Genuine Philanthropist

by Jim Hightower

When you get fed up with all the greed and narcissism that seems to rule our country, a good way to restore your faith in humankind is to reflect on the generosity of Ron Read — The Philanthropist of Dummerston, Vermont.

Mr. Read was not a splashy, self-celebrating, David Koch-Michael Dell-Richard DeVos type

— whose “altruism” is dependent on how prominently their names are displayed on the facilities they endow. In fact, no one in Dummerston had a clue that Ronald James Read was a man of wealth, much less a benefactor, until he died at age 92.

Known around town as Ron, he was a quiet, unassuming, hard-working, and well-liked fellow who spent 25 years as a gas station employee, then 17 more as a jani-

tor at the local JCPenney store. He drove a second-hand Yaris, gathered and cut downed limbs for firewood, used safety pins to hold his well-worn coat together, and hated seeing anything go to waste.

Some knew that Mr. Read enjoyed collecting stamps, and that he often checked out books from the local library. It was only after his death, however, that the town learned about another little hobby

he enjoyed: Picking stocks and making small investments. Turns out, he was very, very good at it — which is how he was able to become a philanthropist. This February, local folks were astonished and delighted to learn that their modest neighbor had bequeathed \$1.2 million to their library, the largest gift in its 129 years, doubling its endowment. He also gave \$4.8 million to the area’s hospital, the largest bequest

it ever received.

He didn’t even wait around for a public thank-you, much less demand that he get tax write-offs and have his name engraved on the library façade. Mr. Ron Read is an exemplar philanthropist — a genuine altruist who invested in the future of the common good.

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that I have annoyed most everyone in the state of New Hampshire, let me explain myself.

God’s Sixth Commandment is “Thou Shall Not Kill.” The Catholic Church teaches us that life begins at conception. Not 20 minutes, not 20 days, not 20 years after conception, life begins at conception. Abortion violates God’s sixth Commandment. Any questions?

The founders of this great country wrote the U.S. Constitution to ensure small, limited government. The police allow the pursuit of happiness and defend the innocent against law breakers, the military defends us from foreign aggression.

A pro-life government would not force women to bear children, it would reserve the right to prosecute anyone who takes the life of a yet-to-be-born human being. This would demonstrate respect for life from conception to death.

Since 9/11, America has been sucked into the downward spiral of the Arab Israeli conflict, costing us thousands of precious American lives, and several trillions of borrowed dollars in war costs.

A small, limited government does not get caught up in endless overseas conflicts, for whatever

reason.

Jesus asks us to love our enemies. If we moved in this direction, it would certainly distinguish ourselves from our Arab and Israeli brethren.

What have we got to lose? On the eve of the ground war against ISIS, loving our enemies could not be much worse than the endless cycle of violence we are now locked into.

My advocacy against overseas wars does not disrespect the sacrifice made by our active military and veterans. The U.S. military is the bravest and the best in the world.

I suggest we get out of the war business, and get back to loving and raising beautiful American babies from conception onward for the greater glory of God.

Daniel F. Morgan
Hampton, NH
Daniel:

Yes, we do we have a question. Like a good lawyer, though, we know the answer in advance: what part of the First Amendment don’t you understand?

The Editor

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Everything You Know is Wrong

To the Editor:

At no cost to the taxpayer, all

elected officials can receive a raise!

There are two controlling statutes that have been “on-the-books” for many years. They have been cleverly hidden from the people and ignored by the corporate PTB’s [Powers That Be, we presume — The Ed.] who justify their parasitic existence by such silence.

Mandated enforcement of these two statutes will save this state millions and give all elected [officials] an increase in their take home compensation. This will benefit our economy and restore the “Rule of Law” that has been lost by deception and the silence of the PTB’s, which is fraud. Further, the cost of the many accountants now being paid to calculate what is unlawfully being taken from elected compensation, will no longer exist. This current expense to the people will be eliminated!

The Federal statute is Title 29 USC 630 (f): “The term ‘employee’ means an individual employed by any employer except that the term ‘employee’ shall not include any person elected to public office in any State or political subdivision of any State by the qualified voters thereof, or any person chosen by such officer to be on such

officer’s personal staff, or an appointee on the policymaking level or an immediate adviser with respect to the exercise of the constitutional or legal powers of the office. The exemption set forth in the preceding sentence shall not include employees subject to the civil service laws of a State government, governmental agency, or political subdivision.”

Knowledge of the fact that elected officials are not employees means that all of the unlawful accounting services, now being billed to the taxpayer to unlawfully remove the percentage of several Medicare, Social Security, &c., “deductions” now being taken out of the “compensation” for elected officials will cease and this current accounting cost removed from future budgets, thus substantial savings! Further, the elected officials in the 235 cities, towns, and the ten counties as well as the 400 member legislature, 24 member Senate, five Councilors Secretary and Treasurer, et al., will receive an automatic increase in their “take-home” compensation. No deductions can be taken from their compensation. They do not receive “wages,” “salary,” or “pay.” Article 15, Part II defines it as “compensation” for services rendered. It can be assumed the raise in take

home will eventually be spent in the New Hampshire economy, thus growing our economy without new taxes!

The second is RSA 282 A:9, IV, (o) — the term “employment” shall not include: (o) Service performed by an individual in the exercise of duties: (1) As an elected official; (2) As a member of a legislative body or as a member of the judiciary of the state or political subdivision.

Enforcement of these two statutes can immediately expand the economies of all states that immediately implement the mandates of the statutes and stop the unlawful deductions of Social Security and Medicare, et al., from their compensation.

Contact your State Representative and demand these statutes be enforced, and that they support HB-400, now in committee.

Rep. Dick Marple
Hooksett, NH
Dick:

We are shocked — shocked! — that you, a New Hampshire elected official of the conservative persuasion, would associate yourself with a bill which would increase the compensation of New Hampshire elected officials.

Seriously, though... interesting.
The Editor

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Murph's Fortnightly Quote
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— George Washington (1732-1799)

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22 sun Eula Lawrence w/Parker, Gertz and Harris Jr 6-9PM, \$10 Soft Eyes & Herbcraft 9PM, NC	1 sun Austin & Palmer with Ryan Parker, Keala 6-9PM Kaumeheewa & Les Harris Jr \$10
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24 tue Hoot Night 6:30PM, NC HOOT (OPEN MIC) 9PM, NO COVER Pint Night: 6-9pm	3 tue Sam Lewis 9PM, \$5 Larry Garland JAZZ JAM & HOOT TUES @ 6PM HOOT @ 9PM
25 wed Stu Dias and Taylor O'Donnel 9PM, NO COVER	4 wed tba Pint Night: 6-9pm
26 thu TAUK 9PM, \$10/\$13	5 thu Soggy Po' Boys 9PM, NO COVER w/Larry Garland&Friends SATURDAYS @ 1PM

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ADMIRAL FOWLE'S PISCATAQUA RIVER TIDAL GUIDE (NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES)

Portsmouth, arguably the first town in this country not founded by religious extremists, is bounded on the north and east by the Piscataqua River, the second, third, or fourth fastest-flowing navigable river in the country, depending on

whom you choose to believe.

The Piscataqua's ferocious current is caused by the tide, which, in turn, is caused by the moon. The other player is a vast sunken valley — Great Bay — about ten miles upriver. Twice a day, the

moon drags about seventeen billion gallons of seawater — enough to fill 2,125,000 tanker trucks — up the river and into Great Bay. This creates a roving hydraulic conflict, as incoming sea and the outgoing river collide. The skirmish line

moves from the mouth of the river, up past New Castle, around the bend by the old Naval Prison, under Memorial Bridge, past the tugboats, and on into Great Bay. This can best be seen when the tide is rising.

Twice a day, too, the moon lets all that water go. All the seawater that just fought its way upstream goes back home to the ocean. This is when the Piscataqua earns its title for xth fastest current. Look for the red buoy, at the upstream

end of Badger's Island, bobbing around in the current. It weighs several tons, and it bobs and bounces in the current like a cork.

The river also has its placid moments, around high and low tides. When the river rests, its tugboats

and bridges work their hardest. Ships coming in laden with coal, oil, and salt do so at high tide, for more clearance under their keels. They leave empty, riding high in the water, at low tide, to squeeze under Memorial Bridge.

Sunday, February 22	Monday, February 23	Tuesday, February 24	Wednesday, February 25	Thursday, February 26	Friday, February 27	Saturday, February 28
<p>2004—A leaked Pentagon document predicts global doom from climate change.</p> <p>1994—CIA agent Aldrich Ames is arrested for spying.</p> <p>1974—Trying to hijack an airliner to crash into the White House, Samuel Byck counterproductively shoots the pilot and co-pilot before he is shot to death by police.</p> <p>1967—Operation Junction City begins in Vietnam — largest U.S. offensive operation of the War.</p> <p>1966—In Minnesota, Barry Bonds dumps two buckets of human digestive byproduct on draft files.</p> <p>1965—Gen. Westmoreland asks LBJ for Marines to protect the Danang airbase. Despite Ambassador Taylor's qualms, LBJ says "OK."</p> <p>1965—Sam Lovejoy cuts down a weather tower for a proposed nuke plant in Montague, MA.</p> <p>1945—Rep. John Rankin [D-MS] calls Rep. Frank Hook [D-MI] a Communist, whereupon Hook calls Rankin a liar. Rankin, 63 and 140 lbs., attempts to punch out Hook, 52 and 195 lbs., to little effect.</p> <p>1944—Ray Noury's parachute fails as he falls 15,000 feet from a shoot-up B-24. He lands alive on a ski slope in Blovicze, Czechoslovakia.</p> <p>1902—"Pitchfork Ben" Tillman, the senior Senator from South Carolina, accuses John L. McLaurin, the Palmetto State's junior Senator, of corruption. Fisticuffs ensue.</p>	<p>2008—Fox News inadvertently interviews comic Lee Camp about the Iraq War: "[This is] just a parade of propaganda. A million people are dead in Iraq... Go outside ... hug your children ... love your family... do something with your life."</p> <p>2008—Because one maintenance crew fails to warn another that humid air confuses its sensors, a \$1.4 billion B-2 bomber crashes in Guam.</p> <p>2004—Rod Paige, U.S. Secretary of Education, calls the nation's largest teachers union a "terrorist organization."</p> <p>1974—Two days after presiding over the 100th birthday of his newspaper, the <i>Oakland Tribune</i>, former Sen. William Knowland (R-CA) shoots himself dead.</p> <p>1971—Lt. Wm. Calley confesses to mass murder, and says his CO, Capt. E. Medina, ordered it.</p> <p>1945—Marines plant the U.S. flag atop Mt. Suribachi.</p> <p>1942—The Japanese submarine <i>I-17</i> fires more than a dozen 5.5 inch rounds at the Richmond oil refinery near Santa Barbara, CA.</p> <p>1922—Henri Landru is executed in France for having 11 wives. He hadn't suffered enough?</p> <p>1868—In Great Barrington, MA, W.E.B. Dubois is born.</p> <p>1775—"Give me liberty, or give me death," says Patrick Henry — maybe.</p>	<p>2001—"My plan reduces the national debt, and fast," says G.W. Bush, "... economists worry that we're going to run out of debt to retire."</p> <p>1991—Ground war against Iraq begins, amid concerns about anthrax and botulism sold to Iraq by U.S. companies with Commerce Department approval.</p> <p>1989—Nine passengers aboard United Airlines Flight 811 from Honolulu to New Zealand are sucked out a hole in the plane.</p> <p>1988—Supreme Court upholds Larry Flynt's right to portray Jerry Falwell as a man who lost his virginity to his mother, in an outhouse, while intoxicated.</p> <p>1988—At 1:17 a.m., Capitol police carry Sen. Robert Packwood (R-OR) into the Senate chamber feet first to make up a quorum.</p> <p>1942—Anti-aircraft batteries in Los Angeles fire 1,400 rounds at a weather balloon. Three are trampled to death in the resulting panic and dozens more are injured.</p> <p>1922—Lewis Vernon Harcourt, 1st Viscount Harcourt and former British Secretary of State for the Colonies, commits suicide rather than face exposure as a pederast.</p> <p>1809—As his New Drury Lane Theatre burns, owner Richard Sheridan (<i>The School for Scandal</i>) drinks at a neighboring coffeehouse, saying "A man may surely be allowed to take a glass by his own fireside."</p>	<p>2011—"[A]ny future defense secretary who advises the president to again send a big American land army into Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should have his head examined," says Defense Secretary Bob Gates.</p> <p>2003—Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki warns the Senate that occupying Iraq would require far more troops than Donald Rumsfeld planned to use.</p> <p>1988—Sam Donaldson broadcasts excerpts from President Reagan's private schedule for the day, making it clear the Chief Executive is still reading scripts for a living.</p> <p>1968—"I do not believe Hanoi can hold up under a long war," says Gen. William Westmoreland.</p> <p>1913—The IWW's Paterson, NJ silk strike begins.</p> <p>1870—Hiram Rhoades Revels (R-MS) becomes the first black U.S. Senator.</p> <p>1862—Congress authorizes the first "greenbacks." In one year, their value is down to 39 cents.</p> <p>1837—In Vermont, Thomas Daventry is granted the first patent for an electric printing press.</p> <p>1836—Colt patents the six gun.</p> <p>1836—Joice Heth is autopsied before 1,500 paying spectators in New York City, at the behest of P.T. Barnum. Before her death, Barnum had exhibited Heth as George Washington's 162 year-old "Mammy."</p>	<p>2003—Saddam Hussein tells interviewer Dan Rather he would like to debate George W. Bush on TV.</p> <p>2001—In Afghanistan, the Taliban destroy huge statues of Buddha.</p> <p>1993—A truck bomb explodes beneath the World Trade Center in NYC; 6 are dead, 1,000 injured.</p> <p>1991—George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush admits the U.S. has been supporting the Khmer Rouge for over a decade.</p> <p>1991—Thousands of Iraqi troops fleeing from Kuwait are massacred on the Highway of Death.</p> <p>1987—The Tower Commission reports that President Reagan has been confused and uninformed.</p> <p>1974—A Senate report details close ties between the Ford Motor Co. and the Nazis.</p> <p>1972—Pittston Coal's cheap-jack dam on Buffalo Creek in West Virginia collapses killing 118, injuring 1,121, and leaving 5,000 homeless. The company ends up paying less than \$15,000 per casualty.</p> <p>1970—NPR incorporates.</p> <p>1954—A C-119 "Flying Boxcar" buzzes the Huntingdon, TN, county courthouse then crashes, killing four on board and injuring two on the ground.</p> <p>1936—The ceremonial opening of the first Volkswagen plant is conducted by A. Hitler.</p> <p>1932—Birth of Johnny Cash.</p> <p>1928—Birth of Fats Domino.</p>	<p>2003—Deputy Sec. of Def. Paul D. Wolfowitz says "the notion that it will take several hundred thousand U.S. troops to provide stability in post-Saddam Iraq, [is] wildly off the mark."</p> <p>1986—Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos are chased out of the Philippines by their own people.</p> <p>1977—Canadian Mounties bust Keith Richards for possession of heroin and cocaine.</p> <p>1975—The FDA announces the recall of a batch of GE pacemakers. Too late, though: all 1,241 have been implanted.</p> <p>1973—American Indian Movement occupies Wounded Knee.</p> <p>1970—The <i>New York Times</i> reports that the U.S. Army no longer conducts illegal domestic surveillance; untrue then, and now.</p> <p>1968—Walter Cronkite says on the <i>CBS Nightly News</i> that "we are mired in stalemate" in Vietnam.</p> <p>1962—Renegade South Vietnamese pilots bomb Saigon's Presidential Palace with U.S. airplanes.</p> <p>1939—The Supreme Court declares sit-down strikes illegal.</p> <p>1938—Britain and France recognize Franco's fascist government.</p> <p>1933—Nazis burn the Reichstag and blame the Communists.</p> <p>1902—Speaking to the firing squad about to shoot him after a bogus court martial, Harry "Breaker" Morant says "Shoot straight, you bastards. Don't make a mess of it."</p>	<p>1997—Bill, Monica and a blue dress.</p> <p>1997—Two heavily armed—and armored—men rob a North Hollywood, CA bank. Twelve police are wounded, the two robbers die.</p> <p>1993—The ATF bungles an assault on a heavily armed colony of religious wackos in Waco.</p> <p>1991—"By God," says George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush, "we've kicked the Vietnam Syndrome once and for all."</p> <p>1986—Ronald Reagan calls reporters "sons-of-bitches" for asking questions during a photo-op; press aide Larry Speakes explains he really said, "It's sunny and you're rich."</p> <p>1958—In New York, a first batch of 27 people die after drinking "King Kong" moonshine.</p> <p>1947—Taiwanese civilians riot over corruption, Koumintang forces respond by killing thousands.</p> <p>1921—The Kronstadt Rebellion against bolshevism begins in Russia. "Shoot them down like partridges," orders Leon Trotsky.</p> <p>1893—Birth of Ben Hecht, author of <i>The Front Page</i>.</p> <p>1877—The U.S. seizes the Black Hills, in violation of a treaty.</p> <p>1854—A group of political activists meet in Ripon, WI, and may or may not found the Republican party.</p> <p>1840—Joshua V. Hines begins publishing <i>Signs of the Times</i>, a newspaper devoted to William Miller's Doomsday prophecies.</p>
Sunday, March 1	Monday, March 2	Tuesday, March 3	Wednesday, March 4	Thursday, March 5	Friday, March 6	Saturday, March 7
<p>2002—U.S. forces in Afghanistan begin Operation Anaconda, aimed at capturing or killing Taliban fighters in the Shah-i-kot Valley.</p> <p>1971—The Weather Underground bombs the U.S. Capitol.</p> <p>1954—After 39 combat missions in Korea, Ted Williams breaks his collarbone at spring training.</p> <p>1954—Nuke test Castle BRAVO delivers thrice its expected yield at Bikini Atoll. Unanticipated winds spread millions of tons of radioactive debris over occupied islands.</p> <p>1954—Four Puerto Rican nationalists fire 30 rounds towards the floor of the U.S. House, wounding five U.S. Congressmen.</p> <p>1932—Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr., aged 20 mos., is kidnapped; by whom is still disputed.</p> <p>1910—In Wellington, WA, an avalanche pushes two train 150 feet into the Nye River, killing 96.</p> <p>1906—Emma Goldman publishes the first issue of her anarchist newspaper, <i>Mother Earth</i>.</p> <p>1872—Yellowstone, the world's first national park, is created.</p> <p>1860—Abraham Lincoln speaks at Phenix Hall in Concord, NH, and again later in Manchester.</p> <p>1847—Michigan becomes the first state to stop killing convicts on purpose.</p> <p>1562—In Vassy, France, Catholics massacre between 30 and 1,000 Huguenots, kicking off 37 years of religious warfare.</p>	<p>2004—UN weapons inspectors report that Saddam Hussein had no WMDs. Oops.</p> <p>2002—A U.S. gunship mistakenly fires on a U.S./Afghan convoy during Operation Anaconda, killing CWO Stanley Harriman. Afghan soldiers flee. The remaining U.S. forces are attacked by the Taliban.</p> <p>1965—Operation Rolling Thunder begins: non-retaliatory U.S. bombing of North Vietnam.</p> <p>1946—Ho Chi Minh is elected president of North Vietnam.</p> <p>1944—Fumes from a stalled locomotive kill 521 in an Italian train tunnel.</p> <p>1942—Lt. Gen. John DeWitt announces all Japanese-Americans will be required to move away from the West Coast and should do so voluntarily for their own good.</p> <p>1901—By way of the Platt amendment, Congress informs Cuba it's a "protectorate" and our troops are staying.</p> <p>1877—Bribed by Republicans, the Electoral College selects Rutherford B. Hayes over Samuel Tilden.</p> <p>1860—Abraham Lincoln visits the Ameskeag mills, then speaks at City Hall in Dover.</p> <p>1836—Texas declares independence from Mexico.</p> <p>1805—Aaron Burr—the first Vice President to shoot a man—resigns from the Senate for other, unrelated reasons.</p>	<p>2014—Scott Brown tells <i>Politico</i> "[h]ad they left me alone," he might not be running for Senate.</p> <p>2005—Hauled from the depths off Nantucket, spared from the plate for his size, Bubba the 23 lb. lobster expires on his way to Ripley's.</p> <p>1991—A troublemaker videotapes Los Angeles Police officers chastising Rodney King.</p> <p>1974—Poor latch design lets a door come off a DC-10 over France. Six passengers whoosh out; an ensuing crash kills 340 more.</p> <p>1955—Elvis Presley appears on television for the first time, fatally undermining Western Civilization.</p> <p>1949—The Tucker automobile company crashes.</p> <p>1934—John Dillinger busts out of the Crown Point, IN jail with a fake pistol and drives off in the sheriff's new V-8 Ford.</p> <p>1931—"The Star-Spangled Banner" becomes our national anthem.</p> <p>1927—Doing 170 mph during a land speed record attempt in Wales, J.G. Parry-Thomas is decapitated by a broken drive chain.</p> <p>1913—In Washington, D.C., 8,000 suffragists march down Pennsylvania Avenue. They're met by jeers and jostling; 200 are injured.</p> <p>1873—"The Salary Grab Act" raises Congressional pay retroactively.</p> <p>1863—"The first U.S. draft law passes, exempting men who can pay the government a \$300 bribe.</p>	<p>2014—The <i>NY Times</i> reports that the CIA has been illegally snooping on the computers of Senate staffers investigating the Agency's torture program.</p> <p>2003—Presidential brother Neil Bush admits under oath that he'd booked strange women during business trips to Asia.</p> <p>2001—Fox broadcasts a "Lone Gunman" show in which U.S. agents remotely hijack an airliner and try to crash it into the WTC.</p> <p>1987—Ronald Reagan admits trading arms for hostages.</p> <p>1960—<i>La Coubre</i>, a French munitions ship, explodes in Havana harbor. Between 75 and 100 people die. CIA involvement is "suspected."</p> <p>1937—The UAW wins a sit-down strike in Flint, MI.</p> <p>1933—"We have nothing to fear," says FDR, "but fear itself."</p> <p>1917—During a filibuster, Sen. Harry Lane (D-OR) prepares to stab Ollie James (D-KY) in the neck if James pulls out his pistol; meanwhile, Democrats prevent Sen. Robert La Follette (Progressive Rep.-WI) from bashing the presiding officer with a spittoon.</p> <p>1909—President Taft and First Lady Nellie move into the White House. Under the lawn is a voodoo doll of Mrs. Taft, buried by Teddy Roosevelt's daughter Alice.</p> <p>1865—Drunk as hell, Vice President Andrew Johnson is sworn in.</p>	<p>2014—News reports say former Sen. Bob Smith [R-NH] will try to get his seat back.</p> <p>2007—In Bloomington, IL, Dee Riddle is startled by a meteorite crashing through her window.</p> <p>2003—Dixie Chick Natalie Maines says she's ashamed that George W. Bush is a Texan.</p> <p>2003—In a White House press conference, Helen Thomas tells Ari Fleischer "There is no imminent threat" to the U.S. from Saddam Hussein. Apparently he fails to pass that information along to his boss.</p> <p>2001—A Nor'easter begins which will dump 40 inches of snow on Rockingham County.</p> <p>1963—Patsy Cline, singer of "I Fall to Pieces," dies in a plane crash.</p> <p>1960—Alberto Korda takes a nice photo of Che Guevara.</p> <p>1953—Everybody dies; this time for a change it's Stalin.</p> <p>1933—In Germany, the Nazi party wins a plurality in the Reichstag.</p> <p>1933—On his first full day in office FDR declares a bank holiday.</p> <p>1927—One thousand U.S. Marines land in China.</p> <p>1877—"Rutherford" B. Hayes is sworn in as President.</p> <p>1871—Rosa Luxemburg is born.</p> <p>1770—Heinous British troops slaughter innocent Bostonians in the Boston Massacre. (Or, provincial terrorists attack duly constituted authority.)</p>	<p>2007—A jury finds Dick "Dick" Cheney's Chief of Staff I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby guilty of perjury and obstruction of justice.</p> <p>2003—George W. Bush claims Saddam Hussein's operatives have "biological and chemical agents" they are moving "to different locations every 12 to 24 hours, or placed in vehicles that are in residential neighborhoods."</p> <p>1991—President George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush claims that his defeat of Saddam Hussein has created a "new world order."</p> <p>1981—After 19 years as anchor, Walter Cronkite casts off from the "CBS Evening News."</p> <p>1975—Tech. Sgt. Leonard Matlovich openly challenges the Air Force's "no gays" rule.</p> <p>1971—The same day the FCC bans songs that "promote or glorify the use of illegal drugs," unsuspecting Lawrence Welk singers perform "One Toke Over the Line."</p> <p>1964—Cassius Clay takes the name Muhammad Ali.</p> <p>1930—Clarence Birdseye invents a method of quickly freezing food.</p> <p>1896—Charles B. King (1868-1957) demonstrates the first automobile ever seen in Detroit.</p> <p>1857—The Supreme Court rules in <i>Dred Scott v. Sandford</i> that "the unhappy black race [never possessed] rights which the white man was bound to respect."</p>	<p>1981—An 18 year-old is stabbed to death in Disneyland's first homicide.</p> <p>1965—Six blocks into a 50-mile, Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march, 600 marchers are attacked by state and local police on the Edmund Pettus Bridge.</p> <p>1955—The Commissioner of Baseball, Ford Frick, says the he favors legalizing the spitball.</p> <p>1932—Detroit police fire on a hunger march of Ford workers, four of whom die.</p> <p>1911—Twenty thousand U.S. troops are dispatched to the Mexican border to protect "American interests."</p> <p>1908—In Cincinnati, Mayor Mark Breith announces that "women are not physically fit to operate automobiles."</p> <p>1906—In Finland, the Senate approves of universal suffrage—except for the poor.</p> <p>1876—Alexander Graham Bell patents the telephone.</p> <p>1850—New Hampshire native Daniel Webster, representing Massachusetts in the U.S. Senate, argues in the Senate that slaveholders are entitled to be secure in their ownership of their slaves.</p> <p>1799—In Bethlehem, PA, John Fries and a mob of four hundred insurgents and onlookers free 19 property tax protestors from a federal marshal and his 13 deputies.</p>

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