



FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE **NEWSLETTER #240 — OCT. 4, 2012**

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A Sad Night in Denver

(posted by Steven W. Baker / SteveB, Oct. 4, 2012)

It was certainly not a good night for the President. I simply don't understand his manner, unless he was just disgusted to be on stage with a snake or mad that his wedding anniversary was being ruined. What a disappointment. Meanwhile, at every turn and in ways not noticeable to much of the electorate, Romney lied!

"5 Takeaways from the Denver Debate" by Maggie Haberman, Politico

Oct. 4, 2012, (http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1012/82006.html?hp=t3_3)



(DENVER) One presidential debate is now in the books; two are left to go.

The conventional wisdom about Denver will hold this morning. Mitt Romney was the victor over President Barack Obama in the first of three debates marking the last month of the 2012 campaign.

The debate was relatively sleepy, and there were no fireworks or big “moments” to speak of, but Romney scored on points against a barely-there incumbent.

It isn't clear the Denver debate will be the “game-changer” that some of Romney's supporters predicted in its immediate aftermath, but Obama adviser David Axelrod set the expectations in the spin room when he indicated he expects the Republican will get a bounce off his performance.

What Romney definitely did was earn himself a second look from the slim pool of undecided and persuadable voters still considering their options, and give himself a tighter messaging framework to use, if he is able to, before the next debate in New York two weeks from now.

Below, Politico's five takeaways:

1. The Newt-slayer is back.

The Romney on stage Wednesday night bore a much closer resemblance to the one who ground up Newt Gingrich in the Florida GOP primary debate when his campaign depended on it.

Romney was aggressive, knew his points, and pushed back whenever there was an opportunity. He more than passed the test of being able to stand on the same platform as the president of the United States.

Romney didn't make any sweeping new vision statements. But he was sharp and able to rattle off statistics with ease. He stayed focused on the president and, unlike Obama, seemed mindful of the camera being on him even when it wasn't his turn to speak. His response on Obama's health-care plan was about the way it was enacted, as opposed to a muddled explanation of his own health plan as governor of Massachusetts. And he did not let Obama score a point off him without firing back.

Romney wasn't perfect — a quip about Big Bird that landed like a lead feather, and he had a tendency to get a bit bogged down in the weeds of tax plans and statistics during the debate's key first half hour, possibly because he was a bit overprepared.

There were no knockout punches either, but a thousand cuts that made Obama bleed.

2. Obama has a lot of work do.

Post-debate, the president's campaign was spinning valiantly in the media filing center. But there was no mistake among Democratic operatives here and in other states that Obama blew it.

It was one of the weakest performances ever turned in by a man known for his oratorical skill in speeches, and well enough (if less consistently solidly) in debates. Obama looked like he just wasn't enjoying himself. He gave halting answers, and seemed exhausted and irritable at times. He nodded frequently when Romney talked, dismissively saying “okay” while the former governor was midway through a response at one point.

The president came alive a bit at the end, using his line about Romney as “extreme,” but it was rather late, and by then impressions had formed.

Obama and his campaign team may actually feel otherwise, but for 90 minutes, Obama's body language and approach also signaled that he doesn't consider beating Romney a huge challenge. The president seemed to be playing things safe. If so, that's a problem because the race remains close and there is a month — and two debates — left.

One of the most surprising elements of Obama's performance was what he didn't say. The president never raised Romney's secretly-taped comments about 47 percent of Americans at a fundraiser, or said the words Bain Capital, or questioned the GOP nominee about his tax returns, despite ample time devoted to the candidates' tax plans. It was more than a little puzzling.

Obama didn't invoke any of the attack lines that Democrats have used for months to keep Romney off balance, a decision that had a number of Obama supporters apoplectic about the strategy.

Obama aides insisted such obvious omissions weren't by design. If that's true, it suggests a candidate who wasn't in good form. If they're not being candid, it may have been a way of avoiding making a personal attack on stage, something that is harder to pull off, and which could make Obama look petty. But it also let Romney shape the narrative of the debate.

It remains to be seen whether this will be Obama's version of George W. Bush's first debate in 2004, in which the incumbent fared poorly. It remains to be seen if Obama will be on his game in a more advantageous format for the next round — town hall-style face-off in New York on Oct. 16.

The real problem for Obama was that he signaled he wasn't fighting for the race, while Romney — for the first time in awhile — showed that he was doing just that. Voters don't like it when it seems like candidates are taking things for granted and Obama can't assume that Romney, who's a fighter, isn't a threat.

3. Romney also still has work to do.

Only one of Romney's challenges was the stature gap, and he certainly went a long way toward closing it on Wednesday night. But there was no way for Romney to accomplish all he needs to at this late stage of the race in 90 minutes, either.

The GOP nominee tried to accomplish one of his tasks — humanizing himself — by invoking the tribulations of voters who have approached him and his wife, Ann, on the campaign trail. He used a much more Clintonian approach than Obama did when the president relied again on a biography he's turned to repeatedly to describe his mother's family as working-class.

Romney even managed to make the most of the first five minutes of the debate, when Obama acknowledged his 20th wedding anniversary, and the Republican made a joke about the president picking the most romantic setting possible to celebrate it — with Romney.

But Romney has a ways to go on this front, and his best opportunity may be at the New York debate. He will interact with voters, and have the opportunity to show he's more Clinton than George H.W. Bush when he's in that type of setting.

Yet Romney will also have to get more specific on his tax plan, on which Obama pressed him repeatedly. Romney responded that Obama wasn't telling the truth, and the president is hardly being specific himself about his second-term vision. But this is where the power of incumbency helps.

4. Lehrer lost control.

Moderator Jim Lehrer spent 10 minutes before the debate detailing, carefully, the rules of the game to the crowd gathered in the debate hall, and then explaining to the candidates the format. The crowd, ordered to silence, was compliant. Lehrer, however, got lost onstage.

Early on, Romney ground Lehrer down repeatedly in exchanges that made the GOP nominee look a bit testy at times when he pushed Lehrer for a chance to respond to some of Obama's remarks. But the candidate got the better of the moderator.

Lehrer ultimately stopped trying to tame Romney, and only occasionally did so with Obama. The first question ended up as a protracted back-and-forth over tax policy, but went so long that Lehrer himself got a bit frustrated.

What's more, the questions Lehrer asked were so loosely framed that the candidates were able to do with them what they wanted. And among the significant questions that were not put to the candidates were ones about foreign policy, especially the situation in Libya (to be fair, that was not an official topic of the debate).

The Obama campaign faulted Lehrer at points following the debate. Obama deputy campaign manager Stephanie Cutter told CNN that Lehrer let a “testy” Romney go on, but didn’t repeat the charge to a gaggle of reporters. Romney’s camp dismissed such moderator complaints as whining, but the case could be made that Lehrer was lax with both men.

Lehrer has a sterling reputation as a debate moderator at the presidential level. But the flabbiness of the Denver face-off was striking.

5. There was some substance and a lot of centrism.

If there was any question that Romney is making an effort to move toward the center — at a fairly late stage in the race — that became clear at this debate.

He talked up his bipartisan approach as governor of Massachusetts, a touchstone he’s reached for occasionally but not regularly in the general election.

He painted himself as a problem solver, and steered clear of some of the more troublesome aspects of policy that could paint him as too far to the right. On the issue of voucherizing Medicare, he framed his response with care, mindful of how the issue plays, and without talking about the need for entitlement reform. He made sure that voters knew that he wasn’t in favor of changing Medicare for current seniors, and repeated his stump claim that Obama’s health care plan would cut Medicare spending.

And despite the Democratic National Convention containing frequent references to abortion rights, and the success with which Democrats believe they have used it as a cudgel against Romney, the president never raised it.

There was an expected exchange about “Obamacare” and “Romneycare,” but it yielded little by way of new information.

The questions Lehrer asked also allowed for a bit more of a substantive exchange than we’ve seen through a lot of the campaign — although he did not challenge either candidate on some of their more dubious claims.

Also absent? The much-anticipated “zingers” from either candidate. Beyond Romney’s Big Bird line and his quip about Obama having his own house and a plane, but not his own facts, there were few memorable lines in this debate. It’s a striking fact for a campaign that’s been defined, on both sides, by an attempt to exploit gaffes.

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"Bolivian Rice Soup (*Sopa de Arroz*)" by Chef Noly, Noly's World Cuisine/BoliviaBella

Oct. 2, 2012, (<http://www.nolysinc.blogspot.com/2012/10/bolivian-rice-soup-sopa-de-arroz.html>)

The weather in Santa Cruz, Bolivia lately has been going from one extreme to another. Tremendous amounts of rain fell in a short period of time making travel to the outskirts of Santa Cruz difficult. Then heat and dryness caused the death of many chickens. The heat also is causing trouble for cows. After the cows grazed on their allotted land, the land did not regrow plants fast enough to continue sustaining the cows needs. So cows are now being transported to other areas where viable grazing land is more plentiful.

For this week's post I've decided to give you a quick and easy soup recipe that can be made with or without meat. The version below is vegetarian but feel free to add your favorite meat.

- 12 cups broth (use your favorite homemade or store bought vegetable, beef or chicken broth)
- 1 medium Spanish onion, minced
- 1 bell pepper, minced (use green, red, yellow or orange bell peppers)
- 2-3 T fresh parsley, chopped
- 1/2 cup tomato, peeled and grated
- 1 small turnip, grated
- 1 stalk celery, minced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 t ground cumin
- vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup rice
- 4 small red potatoes, peeled and cut in half
- 1/4 cup frozen peas
- 1 large carrot, peeled and shaved into long thin slices

1/4 t dried oregano, crushed

In a large saucepan over medium heat saute the onion, bell pepper, tomato, turnip and celery in 1-2 T oil. Stir often for about 10 minutes.

Add 1 T chopped parsley, cumin and salt and pepper.

In a large soup pot combine the sauteed vegetables and the broth. Bring to a boil then add the rice, cover and cook over medium heat for about 15 minutes.

Add the potatoes and peas then continue to cook for another 10-15 minutes or until the potatoes and rice are tender.

Add carrots and oregano. Simmer for 10 minutes.

Serve in large soup bowls and garnish with remaining parsley.

I love to add shredded green cabbage to this soup at the same time I add the rice. The shredded cabbage with the carrot ribbons look beautiful and taste delicious. You can also turn this into a seafood soup by using shrimp broth and adding in shrimp, scallops and chunks of fish.

(To order saltenas please visit Noly's World Cuisine at <http://nolys.vpweb.com>.)

[20121003-02](#)

10:53

Pam

Re: "My Take: 'I'm Spiritual but Not Religious' Is a Cop-Out" (reply to SteveB, FotM Newsletter #239)

How much truth is necessary for the good life? More vexing still, what is truth anyway? I take issue with the FotM article that chastises people who call themselves "spiritual" but not "religious." Make up your mind, the author says, as if it were actually possible for a thinking person to do so. The truth is, we do not know what the Truth is and probably never will. "There is more in heaven and earth...than is dreamed of in your philosophy."

Believers hold religious truths to be immutable and eternal. Scientists find truth in empirical data, which is often counter-intuitive. There is only one truth at a time in science. Either the earth revolves around the sun or it doesn't. We may not know the dimensions of the cosmos, but we do know we live in a heliocentric universe. Science is always open to new "truths" that replace the old ones. Imagine a world where "science" was caring for tradition that never changed.

Quite obviously religion varies from culture to culture. Over the centuries some have fallen (no one believes that Zeus sends down thunderbolts any longer), while others have come to prominence, almost always (always?) with an uncomfortable amount of violence involved. Religion is NOT self-evident, the way gravity is. It requires a leap of faith that a trust in antibiotics does not. The right drug will cure you, whether you believe in it or not. You only need to "make up your mind" about something that is not self-evident and lacks empirical evidence, and in that case, it's impossible to find a "right" answer, only a provisionally useful or comforting one. We make such choices all the time. We may believe the Colts will win the game on Saturday; we may believe enough to bet money on it. But when they lose, our belief counts for nothing.

As human beings, we don't know everything, very far from it. Everything is provisional, and living with ambiguity and an open mind is the best we can do. The essay criticizes folks who opt out of the confines of organized religion, preferring to do "what feels good" rather than what doctrine dictates. I see that not as a criticism but as a rational way to live. It's rational to want to feel good. If prostrating yourself before a wooden idol makes you feel good, then where's the harm? I would feel ridiculous doing that, but, hey, I don't have to. Loving my children makes me feel good. Helping a friend makes me feel good. Helping a stranger makes me feel good. Whatever the origin of those feelings, they are real to me, and I see no reason to dismiss them. I realize I believe what I have chosen to, just as much as the next person. And I admit that those beliefs have sometimes led to unfortunate outcomes, and I have changed my mind. I will probably change my mind again about fundamental things before all

is said and done, but that doesn't disturb me. It is not a loss of integrity to internalize the lessons life brings to you. It is not a strength to cling to the impossible.

20121003-03	12:49	SteveB	Re: "My Take: 'I'm Spiritual but Not Religious' Is a Cop-Out" (reply to Pam, above)
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Powerful and impeccable, Pam! Yet you know, now, that the devil will be after you, right? Haha

I agree with you about all this, pretty much, but I wonder if the writer of the article was just not a good enough writer to make us understand exactly what he was talking about... Although it seems the author is a Christian, I think I agree, too, with what I thought was his point (but I may be wrong): If you're going to believe in magic, you might as well believe in big, conventional magic or else give magic up.

I think giving it up seems like a distinctly good option to many of us.

And besides, I guess the team of linguists and scientists and religio who are, at this moment, writing the Bible (well, *re-writing* it) won't be done for another 100 years, they estimate.

Until then, I'm not quite sure how Christians can know what to believe, as far as the details go. And that's just the way it is, I believe. I don't mean to offend anyone.

And I think I agree with the author that New Age magic, quantum physics, UFO's, and angels don't add much to our spiritual or cultural enlightenment. Science is unkind, relentless, and extremely dangerous too, but it's what we have available to try to understand the powerful yearning for God or spiritual reality that seems so innate in humans.

And I want to add one important point. I feel so fortunate and I believe we are all so lucky to have people like MarthaH (see her excellent "essay" today in *FotM Newsletter* #235 about the importance of local politics) and Pam (just to give the two most recent examples), who are unafraid to put inner truth, passion, caring, and love (*agape/philios*) into everything they write. THANK YOU ALL!

20121003-05	13:24	Pam	Re: "My Take: 'I'm Spiritual but Not Religious' Is a Cop-Out" (reply to SteveB, above)
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Re. religion: bottom line: I don't care what anyone believes so long as those beliefs don't impinge on other people. It's fun to try to articulate and defend what I believe (or don't), but I'm not so arrogant as to think I have enough answers to be able to tell others what to believe. Lots of people cite the apparent inherent need in humans to have religion, and that may be true. I don't know what happened to me then, because I just don't have that need. There are plenty of things I DO need, like love and friendship and safety and books, but, much as I might like it, I can't believe in the supernatural.

Well, tonight is the first round of debates. I don't know about the candidates, but I'm nervous. I think I'll wait to catch it in clips after the fact. I can't bear to watch screw-ups in real time.

20121003-08	15:08	SteveB	Re: "My Take: 'I'm Spiritual but Not Religious' Is a Cop-Out" (reply to Pam, above)
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Marci and I were just talking about how incredibly nervous either of us would be having to debate for President in front of the world. Incredible. How and why would anyone do it?

I'm going to try to watch in real time, but I am very nervous too. Jeez, I hope the idiot shows his true colors clearly.

20121003-09	15:20 Pam	Re: "My Take: 'I'm Spiritual but Not Religious' Is a Cop-Out" (reply to SteveB, above)
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I hope those "zingers" come across as phony as they actually are.

20121003-04	13:09 SteveB	"Drudge, Daily Caller Hype Old Obama Speech, Trolling Entire Political World"
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DRUDGE DEBUNKED!

"Drudge, Daily Caller Hype Old Obama Speech, Trolling Entire Political World" by Jason Linkins, Huffington Post

Oct. 2, 2012, (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/02/drudge-daily-caller-obama_n_1934441.html?utm_hp_ref=politics)

(WASHINGTON) The Daily Caller, working in collaboration with Fox News, released a video Tuesday night of a speech President Barack Obama delivered at Hampton University back in 2007. The release was preceded by an all-afternoon Drudge Report banner headline splash, billing the video as some sort of electorally game-changing revelation with racial overtones that was going to affect the 2012 campaign ahead of the first presidential debate.

It ended up being a rerun of a 2007 story that was already well known to reporters and political partisans. So, as a piece of new and incendiary news, it was something of a letdown. However, as a piece of Internet trolling that forced political reporters to bide their time until the evening release of the video, instead of watching the goings-on in the last days of Major League Baseball's regular season, it was a work of genius.

So, here, in 2012, is how a screaming Drudge-siren scoop comes and goes, in 10 easy steps:

1. We get a big tease, about a bombshell video scoop that's going to "drop," from Matt Drudge. He uses Twitter to get the word out. Relatively speaking, that's kind of new. Anyway, this is enough to prompt zillions of political reporters to point their browsers at the Drudge Report and start refreshing like mad. Relatively speaking, that's kind of old. But, hey, if you want to attract lemmings, give 'em a cliff.
2. Naturally, one sort of suspects that something of a letdown is coming. Condoleezza Rice, after all, was not selected to run alongside Mitt Romney. But the promised outcome is that the video is going to "cause controversy, ignite accusations of racism -- in both directions!" (No, I've no idea what "both directions" is supposed to mean.)
3. Those madcap browser-refreshers get gradual payoffs. We learn that the video in question will be shown on Fox News later Tuesday night. It's billed as "Obama's other race speech." A later update teases: "THE ACCENT ... THE ANGER ... THE ACCUSATIONS ... THE SHOUT OUT TO REV. WRIGHT WHO IS IN AUDIENCE ..."
4. Matt Drudge has an image to his Obama video splash, of Obama speaking, in front of some sort of drum kit. He is apparently unaware that Google allows anyone to do a reverse-search to find information about images. A reporter from BuzzFeed, Jessica Testa, figures this out, and identifies the image as Obama, giving a speech at Hampton University, in 2007. She and her colleague, Andrew Kaczynski, start finding relevant portions of the speech on YouTube.
5. As it turns out, Andrew Sullivan's The Daily Dish has had a transcript of the prepared remarks of the speech since 2007. (Though Obama did, at times, improvise from those remarks, as the videos BuzzFeed gathered demonstrate.)
6. And Politico reported the "shout-out" to Wright in 2008 as one of the "top eight gaffes of the campaign." By which I mean, the 2008 campaign.

7. Newsbusters wrote about this appearance, speech, et al., back in 2008 as well. This virtually assures that everyone who was a) alive in 2008 and b) a conservative political blogger, is well aware of this story.
8. Actually, they were likely aware of it even before Newsbusters wrote about it. CNN's Roland Martin, in fact, pushed back against the conservative outcry over this speech in 2007.
9. Tucker Carlson, who was chiefly responsible for rolling out this old video, insisted earlier today that all the extant video clips that were found to be in wide circulation were incomplete, and that he, exclusively, had the full video. What's *really* strange about this is that Tucker Carlson already covered this speech -- back in 2007, on his eponymous MSNBC show.
10. The Daily Caller and Sean Hannity collaborate on an explosive release of this story, releasing it simultaneously at 9 p.m., as if it had not happened a long time ago.

And that's how the entire political Internet was briefly trolled on Tuesday, and into Tuesday night.

For what end? Well, it's a largely a reheat of something that conservatives have already pretty much bugged out over once before. The Daily Caller, writing up the video in a post published to coincide with Hannity, runs down a list of what it finds objectionable: Obama shouted out the Rev. Wright, he used "an accent he almost never adopts in public" (meaning it's an "accent" he sometimes uses), and he criticizes the federal government's response to Hurricane Katrina. (As did Bobby Jindal, and David Vitter.)

Obama expresses his dissatisfaction thusly:

People in Washington, they wake up, they're surprised: 'There's poverty in our midst! Folks are frustrated! Black people angry!' Then there's gonna be some panels, and hearings, and there are commissions and there are reports, and then there's some aid money, although we don't always know where it's going — it can't seem to get to the people who need it — and nothin' really changes, except the news coverage quiets down and Anderson Cooper is on to something else.

And that ...*pretty much accurately describes Washington's official response to this*, actually, right down to Anderson Cooper finding something new to cover. The only thing I'd object to, is that there didn't end up being all that many panels and hearings and commissions and reports. So, Obama is in the wrong here, by giving Capitol Hill even that much credit.

Obama goes on to object that the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act -- which requires localities to match federal relief funds, a requirement that was waived for the Sept. 11 attacks and their aftermath -- was not waived for Hurricane Katrina relief. But Obama is hardly alone in calling for reforms of the Stafford Act. Here's Desiree Evans of the Institute for Southern Studies:

For years policy advocates have called for an overhaul of the Stafford Act, the primary law that also governs the Federal Emergency Management Agency's role in responding to disasters. Policy advocates say that amending the Stafford Act will better serve people in the wake of disaster. Following the disastrous federal response to Hurricane Katrina, this call to action became even more urgent.

As the Louisiana Family Recovery Corps pointed out in a recent statement, the Stafford Act was not designed to deal with massive disasters, and it has ultimately retarded recovery in Louisiana and other states. According to the Recovery Corps, "the rigidity of the Act and its voluminous amendments has certainly served to handcuff those federal agents, officers, and agencies working under its oversight."

[...]

Critics of the Stafford Act also argue that it needs to give FEMA greater latitude in how it responds to catastrophes as devastating as Hurricane Katrina. The assistance flowing from the Stafford Act has been inadequate following major disasters and unable to fulfill vital needs, human rights advocates argue. Reform

advocates also call for more flexibility in providing cash assistance quickly -- particularly in the form of grants to states and localities, while also avoiding the type of bureaucratic red tape that has marred post-Katrina recovery efforts.

Following Hurricane Katrina local Gulf Coast officials said the "match" requirement in the Stafford Act -- which said that affected communities had to pay a 25 percent match upfront before they can receive federal disaster fund -- played a large role in the pace of recovery in the region. After Katrina, the White House reduced the match requirement to 10 percent, but it was still a hefty sum for devastated areas.

Did race play a role in the response to Katrina? That question was put to the 2008 slate of Democratic Party candidates. Well-known angry black guy Christopher Dodd opined: "I believe that if this had occurred in a place with a majorly white population, we would have seen a much more rapid response and a consistent response." Here's Howard Dean, on the same topic: "We must ... come to terms with the ugly truth that skin color, age and economics played a deadly role in who survived and who did not."

It was a fairly mainstream Democratic Party critique of the Katrina response, in other words.

Beyond that, the objections seem to be largely based on Obama acknowledging that the black community hasn't exactly had the easiest time of it in America for the past three centuries. The Daily Caller contends thusly: "Obama describes a racist, zero-sum society, in which the white majority profits by exploiting black America. The mostly black audience shouts in agreement. The effect is closer to an Al Sharpton rally than a conventional campaign event."

Pardon me -- I mean to say that the Daily Caller *recontends* things that conservative critics already contended four years ago, about this speech. (Newsbusters, circa 2008: "This entire speech is filled with nothing but class warfare, expansions of social programs, raising the minimum wage, typical great society type junk all couched squarely as a civic responsibility enmeshed with Obama's view of Biblical precepts.")

Obama campaign press secretary Ben LaBolt responded to all of this, thusly:

In a transparent attempt to change the subject from his comments attacking half of the American people, Mitt Romney's allies recirculated video of a 2007 event that was open to and extensively covered by the press at the time. The only thing shocking about this is that they apparently think it's wrong to suggest that we should help returning veterans, children leaving foster care and other members of Mitt Romney's 47 percent get training that will allow them to find the best available jobs. If the Romney campaign believes that Americans will accept these desperate attacks tomorrow night in place of specific plans for the middle class, it's they who are in for a surprise.

There's really not much more to say about this. If you were inclined to object to the content of this speech, you've been so inclined since the 2008 campaign, and you're probably all het up again tonight. If you're open to the argument but need convincing, this might do the trick, but it's just as likely that it will be seen as pretty weak tea.

Four years of the Obama White House basically makes it hard to present Obama -- now -- as an "angry black man" -- the reason Keegan-Michael Key and Jordan Peele's "Obama Anger Translator" comedy sketches work is because Obama never manifests that sort of raw, racially-tinged ire, so watching "Luther," his "anger translator" indulge himself in it is a hilarious contrast. The closest Obama came to that sort of acrimony was when he referred to the police who arrested Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr for breaking and entering "stupid." (Mind you, Gates was accused of breaking and entering his own home. If the day ever comes that the police arrest me for doing the same, I plan on calling them "stupid," quite a bit. They, in turn, should plan to take it with humility.)

So what's the point of this? Well, it's become an article of faith among many conservatives that Sen. John McCain cost himself the election when, in the late stages of the 2008 campaign, he didn't make greater use of the Rev. Wright controversy, and all of the attendant racial dog whistles it offered, to win the election. This rehash of a news event that was exceedingly well covered four years ago is less about new information, and more about fulfilling a conservative tribal need, left unfulfilled by the previous Republican candidate.

20121003-06

13:29

Pam

Re: "Fire Congress, Vote Out Incumbents" (reply to MarthaH, FotM Newsletter #239)

I wish you were still in the classroom, Martha.

20121003-07

14:49

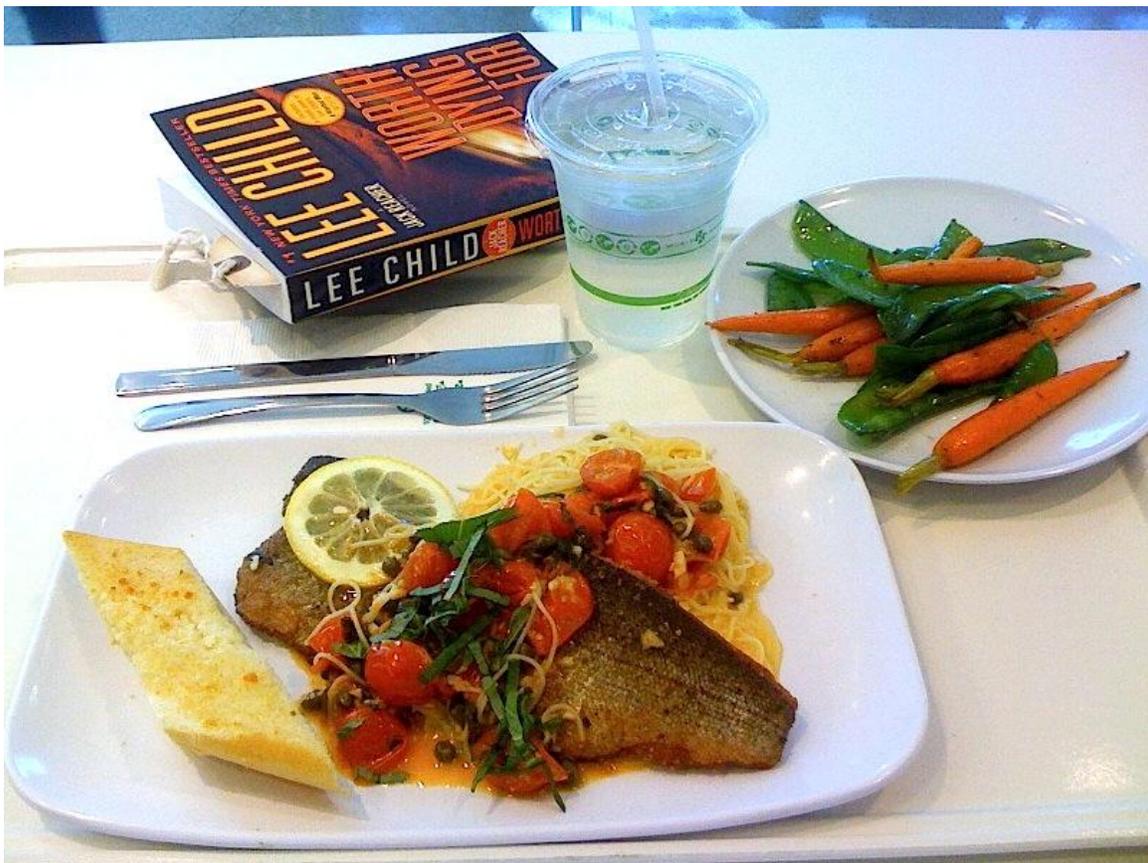
Ben

Photo: Today's Seafood Lunch at Apple

Too busy for details today, so you will have to imagine another superb meal's verbiage.

Bounced from a fishless bistro to the pasta line, Chef Patricia proved to me just how good pasta and fish are together with this delicious pitch-perfect seared trout filet over angel hair pasta in garlic butter sauce with prima vera sauce; a side of fresh carrots and snow peas from the Bistro gave balance to my nutritional needs.

I ate every caper and scrap of pasta.



Seared Trout with Veg Side

20121003-10

18:52

Marci

Fw: *Chuchu* Fruit from Brazil

[Source of original email unknown. –SteveB]

HO - HO – HOOOO, GREEN GIANT!

This is actually a vegetable growing in Brazil called "Chuchu" pronounced shoo-shoo.

Well, well, well....they DO grow on trees! Look how happy she is!



20121003-11 19:28 Marci Fw: Photos: Rescued Squirrel

You are going to love these pictures.

This is your "Aaahhhh moment" for the day -- Squirrel Rescued

Love this one!

Soldiers in Belarus found a little squirrel and brought it to the Warrant officer. The squirrel was very weak and about to die, so the officer took care of it, fed it like a baby every 4 hours.

Three months ago the guy left the army and now works as a taxi driver -- and the squirrel is always in his pocket no matter where he goes!

"Rescuing one animal may not change the world, but for that animal, their world is changed forever!" - Unknown



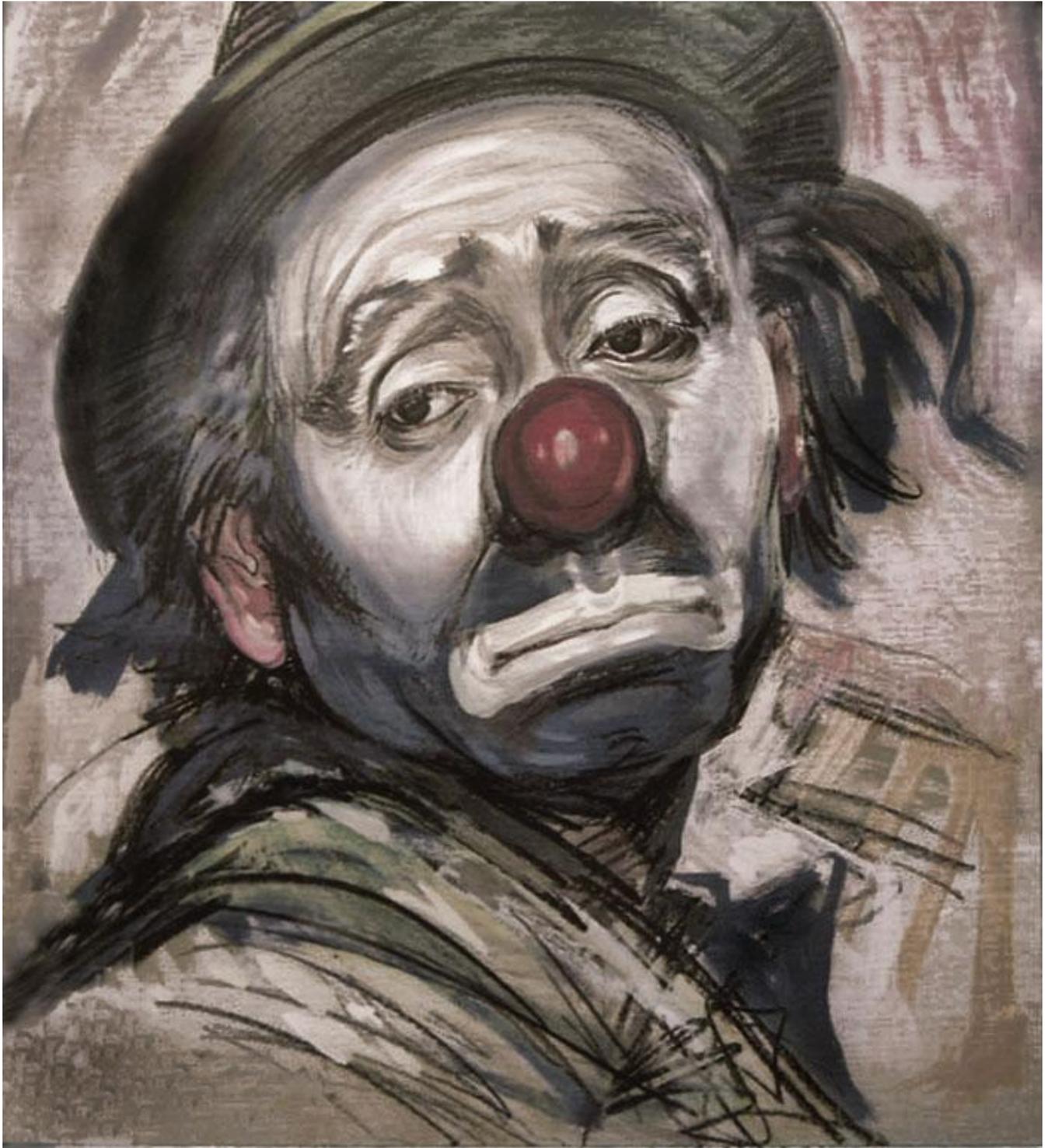








<http://www.ravingsofamadhousewife.com/2011/03/facebook-and-amish-people-and-sad.html>



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

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