



## FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE NEWSLETTER #189 — JULY 25, 2012

*Welcome to always lively political discussion and whatever else comes up.*  
<http://www.FriendsOfTheMiddle.org> [FriendsOfTheMiddle@hotmail.com](mailto:FriendsOfTheMiddle@hotmail.com)

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### **A Raygun of Hope?**

(posted by Steven W. Baker / SteveB, July 25, 2012)

Well...I would hope so!

"Gun Owners Surveyed by Frank Luntz Express Broad Support for Gun Control Policies" by Sam Stein, Huffington Post

July 24, 2012, ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/24/gun-owners-frank-luntz\\_n\\_1699140.html?utm\\_hp\\_ref=politics](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/24/gun-owners-frank-luntz_n_1699140.html?utm_hp_ref=politics))



(WASHINGTON) A survey of National Rifle Association members and non-affiliated gun owners conducted by a prominent Republican pollster shows that there is broad support for certain provisions that would restrict the sale of guns.

According to a study unveiled at the Center for American Progress on Tuesday, 82 percent of 945 self-identified gun owners said they support requiring criminal background checks for gun purchasers. The sample was divided evenly between gun owners who were current or lapsed members of the NRA and non-NRA gun owners. 74 percent of the NRA members said they support the background checks.

The study, which was conducted in May by GOP wordsmith Frank Luntz, revealed the following data points as well:

- 74 percent of NRA members believe concealed carry permits should only be granted to applicants who have completed gun safety training.
- 68 percent of NRA members believe concealed carry permits should only be granted to applicants who do not have prior arrests for domestic violence.
- 63 percent of NRA members believe concealed carry permits should only be granted to applicants 21 years of age or older.
- 75 percent of NRA members believe that concealed carry permits should be granted only to those applicants who have not committed any violent misdemeanors.

Taken in full, the numbers cut against the conventional wisdom, which holds that there is little political will for tackling gun control legislation in the wake of Friday's shooting in Aurora, Colo. But that theory, the study's authors insisted, was always based on a false reading of the public opinion data.

"Gun owners and NRA members overwhelmingly support common sense steps to keep guns out of the hands of criminals, even as the NRA leadership continues to oppose them," said New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, chair of Mayors Against Illegal Guns, which commissioned the study. "It's time for those in Washington — and those running for President — to stand with gun owning citizens who are concerned about public safety, rather than influence peddling lobbyists who are obsessed with ideology."

An equally telling feature of the study is the pollster who put it together. While Luntz's work on the topic alongside Bloomberg's group and the liberal Center for American Progress may seem like the personification of a strange-bedfellows coalition, Luntz explained that his ideological bent is towards sensible gun laws.

"I grew up in an NRA family and strongly believe in Second Amendment rights," he told The Huffington Post in an email. "But I don't believe that anyone with a felony record should automatically be able to own a gun. I don't believe in absolutes."

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<a href="#">20120724-01</a>	06:50	MarthaH	"Trophy Backlash: Are We Rewarding Kids for Just Showing Up?"
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Amen! Give them a book, a horn, a savings account for college. Keep the trophies!

"Trophy Backlash: Are We Rewarding Kids for Just Showing Up?" by Sarah Maizes, MSNBC

July 23, 2012, ([http://moms.today.msnbc.msn.com/\\_news/2012/07/23/12896389-trophy-backlash-are-we-rewarding-kids-for-just-showing-up?lite](http://moms.today.msnbc.msn.com/_news/2012/07/23/12896389-trophy-backlash-are-we-rewarding-kids-for-just-showing-up?lite))

(Did he win the championship, or ride the bench? Some parents think we're overdosing on trophies.)

This Friday, 14,000 athletes from 204 countries around the world will gather in London for the opening of the Olympic Games. Imagine their excitement as each of these athletes prepares to compete.

Now imagine each and every one receiving a gold medal – just for "showing up."

Sounds stupid, right? After all, that's not what sports are about. In sports, somebody wins - somebody loses. Somebody gets a gold medal and somebody goes home empty handed. That's sports. That's life.

So tell me, why do we feel the need to award every kid a trophy for every sport they play?

There are few debates in parenthood – with the exception of breast-feeding – that are as heated as that over whether every kid should get a trophy. But there may be a trophy backlash brewing.

My kids have shelves full of trophies for basketball, soccer and Tee-ball despite the fact that none of them have ever shown any real prowess in any of those sports. My oldest daughter even has a bowling trophy that praises her for coming in "2nd place for most spares." No joke.

Sure, trophies are fun to collect. So were Wacky Packs. But once those trophies come home, their value diminishes rapidly from a symbol of accomplishment to, well, that of an old crayoned kid's menu.

I say "enough already!"

I can see the value of giving a kid a pat on the head when they've accomplished something. But shouldn't those shiny, gold statues and medals be reserved for real accomplishments? Shouldn't they be a token of acknowledgement for a marked effort, a honed skill, or even good ol' sportsmanship – not just for showing up?

Let's start with this list of "accomplishments," and see if we can agree which are deserving of a trophy versus a "Pat on the Head."

Winning a baseball tournament = Trophy

Eating all their dinner = POH

Exhibiting real, true "Good Sportsmanship" for an entire season = Trophy

Napping = POH

Making the most baskets in a season = Trophy

Wiping themselves = POH (Maybe an extra hair touse for washing hands.)

It occurred to me I might be bitter because I never got any trophies, so I interviewed the experts: a bunch of eight-year-olds. I asked them, "Do you think everybody should get a trophy?"

One kid said "Yeah. It's nice. Then nobody is left out."

Fair enough.

But another kid disagreed. And she was angry. "I don't think it's fair that everyone gets a trophy when you tried really hard and somebody else gets one who didn't do anything. Like, there was this kid on my basketball team and he never went to practice. He got a trophy. And it wasn't fair."

There were nods of agreement and "Yeah! No fair!" followed by someone yelling "Ice cream truck!" and that was the end of my study.

But I felt vindicated.

Everybody wants their kids to be happy. We all want them to grow-up well-adjusted, fair-minded and confident. But the cold, hard, gold-plated truth just might be that awards for worthy deeds actually encourage children -- and grown-ups -- to try harder, take pride in their own abilities, and do the right thing. And I don't see how that can be wrong.

Live Poll: Do kids today get too many trophies? (97% said "Yes".)

[20120724-04](#) 10:07 Pam Re: "Trophy Backlash: Are We Rewarding Kids for Just Showing Up?" (reply to MarthaH, above)

It used to be that kids (like me) played because it was fun, not because we expected a prize for doing it. I think this rewards system is tied to our materialism and what's-in-it-for-me? Attitude. I feel the same way about bribing kids to read. Every time a principal agrees to eat worms if his students read a book over the summer, I groan. I remember when my parents used to tell me to get my nose out of a book and go outside and play. Plato worried that literacy would ruin people's memories; he was right. I worry that the Internet and TV will ruin our kids' imaginations and ability to entertain themselves. I say this as my 3-yr. old grandson is watching "Blue's Clues" on TV. Call me a hypocrite.

[20120724-02](#) 08:26 SteveB Un-American

Republicans are a minority which has given-up on trying to argue its losing (minority) politics and decided, instead, to try to impose its will on the majority in whatever way it can.

What could be more un-American?

[20120724-03](#) 09:53 SteveG Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to SteveBA, FotM Newsletter #188)

Name calling has no place in a civil discourse.

As I understand the Keystone pipeline: it was to get oil shale to refineries; passed through an area that may affect the water table of 7 states; similar pipelines for shale oil have a high rate of leaking; once the oil was refined it was to be exported; part of the pipeline route has been given the go ahead and the remained is under discussion as to the route and to minimize the impact of potential leaks.

[20120724-05](#) 10:25 Pam Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to SteveBA, FotM Newsletter #188)

"Visual pollution?" I find wind farms far more attractive than giant oil rigs. JIMHO The real issue, of course, is global warming and the continuing degradation of our environment. We need to develop clean energy ASAP (jobs will be created) and figure out how we're going to survive in a more environmentally hostile world. The north will need to install air conditioning; we'll need to stop building beach houses where hurricanes erode the coast line; we'll need to develop new vaccines against insect-borne diseases that heretofore have been most prevalent in the tropics; we'll need to figure out how to manage our water supplies so that droughts like the one this summer don't diminish our food supply. So many things need doing, and I believe there are people who are working on them, but who's paying attention?

[20120724-07](#) 11:07 Art Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to SteveB, FotM Newsletter #188)

Isn't that the truth. Why all the vehemence and name calling from the right? Because we disagree? Science is on our side.

[20120724-11](#) 16:49 Bill Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to SteveB, FotM Newsletter #188)

Was in Canada last week and read in both the Toronto and Charlottetown papers about the Gateway pipeline project, which will carry crude and related products west from sources in Alberta to coastal British Columbia.

My understanding of this pipeline project is that the petroleum products transported are intended primarily for the Chinese market via tanker from B.C. The developer is Enbridge. I don't happen to know who the investors or partners are.

The primary element of last week's news and opinion stories was that the developer of the pipeline had just agreed, as a result of substantial pressure from those concerned about environmental effects, to upgrade the pipeline via use of heavier steel in the pipeline and remotely operable valves. Cost of those accommodations is estimated at half a billion above the current \$6 billion estimate for construction. It is the Alberta government that will make the primary ruling on acceptability of the project. B. C. will certainly have a role, but the larger decision will be made in Alberta.

What occurs to me is that, if the Gateway pipeline gets thumbs up from Alberta and whoever else may have jurisdiction, that will make it easy for the Keystone developers to triumph in their certification efforts, since they inevitably will note the destination of petroleum carried by the Gateway project. Strategic considerations, in other words, may have a large role. In any event, it would be my guess that the U. S.'s mighty thirst for petroleum will cause Keystone to succeed in some measure, in some form, in any longer scenario. There just aren't enough windmills and natural gas wells to supplant petroleum in any longer scenario, e. g. ten years.

Whatever problems with origin in global warming or the economy may occur in the next few years, oil supply will be of huge concern.

Thoughts?

<a href="#">20120724-12</a>	17:54	Dennis	Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to Bill, above) & "Preventable Errors Led to Pipeline Spill, Inquiry Finds"
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Enbridge has a record of transporting gooey Canadian Tar Sands oil through Michigan, except for what gets spilled (see below) (Disclosure: I was an Enbridge stockholder at the time of the spill, but wisely sold the day after.)

I too was in Canada last week, in Alberta and B.C. Since Alberta is the Texas of Canada, there won't be any problem getting the project approved there. B.C. may be another matter.

Are Canadian Tar Sands, with their high cost of production, huge use of water, and excessive carbon omissions a wise place for the U.S. to rely on for oil? Seems that North Dakota and all the other oil shale deposits that are being fracked around the country may make the U.S. oil independent. I expect the cost of oil, and the stock prices of oil companies, to drop in the months, if not years, ahead. A new route for Keystone XL will probably get approved. It just won't go over the Ogallala Aquifer since there are too many Republican farmers in Nebraska dependent on clean water for irrigation.

"Preventable Errors Led to Pipeline Spill, Inquiry Finds" by Adeshina Emmanuel, *New York Times*

July 10, 2012, (<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/07/10/preventable-errors-led-to-pipeline-spill-inquiry-finds/>)

<a href="#">20120724-13</a>	18:20	Clark	Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to Bill & Dennis, above)
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Weird and apropos of nothing but I was in Canada two nights ago as well. Something in the water? (not oil, I hope).

<a href="#">20120724-16</a>	20:07	Bill	Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to Clark, above)
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Well, we could have been in search of cooler weather, no? But you, Clark, don't have that far to go to be in Quebec, I think.

[20120724-18](#) 21:05 Clark Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to Bill, above)

*Mais oui*, except that I was in B.C. On my way back from Alaska, where they love their pipelines almost as much as their salmon. BTW, they say the wild caught (pink) salmon that we consume in the lower 48 is considered dog food up there. Of course, they also love their dogs, so maybe that's not so bad.

[20120724-14](#) 18:29 Jim Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to all, above)

But the developers of the Keystone XL project going to the US Gulf have admitted that part of the strategy was to raise oil prices in the Midwest by bypassing refineries in places like northern Indiana to reduce American oil availability. As long as they can sell it to somebody who will pay higher prices, they will skip us until we agree to pay those higher prices for their products.

Keystone was never about giving the US more oil to use--just more oil to sell. That is why we are now exporting so much.

[20120724-15](#) 19:23 Pam Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to all, above)

OK. I'm willing to be realistic. We're not getting off oil in the next decade, but that is no reason to delay research in other forms of energy. The last article I read (in the Stanford alumni magazine) talked about how the technology already exists to use hydro, wind, and solar energy if we go global and share sun with cloudy areas and geothermal with icy climates. I truly believe we (scientists with adequate funding) could solve our energy problems if the political will was there. It's like the human race is dragging a huge ball and chain everywhere it goes that makes progress next to impossible. We spend so much on terrible things, like wars and exploiting vulnerable populations, that we ignore problems we could solve with a bit of will-power. I'm such a pessimist, though; I think it's more likely that we'll destroy the planet, at least as a home for humans, than that we'll learn to live sustainably. I won't see the worst, but I worry that my grandchildren will.

It's always about money. The environment, people's health, and long-term planning be damned. I don't understand all the technicalities, but I know we're in trouble if we don't make some changes. Despite my earlier pessimism, I believe (hope) we will stop short of global suicide. I still think the wealthy of the world will burrow underground, while the rest of the population struggles for survival on an increasingly hostile surface. But what do I know?

I'm really a basically happy person, really.

[20120724-17](#) 20:15 Bill Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to Pam, above)

Pam (Happy Person), Martin Amis somehow captured the nature of it all in the title of his book, *Moronic Inferno*. But I'd advise some reasonable effort, as you suggest you are doing, by trying to be happy. Life's too short, no?

Pam (above): I still think the wealthy of the world will burrow underground, while the rest of the population struggles for survival on an increasingly hostile surface.

Morlocks and Eloi?

[20120724-19](#) 21:34 SteveB Re: Keystone Pipeline (reply to all, above) / CANADA

See? The above emails demonstrate the giant sucking effect of our northerly neighbor, Canada. Half of Friends of the Middle, it seems, have been magnetically(?) pulled north.

Something has to be done! Canada must be the next Iran (after we actually finish with Iran, in about 2025). Canada even has oil! There, shivering amid the lonesome, snowy pines, one can find solace and **the next 9 to 13 U.S. states!** (I don't know what to do with the territories and neither, apparently, does Canada.) Maybe Quebec would be left as an independent country, or a department of France...

### **Manifest destiny of the incredibly exceptional Gringos!**

Now, please pass me that delicious Canadian national dish...er...what was its name...road-kill? I love Canada!

**20120724-06** 10:55 Dick Fw: Proposed 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment

OK, SteveB, is this true?

[Source of original email unknown. -SteveB]

Found this interesting, Children of congress member do not have to pay back their college student loans. How nice!

Monday on Fox news they learned that the staffers of Congress family members are exempt from having to pay back student loans. This will get national attention if other news networks will broadcast it. When you add this to the below, just where will all of it stop?

35 States file lawsuit against the Federal Government

Governors of 35 states have filed suit against the Federal Government for imposing unlawful burdens upon them. It only takes 38 (of the 50) States to convene a Constitutional Convention.

This will take less than thirty seconds to read. If you agree, please pass it on.

This is an idea that we should address.

For too long we have been too complacent about the workings of Congress. Many citizens had no idea that members of Congress could retire with the same pay after only one term, that they specifically exempted themselves from many of the laws they have passed (such as being exempt from any fear of prosecution for sexual harassment) while ordinary citizens must live under those laws. The latest is to exempt themselves from the Healthcare Reform... in all of its forms. Somehow, that doesn't seem logical. We do not have an elite that is above the law. I truly don't care if they are Democrat, Republican, Independent or whatever. The self-serving must stop.

If each person that receives this will forward it on to 20 people, in three days, most people in The United States of America will have the message. This is one proposal that really should be passed around.

Proposed 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution: "Congress shall make no law that applies to the citizens of the United States that does not apply equally to the Senators and/or Representatives; and, Congress shall make no law that applies to the Senators and/or Representatives that does not apply equally to the citizens of the United States."

**20120724-10** 14:40 SteveB Re: Proposed 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment (reply to Dick, above)

1. (LIE) <http://www.factcheck.org/2011/01/congress-not-exempt-from-student-loans/>
2. (LIE) [http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Governors\\_of\\_35\\_states\\_have\\_filed\\_suit\\_against\\_the\\_Federal\\_Government](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Governors_of_35_states_have_filed_suit_against_the_Federal_Government)

3. (N/A) The idea (neither TRUTH nor LIE) that congress should be subject to its own laws sounds OK, but I don't think it would solve any of our problems.

20120724-08

12:10

SteveB

From the Right: "Obama's Philosophy Out of Step with American History's 'Self-Made Men'"

"Obama's Philosophy Out of Step with American History's 'Self-Made Men'" by Jarrett Stepman, *Human Events*

July 24, 2012, (<http://www.humanevents.com/2012/07/24/obamas-philosophy-out-of-step-with-american-historys-self-made-men/>)

Nothing symbolized the overall economic philosophy of modern day liberalism and President Barack Obama, than his statements in a Roanoke, Virginia campaign speech last week.

"If you were successful, somebody along the line gave you some help. There was a great teacher somewhere in your life. Somebody helped to create this unbelievable American system that we have that allowed you to thrive. Somebody invested in roads and bridges. If you've got a business — you didn't build that. Somebody else made that happen," Obama said.

This statement by Obama demonstrates a fundamental lack of belief in individual Americans to create their own wealth and become what many in American history have called "self-made men." The philosophical underpinnings of Obama's statement fundamentally contradict the belief in American exceptionalism, that is: Laissez faire economics, equality of opportunity, individualism, and popular but limited self-government.

There are a number of famous examples in American history that show how out of step Obama's beliefs are with the long tradition of dominant American beliefs and attitudes, and some of these examples are of people who generally believed that government action could in fact help in the process of entrepreneurial success. I will use three men of American history demonstrate the powerful ethic of the self-made man. These individuals are Benjamin Franklin, Henry Clay, Frederick Douglass.

The man who almost single-handedly created the image of the self-made man in America was Founding Father, Benjamin Franklin. Franklin demonstrated the virtues of self-reliance and hard work in both his own life and especially in his writings, yet he came from very humble origins.

Franklin believed that by cultivating industry, frugality, and self-sufficiency in its citizens, America would be both strong and prosperous. A society of dependents would have been odious to Franklin, who wrote in Poor Richards Almanack, "A plowman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees."

While the ultimate burden of success fell on the individual, Franklin believed that those who had achieved success should be interested in maintaining and improving their society. He combined the ideas of both individualism and civics that were so critical to the founding.

Franklin would have had no patience for the welfarism demonstrated by the Obama administration and the modern Democratic Party. In early July the Obama administration made a drastic and possibly illegal move to repeal the welfare reform laws of 1996 through a Department of Health Human Services mandate, changing the welfare-to-work programs back into no-strings attached handouts.

Franklin was harsh on even the poor laws of his own day and said that they "encourage idleness and prodigality" and "promote and increase poverty." Obama's change in welfare will make America more like California, which didn't go through the same welfare reform that the rest of the nation did in the 1990's and currently has one-third of all welfare recipients in the nation, a stagnant economy, crushing deficit, staggering debt and a mass exodus of Californians looking for work and better opportunities. This will be a clear setback for this and future generations.

The idea of the self-made man became an even more important force in American culture in the generation after the founding, and it was apparent that the culture of individualism and self-reliance that Franklin and other founders tried to inculcate in future American generations was taking off.

The great American statesman, Henry Clay, is often given credit for popularizing the term "self-made man" in an 1832 speech he gave about the "American System" in the Senate.

In a clarification of his "you didn't build that" statement, Obama said, "What I said was together we build roads and we build bridges...That's the point I've made millions of times, and by the way, that's a point Mr. Romney has made as well, so this is just a bogus issue."

Obama and his followers may point to Clay as a champion of their belief in the government's critical role in economic development, as the American System was about building a system of national roads, protective tariffs to protect and promote manufactures, and a centralized national bank, however, there is a key difference in the ethos of Clay and Obama.

In a speech promoting his program of economic development, Clay said, "In Kentucky, almost every manufactory known to me, is in the hands of enterprising and self-made men, who have acquired whatever wealth they possess by patient and diligent labor."

Notice the key difference in the outlook of Clay versus Obama. Clay believes that the right economic and infrastructure programs can help individuals reap the benefits of their self-sufficiency, while Obama ultimately believes that the wealth and success of individuals is ultimately owed to collective society and government. This is a critical part of modern day liberal thought, that government and society own both you and the fruit of your labor, and that "society" has a right to redistribute it in any way that it sees as "fair" and "equitable". This is the foundation of "positive rights".

Clay, often called the "Mill Boy of the Slashes" to highlight his humble, middle-class origins would undoubtedly have seen the modern day liberal ethos as a warped version of his American System. Clay had a good but uneven education, and was certainly not a product of an Ivy League school, yet he reached the height of American society through incredible talent and ambition, not welfare or affirmative action.

The most dramatic example of the self-made man, perhaps in American history, is Frederick Douglass. Douglass, an former slave from Maryland, the offspring of a black slave mother and white father, had given himself and education despite attempts by his former master to keep him from getting an education. If there was ever a person who should have looked for a handout or given up on success in life, it should have been Douglass, but instead he made himself into one of the most learned and successful men of his age. He didn't let institutional opposition keep him from reaching the pinnacles of success in America.

Douglass, a man who had every right to believe in welfare and reparations for himself and others like him, instead expounded upon an entirely different ethic, one of individualism, self-sufficiency, hard work, and independence.

In a famous speech that he gave through most of his life called, "Self-Made Men," Douglas spoke about what the critical elements are for success in America. He explained who the self-made men were and what made them successful. Douglass's speech is the antithesis of everything Obama and modern liberals stand for.

"Self-made men are the men who, under peculiar difficulties and without the ordinary helps of favoring circumstances, have attained knowledge, usefulness, power and position and have learned from themselves the best uses to which life can be put in this world, and in the exercises of these uses to build up worthy character," Douglass continued, "In fact they are the men who are not brought up but who are obliged to come up, not only without the voluntary assistance or friendly co-operation of society, but often in open and derisive defiance of all the efforts of society and the tendency of circumstances to repress, retard and keep them down."

Douglass expounded upon the principles of the modern Americans who wish to conserve the traditional ethos, culture and political system of the Founding Fathers.

Douglass continued to describe self-made men, "Such men as these, whether found in one position or another, whether in the college or in the factory; whether professors or plowmen; whether Caucasian or Indian; whether Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-African, are self-made men and are entitled to a certain measure of respect for their success and for proving to the world the grandest possibilities of human nature, of whatever variety of race or color."

In his speech, Douglass even scoffed at the idea that an Ivy League education is what gives a person ultimate success, and he lambasted do-nothing intellectuals. Douglass also scoffed at the idea that success comes through "good fortune" and circumstance. Douglass said "Detraction is, to many, a delicious morsel."

Modern day Leftists base their values on the idea that society owes you and you owe society, and Obama's statement demonstrates a clear philosophical agreement. However, conservative economist Milton Friedman described exactly how individuals should see government. Friedman said that a free citizen should ask, "'What can I and my compatriots do through government' to help us discharge our individual responsibilities, to achieve our several goals and purposes, and above all, to protect our freedom?"

[20120724-09](#) 12:31 Ben Graphic: Very Demotivational





The Roadfood Tour of Connecticut is only two months away. On the weekend of September 29th & 30th, a band of world-class eaters is going to tackle a menu of four-star pizza, donuts to die for, hot lobster rolls, fried clams, two-foot hot dogs, amazing cheeseburgers, and New England ice cream at its finest.

There are a limited number of places available on this tour, for which several of the state's legendary restaurateurs are planning special tastings, exhibitions, and Roadfood-only meals, so please get your tickets now. Here is the page to order them.

Stephen has secured great rates (including internet) at the newly renovated Sheraton Hotel at Bradley Airport (so if you fly in to Hartford, you'll be right there). Connecticut is small enough that if you come a day or two early or stay a day or two late, you'll be within striking distance of dozens of Roadfood eateries not included in the tour – in Connecticut as well as Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York's Hudson Valley.

When interviewers ask Jane & Michael why they live in Connecticut when, in fact, their job would allow them to live anywhere in the US, they answer, "for the pizza." Then they add, "and for the lobster rolls ... and the hot-relish hot dogs ... and the chocolate donuts ... and, and, and ..." Come join us in September and enjoy a state that overflows with good things to eat.

Connecticut gave birth to the hot lobster roll and the white clam pizza. It also is home of world-class donuts, hot dogs, cheeseburgers, and ice cream.

We will be staying both nights at the Sheraton Bradley Airport hotel in Hartford, where Stephen is arranging special rates (\$99/night). The bus will arrive and depart from this location.

Having lived in Connecticut for over 30 years, Jane and Michael know the state well, and their good relationships with many of its foremost Roadfood chefs guarantee that a ticket on this bus will provide a once-in-a-lifetime weekend eating adventure.

We'll plan to start each day with superior donuts from around the state. From there, we visit bakeries, shoreline lobster shacks, burger stands, and ice cream parlors, ending each day with a feast at one of the state's legendary pizzerias.

The ticket price of \$229 includes a place on the bus and a couple of the special meals, but most food will be pay as you go.

<http://www.roadfood.com/>

<a href="#">20120724-21</a>	22:27	SteveG	From the Right: "Colorado Batman Shooting Shows Obvious Signs of Being Staged"
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How is this for a right wing conspiracy theory?

"Colorado Batman Shooting Shows Obvious Signs of Being Staged" by Mike Adams, NaturalNews

July 20, 2012,

([http://www.naturalnews.com/036536\\_James\\_Holmes\\_shooting\\_false\\_flag.html?fb\\_comment\\_id=fbc\\_10151280867989418\\_27184507\\_10151284003639418#f1d3d0e2f33bc4](http://www.naturalnews.com/036536_James_Holmes_shooting_false_flag.html?fb_comment_id=fbc_10151280867989418_27184507_10151284003639418#f1d3d0e2f33bc4))

**...this guy was equipped with exotic gear by someone with connections to military equipment.** SWAT clothing, explosives, complex booby-traps... c'mon, this isn't a "lone gunman." This is somebody who was selected for a mission, given equipment to carry it out, then somehow brainwashed into getting it done.

[Read more at NaturalNews...](#)

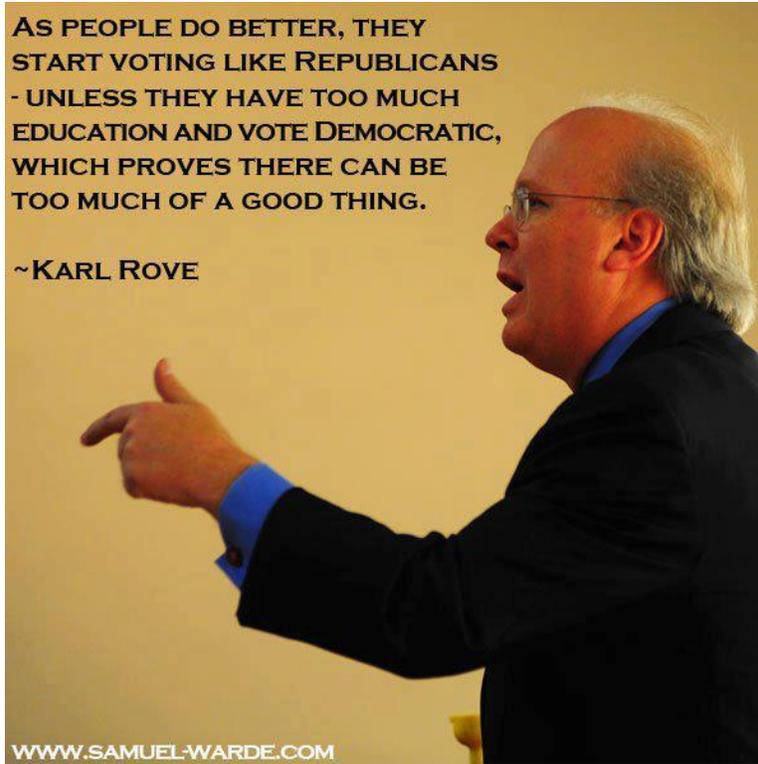
<a href="#">20120724-22</a>	23:57	Tom	Graphic: The Dark Knight Answers
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**AS PEOPLE DO BETTER, THEY  
START VOTING LIKE REPUBLICANS  
- UNLESS THEY HAVE TOO MUCH  
EDUCATION AND VOTE DEMOCRATIC,  
WHICH PROVES THERE CAN BE  
TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING.**

**~KARL ROVE**

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Man, you could put "somebody's eye out" with this thing!

<http://hackedgadgets.com/2008/01/16/disintegrator-rubber-band-gun/>



—Friends of the Middle,  
Steven W. Baker (SteveB), Editor/Moderator

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