



I'm not a robot



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Define monstrous antonym

Review Institute, go here. Beastly News Aggressive hating in progress: Recommended I think you might enjoy The Books of Jacob. In Closing "As we learned from his relatives, our friend Boris Romanchenko, who survived the Nazi camps #Buchenwald, #Peeenemünde, #Dora and #BergenBelsen, died last Friday in a bomb blast at his home in Kharkiv. We are deeply saddened." A person is carried as people flee near a destroyed bridge to cross Irpin River in Irpin, outside Kyiv, Ukraine, March 9, 2022. (Mikhail Palinchuk/Reuters) Welcome to the Tuesday, a weekly newsletter about denazification, antisexistiblitarianism, and perverse polylsiblic pursuits. To subscribe to the Tuesday, which I hope you do, please follow this link. "We Are All Ukrainians Now" "The woman's pelvis had been crushed and her hip detached." I don't even know what that last part means. I suppose I can imagine a crushed pelvis easily enough. I can't imagine what a detached hip looks like or feels like. The woman in question was famous for a minute. She was a Ukrainian mother who appeared in a famous news photo. She is dead now. So is the child she was carrying. She was photographed being carried out of that Mariupol maternity hospital that was bombed by Russian troops in Ukraine, one of many examples of the savagery in which the Russians have been engaged. It is tempting to write "sub-human" savagery, but savagery is entirely human. Nobody talks about ratsnakes or scorpions behaving in a savage fashion — nobody expects them to be anything other than what they are. But we expect more of H. sapiens. — God knows why. "Unidentified bloodied pregnant woman," one headline called her. She must have had a name. We know the name of Tatiana Perebeins, 43, and her husband, 18, and their 9-year-old son. They were killed running for their lives when they were fired on by Russian soldiers. Another famous photo: She was an accountant for a Silicon Valley tech company. There are more like it, working out of India. "We Are All Ukrainians now," her kids saying the headline over a Wall Street Journal column. The sentiment is a human one. But it is a lie. We are not all Ukrainians. Most of us are far removed from anything like that kind of danger or that kind of suffering. The worse we feel it is higher gasoline prices and more expensive groceries. These matter, of course, and they matter a great deal to the poor, for whom these additional financial burdens are very heavy. But that is not the same. It is much easier to be brave, and it is not easy to suffer. But how much easier it must be to suffer oneself than to watch one's children suffer, to be cold and hungry, to die, blown to pieces, in the womb before taking their first breath? How many Ukrainian mothers and fathers would happily — joyfully — give up their own lives to ensure that their children could have a decent dinner at a safe, warm place to sleep? ... If they could have what they do not have? Millions. Imagine. ... You are not alone. Your anger, your grief, your yearning, your despair, your pain, your suffering. Putin is not a superhero, and he cannot act alone. What he has been doing by your government is going to be forgotten. Your children, and your grandchildren will bear the shame of this. Things are never going to go back to normal for you. You don't know if you will be noticed, just as it is popular these days, the civilian world has got together, and we have voted you off the island. The ties between you and the civilized world that have been cut in recent weeks are not going to be restored quickly, and many of them will never be restored at all. You are not part of the civilized world anymore. We are not going to forget what you have been party to, what so many of you have stood by and accepted. What makes it worse, if that is possible, and certainly more asinine: You have already lost, in that what your government had hoped to achieve will not be achieved. You can murder as many expectant mothers and children as you like, bomb them until you run out of munitions, burn down the hospitals and the libraries, execute all the mayors, and you will still have lost. And when you are gone, the civilized people of this world are going to help to rebuild Ukraine, and you will be — what? Praying for high gas prices? "Denazification": When Vladimir Putin launched his campaign of mass murder in Ukraine, one of the pretenses he cited was "denazification." Putin's propaganda machine has for years been retelling the absurd fiction that Ukraine is a country dominated by vicious neo-Nazis, presumably the very strange kind of neo-Nazis who choose to rally behind Volodymyr Zelensky, the country's Jewish president. Putin is fortunate to have created such as Representative Madison Cawthorn (R., N.C.) to aid in the effort. About denazification ... For those who remember just how brutal the 20th century could be, it is remarkable how forbearing the denazification of Germany was. As the tide of the war began to turn and it was clear that the Allies would prevail, Winston Churchill dreamt of dragging Adolf Hitler, whom he considered to be little more than a jumped-up gangster, to England to be executed, quipping that the Americans might make an electric chair available via lend-lease. Churchill opposed the Nuremberg trials, not because he thought they were unjust but because he wanted the Nazi leadership executed without trial. There are competing accounts of the conversations at Yalta and elsewhere, but one version has Joseph Stalin proposing to execute every German officer above the rank of captain. Dwight Eisenhower is quoted in a report to the Senate suggesting that the "ringleaders and SS troops should be given the death penalty, without question. But the punishment should not stop there." It is unlikely that Eisenhower meant to execute every German belonging to the SS — 800,000 men did the bulk of the work of the war — but he did apparently favor keeping the German people in punitive poverty for some indefinite period of time. As it turned out, the business of reforming Germany — West Germany at first, and then unified Germany — did not require such drastic and bloody measures. Or, rather, it did not require those measures precisely, though Soviet domination of East Germany was vicious enough. The reconstruction of post-war Japan involved quite radical measures, including intervening in the nation's religious life, but it was accomplished without very much open violence. I do wonder what it would take to turn Russia around. I suppose it would start with a Russia that wanted to be turned around, or at least a critical mass of Russians who want that. I don't think there is one. Jay Nordlinger is right to say that the Russians who protest Putin's junta are some of the bravest people in the world. But I do not think there are enough of them. Words About Words The occupation and reconstruction of Japan by American forces provides one of the few opportunities to use the word antisexistiblitarianism. It is a cool-sounding word that people sometimes use without knowing what it means, e.g., Ice-T's describing himself as the "epitome of antisexistiblitarianism." Americans who have bothered to learn anything about their Bill of Rights know what an "established" religion is — a state church — and from that might guess that the disestablishmentarian position is the program of those who call for an established church to be disestablished, as we have seen in some (but, by no means all) European countries and in the individual U.S. states, some of which maintained established churches well into the 19th century. (Massachusetts was the last to disestablish, in 1833.) But there are those who oppose this sort of thing, and they are the antisexistiblitarianists. Ice-T and others who like the sound of antisexistiblitarianism tend to use it as though it meant "anti-establishment" or "radical," but, of course, it means the opposite of that. Antidisestablishmentarianism is in most cases a conservative disposition, a positively reactionary one. We need a word for our so-called Catholic Integralists, friends who like to use the power of the American state to effectively establish a church that more than a few in the Founding generation were not sure should even be tolerated. Neo-establishmentarian? Noovoestablishmentarian? Dorks? I am a conservative in these matters; I like having the First Amendment in the United States, but I also tend to want to see countries with established churches keep them. The evangelical atheists talk about the prospect of having an established church as though it were the stuff of neo-medieval nightmares, but Denmark, Sweden, and the United Kingdom are not exactly unlivable hellholes. Neither is Malta. Monaco is pretty nice. Scotland would have to build a lot of quagmire before it caught up with the officially atheist states of recent history. Rampant Prescriptivism That thing most of us endured last weekend — with the exception of our faithful readers in Scottsdale, Honolulu, Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo, Singapore, Dubai, Cape Town, Seoul, New Delhi, and a few other enlightened locales — is Daylight Saving Time, not Daylight Savings Time. It is the one weekend of the year that has us all à la recherche du temps perdu. Daylight Saving Time is a great example of the progressive imagination, forever at odds with the organic cycles and natural variation in human life, insistent that no aspect of that life — down to the time on the clock — is beyond regimentation and rationalization. Inconvenient. Irritating. Arrogant. And, in spite of the connotations of the word "progressive," absolutely stuck in the past. Send your language questions to TheTuesday@NationalReview.Com Home and Away You can buy my most recent book, Big White Ghetto: Dead Broke, Stone-Cold Stupid, and High on Rage in the Dark Wooly Wilds of the 'Real America,' here. My National Review archive can be found here. Listen to Mad Dogs & Englishmen here. My New York Post archive is here. Beastly News . This looks like Katy is being very sweet, but I guarantee you she is just checking to see if Pancake got some yogurt without sharing. Recommended Vinson Cunningham interviews Cornel West in the New Yorker. It is a very interesting interview, and Professor West is as charming as ever. One almost has to be in awe of the effort it takes to make such a brilliant mind to argue itself into such asinine, predictable, and at times genuinely stupid conclusions. In Closing We are about two weeks into Lent, the Christian season of penance and preparation for Easter. In my neighborhood, there were Mardi Gras decorations up for six weeks before the day itself, but I think that has something to do with there being a lot of New Orleans Saints fans around here. But no one decorates his house for Lent. (I wonder what that would even look like.) Lent comes from the Old English word for spring, and Easter is far from being the only resurrection festival celebrated at that time of year. There are many things I like about Lent, and many things about it for which I am grateful, and one of them is the way the season discomfits my secular friends. They don't quite know what to say: "Uh... happy?" Ash Wednesday. "Good... Good Friday." We haven't forgotten how to do penance — that's what all our insane dietary fads are about, mostly — but we have forgotten why. To understand why we must do penance is to understand a great many things that affluent modern people spend a great deal of time and energy working to not understand. It is to remember something that many of us would rather forget and to know something that many of us wish we didn't. If you think Lent is about giving up beer or chocolate bars for 40 days, you don't understand anything about it at all. To subscribe to the Tuesday, follow this link. Tucker Carlson at the 2021 AmericaFest in Phoenix, Ariz., December 18, 2021. (Gage Skidmore) Welcome to the Tuesday, a weekly newsletter about aggravated asininity, total tomfoolery, and assorted acts of assonance and alliteration. To subscribe to the Tuesday, which I hope you will do, please follow this link. The Man in the Box Two facts that seem contradictory but are both true: (1) Tucker Carlson has the most-watched cable-news show in the country, and (2) basically nobody watches Tucker Carlson. Last year, Carlson's Fox News program averaged 3.2 million viewers a night, making it an absolute ratings juggernaut by current cable-news standards but reaching fewer than 1 percent of our nation's 330 million people. Going by that 2021 average, Carlson has a far smaller audience than does, say, Judge Steve Harvey (4.5 million) or reruns of Young Sheldon (4.3 million). Reruns of Young Sheldon do pretty big numbers, but new episodes of that comedy typically outperform the top three programs on Fox News combined. None of this is to piss on Carlson's show or on Fox News — Carlson leads the list, and seven of the top ten cable-news programs in 2021 were Fox offerings. (The other three of the top ten were MSNBC.) The channel and its most popular host clearly know what they are doing. But we live in a very fractured media landscape, and the most widely shared points of cultural reference are not the cable-news mouthholes. Without passing any judgment on the artistic merits of Young Sheldon, that is probably a good thing. People who spend a lot of time in front of Fox News or MSNBC are not in the main what you'd call happy and well-adjusted people. But they do have a relatively big footprint in our politics. In 1983, ABC broadcast a made-for-television movie about nuclear war called The Day After. It was watched by something between 77 million and 100 million people, depending on which estimate you accept. (I watched it, and so did the two little kids I was babysitting that evening; they had nightmares for weeks.) The same year, 106 million people tuned in to watch the last episode of M*A*S*H*; by way of comparison, only 19 million people watched the final episode of Game of Thrones. Other than Super Bowl, and the 2016 presidential debates, you won't see very many broadcasts that have the kind of wide viewership that makes them genuinely national experiences. We've been talking about that "fractured media landscape" for a few decades now. But the fractures seem to be getting deeper. The news environment in 2004 was not very much like what it was in the heyday for the Big Three networks, when the national news conversation was dominated by (that seething crackpot) Walter Cronkite, but Dan Rather was still a big enough cultural presence at that time that his fraudulent report on George W. Bush's military service — a pre-election hit piece — became a monolithic national obsession. That episode was, among other things, the launchpad of modern right-wing Internet journalism as we know it. But Dan Rather today — 90 years old and bonkers as he is — probably remains more widely known than most of the leading television-news figures of our time. My media friends were very interested in the Chris Cuomo story, but when I asked my non-medical friends about that teapot tempest, the most universal response was, "Who?" Over the weekend, Saturday Night Live opened its show with a parody of Laura Ingraham played by Kate McKinnon and Tucker Carlson (portrayed by Alex Moffat), who were shot hosting a gala fundraiser for poor, starving Russian oligarchs. The point was serious, but I'm not sure how seriously like that would really land with the general population. The media care intensely about the media, but they are not. For news figures figure so prominently in SNL sketches as what right-wing talkers spend about 75 percent of their oxygen discussing the so-called mainstream media. The point was serious, but I doubt that very much of SNL's audience cares about the media, or even whether they interact with it. (Yes, for McKinnon's Ingraham/Moffat's Carlson, "My Stewart and Buttigieg Bush" character I imagined it to be, though SNL's audience is likely to think that audience is made up mostly of people who know that Tucker Carlson exists and that they are expected to hate it. I wonder how many people who watched Watchmen realized that the pundit-show parody in the opening scene was supposed to be the McLaughlin Group, once an inescapable cultural presence for a certain kind of American and another favorite SNL target. I wonder how many people watching Aladdin get the William F. Buckley Jr. impersonation or know that there was such a thing as Firing Line. Damned few, I'd bet. We hear a great deal of worry about people living in "bubbles," with highly partisan broadcast programs and social media combining to sort Americans into silos in which most of their information and their social interactions all have the same political and cultural stamp. I suppose that is a problem for the general electorate, though I am not entirely convinced that it is a very large problem. (More precisely, I believe it is more of an effect than a cause.) Some Americans may live in a Tucker Carlson bubble while others live in a Rachel Maddow bubble, but those aren't the only kinds of bubbles. If you have spent very much time around media figures and politicians, then you will understand that however their respective audiences are sorted, Rachel Maddow and Tucker Carlson live in the same bubble. Top-shelf Fox News hosts and their MSNBC counterparts are all multimillionaire employees of multinational media conglomerates, they typically work one block away from each other at their respective studios in Manhattan, their children go to the same schools, etc. — and they have a lot more in common with one another than either has in common with the shmucks who compose their audiences. In the same way two competing dairymen have more in common with one another than either has in common with the chief of staff of a Republican senator than either has in common with most of the people who elect those senators. Etc. I can't help thinking that there is a lost political opportunity in all of this. I recently had a conversation with an elected official who is a frequent target of cable-news and talk-radio ire, and that media attention was pretty low on his list of things to worry about — he rarely hears anything about that kind of stuff from any of the people who elect him. Apparently, nobody back home cares as much about Tucker Carlson as SNL does. And that is to be expected. But acting on that knowledge is not a simple thing. For one thing, Tucker Carlson's 1 percent may not look like much, but the number of people who are willing to spend an hour watching Fox News still is much larger than the number of people who are willing to spend an hour listening to a serious conversation about tax reform or unfunded mandates. It is many multiples of the circulation of this magazine or any other American political magazine. Carlson's largely audience number is considerably larger than the number of people who bought the best-selling book of 2021. (It was a graphic novel.) The best-selling political book of that year, Mark Levin's American Marxism, sold just over 1 million copies in 2021; the second-best-selling political book didn't move enough units to make the overall top-25 list. In the most recent Gallup poll of issues that Americans care most about, only 1 percent said wages, 1 percent said foreign policy, 1 percent said education. If we set aside the vague ("the government") and the unusual (Covid), the leading issue, far and away, was inflation — and that concern led the list for only 8 percent of those polled. Joe Biden was elected president by only 24.6 percent of all Americans, and he won the Democratic nomination on an even smaller number of votes — 19 million, or about 5.8 percent of all Americans. Small, highly motivated groups of people can wield tremendous power at certain democratic bottlenecks, such as primary elections, and broadcast activism of the cable-news and talk-radio variety may have an outsized influence for that reason. But that influence should not be exaggerated: Even the most energetic partisan media is not reliably all that good at selling crazy, even in Texas — ask Don Huffines, the talk-radio hero who got massacred in the Texas GOP gubernatorial primary, or Representative Louie Gohmert, a gadfly on the nut circuit who finished fourth in the AG primary with only 17 percent of the vote. I don't know anybody who does a good Gregg Abbott impersonation, on Saturday Night Live or anywhere else. But he gets a lot of votes. As a practical matter, what Tucker Carlson thinks about U.S.-Russia relations and the situation in Ukraine has not mattered very much, except maybe to Jon Stewart and SNL and other media figures and media obsessives. And maybe it should matter even less. Republican candidates spend a great deal of time obsessing about the wrongs inflicted on them by left-leaning media and absolutely cowering from right-wing media, fearing criticism on Fox News or AM radio more than they fear almost anything else. There is reason to believe that their resentment of the one is largely profitless and their fear of the other largely baseless. I wonder who will bell that cat. Words About Words A reader asks: "What is the most appropriate 'rule' word to describe today's system? Are we in an oligarchy or a gerontocracy or a katorakocracy?" When it comes to rule-by words, you're mostly talking — oracy and archy. There are some funny and obscure ones: Unlike that "true socialist" we've heard so much about for all these years, gerocracy — rule by the intelligent — rarely has been tried. Neither has the variant noocracy, rule by the wise, nor timocracy, rule by the honorable. In Starship Troopers, there was a form of stratocracy in which all political power is held by the military itself or by those who have completed military service. I wrote a book dealing in part with the power of oligarchy, or mob rule. Demarchy is rule by randomly selected people, which maybe isn't the worst of all possible options. Where are we now? Only Dr. Lexus knows for sure. Dr. Lexus (Justin Long) in Idiocracy. It was an idea that grew out of optimism and error, a species of "Whig history," the belief that the world is carried by natural social and economic forces even in the direction of enlightenment and liberty. Vladimir Putin is many things, but he is not a Whig. I come from a Whiggish generation. History cannot be condensed into discrete single events, but there are moments that become a kind of psychological shorthand for a generation: If you are an O.G. Baby Boomer such as Oliver Stone, born 1946, it is the assassination of President Kennedy, the event that produced the distinctive undercurrent of paranoia and terror in the 1960s, the poisoned soil in which Flower Power was planted. For first-wave Millennials such as Pete Buttigieg, an Afghanistan veteran born in 1982, it was 9/11, a terrorist attack that succeeded in at least one of its aims: making our fearful society. For my generation, the defining event was a happy occasion: the fall of the Berlin Wall. Contrary to Generation X's famously cynical reputation, coming of age at the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the tech boom (was there a better year to graduate from college from 1997?) arguably left us mentally disfigured by excessive optimism. Kurt Cobain may be the poster boy for Generation X, but we produced a bumper crop of optimistic globalists and techno-utopians: Elon Musk, Satya Nadella, Sergey Brin and Larry Page, Emmanuel Macron, Charles Michel, Jack Dorsey, Michael Dell, etc. Of course, we also produced a few technopessimists such as Peter Thiel, along with a raft of cartoonish imbeciles such as Beto O'Rourke and Justin Trudeau. Generalities have not been tried. A reader asks: "What is the most appropriate 'rule' word to describe today's system? Are we in an oligarchy or a gerontocracy or a katorakocracy?" When it comes to rule-by words, you're mostly talking — oracy and archy. There are some funny and obscure ones: Unlike that "true socialist" we've heard so much about for all these years, gerocracy — rule by the intelligent — rarely has been tried. Neither has the variant noocracy, rule by the wise, nor timocracy, rule by the honorable. 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Kurt Cobain may be the poster boy for Generation X, but we produced a bumper crop of optimistic globalists and techno-utopians: Elon Musk, Satya Nadella, Sergey Brin and Larry Page, Emmanuel Macron, Charles Michel, Jack Dorsey, Michael Dell, etc. Of course, we also produced a few technopessimists such as Peter Thiel, along with a raft of cartoonish imbeciles such as Beto O'Rourke and Justin Trudeau. Generalities have not been tried. A reader asks: "What is the most appropriate 'rule' word to describe today's system? Are we in an oligarchy or a gerontocracy or a katorakocracy?" When it comes to rule-by words, you're mostly talking — oracy and archy. There are some funny and obscure ones: Unlike that "true socialist" we've heard so much about for all these years, gerocracy — rule by the intelligent — rarely has been tried. Neither has the variant noocracy, rule by the wise, nor timocracy, rule by the honorable. In Starship Troopers, there was a form of stratocracy in which all political power is held by the military itself or by those who have completed military service. I wrote a book dealing in part with the power of oligarchy, or mob rule. Demarchy is rule by randomly selected people, which maybe isn't the worst of all possible options. Where are we now? Only Dr. Lexus knows for sure. Dr. Lexus (Justin Long) in Idi

intelligently and responsibly managed. And, more relevant from a climate-change point of view, so can the waste from nuclear-power facilities. We do not have to pretend that it is not a tricky business or that there are no risks involved; but if those who say that climate change should be our No. 1 consideration in these matters really mean it, then taking on the relatively straightforward problem of handling nuclear waste in exchange for the very complex problem of trying to reduce emissions in some other way would be a very good trade, accepting a small and manageable externality in place of a big, hairy, and complicated one. Of course, generating electricity is only one of the relevant sectors: Other industrial processes, agriculture, and — especially — transportation all have pretty big emissions footprints, too. But it is foolish to try to put together a single plan of action that would address each of these at the same time under the same program, and to allow radical improvements that can be made relatively easily in the here and now to be held hostage to utopian fantasy. Anybody who tells you that you can swap energy industry with lots of externalities for one with no externalities (or only a few) is either ignorant or delusional or willfully misleading you; the real question is: Modes of development that you prefer? Europe could do it itself; a considerable environmental favor — and an even bigger geopolitical favor — by ramping up its own natural-gas production; the continent is blessed with a considerable supply of the stuff, which sits in the ground unused because of political opposition to hydraulic fracturing and other modern development. Another option would be for Europeans to do in a bigger way what they already are doing: Importing natural gas from the United States. We Americans are, unbreakably in 2020. While our progressive friends dream of Green Deals and modern economies powered by good intentions, wishful thinking, and unicorn plagues, about 40 percent of the world's electricity is held at a bureaucratic limbo for month and years — there wasn't a single North American LNG project approved in 2021. We only care about that, though.

Left-wing populists in the United States worry about the trade deficit as much as right-wing populists do, but they also stand in the way of developing the infrastructure that would make it easier and more profitable to export the fuels we already have. Displacing some giant share of that coal with natural gas would be an environmental win and, if the United States could manage to be halfway smart about it, an economic win too. Forging these advantages is foolish, and it is at least as foolish for the nations with that ability to avail themselves of the benefits of nuclear power to fail to do so — or to refuse to do so for reasons that amount to superstition. The European Union is ready to take a baby step in the right direction. The United States needs to take practical and realistic steps in the same direction, but not ones that end up being a distraction from Reidian and other good statesmen. The oil and gas extraction industries are in a fragile position; you could call that the Green New Deal, if you wanted, and it would be a decent deal, but it would do little good. Cutting greenhouse-gas emissions from the oil and gas industries is important, but it is not the only thing that needs to be done. There is also a memorial to fallen police officers. I don't really like that word: "fallen," sounds too pretty, almost poetic. "Killed" may be better. As far as I'm concerned, police officers are in a sense, at war every day, in behalf of all of us. I used to proof-read *Jay's* magazine galley. I found a type once (once), but never a mistake as such. And I haven't found one here, either; though the last sentence does raise an issue. (No, it does not beg the question.) And that issue is: in behalf of us, on behalf of. Most of us are more used to reading on behalf of. To act or to speak on behalf of someone else is to act as their representative. "I attended the conference in Arizona on behalf of ACE Rockets States Inc." "I am speaking on behalf of those who cannot be here to speak for themselves." His proxy voted on his behalf. "We always believed that conservatism is the politics of reality, and that reality ultimately asserts itself in a reasonably free society, in behalf of the conservative position." W. H. Conant. "Perhaps we need an Anti-License League to resist the encroachments on our freedom to have our own offspring educated as we desire. Let us hope it will not require a great hue and cry of propaganda in behalf of Parental Freedom." Of course, it is possible to act simultaneously in someone's behalf and on his behalf, as lawyers often do. But it is important to understand which is which. In other words: news, here is a CNN headline that makes no damn sense at all: "America's Dad" Bob Saget also loved dirty jokes. He mastered both. Both? What? As written, it sounds like there are only two dirty jokes in existence. That is not the case, as Bob Saget was well aware. And to what does that also refer? Picture Samuel L. Jackson here demanding: "English, motherf***er — do you speak it?" Also: I've noticed that more than one English-speaking German broadcaster pronounces nuclear Bush-style. "NUKE-u-lar." My theory here is that this pronunciation is in fact more a variation on the first syllable, or on the second; if you pronounce the first syllable of the word "nuc," then the following "el" sound is an easy transition; but if you pronounce the first syllable of the word "nuke" it then feels more natural to make the transition to the second "u" sound rather than the "l." I would guess, then, that the "NUKE-u-lar" pronunciation is most common where the slang "nuke" is used. But that's just a guess. Rampant Prescriptivism Reticent does not mean hesitant. The words almost rhyme, and reticent suggests a flavor of hesitation in that it describes a disinclination to act by speaking, but there the similarities end. Consider this from Reuters: "We're setting up for a structural shortage of LNG capacity," said Reid Morrison, global energy advisory leader at PwC in Houston. "There is reticence to taking a long-term position in natural gas given the net zero commitments that different governments are making." To be reticent is to be disinclined to speak; the word has nothing to do with other kinds of non-communicative actions, such as making long-term investments in this or that. Morrison might have said that there is hesitation or hesitancy (or, if you must, hesitance) about or resistance to those investments, or reluctance, but not reticence. That being written, reticence is an excellent quality, one that our world could use much more of. Send your language questions to [TheTuesday@NationalReview.Com](#) Home and Away I didn't think much of Sam Quinones's latest book, *The Least of Us*. Both men would probably loathe the comparison, but Quinones is in a sense a version of Tucker Carlson, another child of the old California aristocracy. Quinones is the son of a Harvard-educated Claremont professor, [one who was] a former president of the Association of Literary Scholars and Critics later appointed to the board of the National Council for the Humanities by George W. Bush — but one who offers himself as a journalistic tribute of the pheasants, a voice for a marginalized underclass he knows in an essentially anthropological way, who are not his people but his profession. I do not fault Quinones for being born to privilege; I blame him only for his failure to overcome the difficulties imposed by such an upbringing. More in Commentary, You can buy my latest book, Big White Ghetto: Dead Broke, Stone-Cold Stupid, and High on Rage in the Dark Wooly Wilds of the 'Real America,' here. My National Review archive can be found here. Listen to Mad Dogs & Englishmen here. My New York Post archive can be found here. Amazon page is here. To subscribe to National Review Institute, go here. In Other News ... Even in winter, Texas is not without sunny spots. Recommended I've recently re-read *Hilaire Belloc's The Great Heresies*. It is bracing. You might enjoy it, provided you are not the sort of person who is easily offended, in which case, you might really, really not enjoy it at all. In Closing Today is the feast day of Blessed William Carter, a printer and publisher who was imprisoned, tortured, and, finally, drawn and quartered by the government of Queen Elizabeth I for printing things the Crown did not wish to see printed. Tyrants and fanatics have always had a special place in their hearts — and their dungeons — for dissident printers and publishers, and they always will. Carter should remind us that to run a press with the courage of one's convictions has at many times in history been as dangerous as fighting in a war. In many places in our unhappy world, it still is. On a lighter note, he is the only Billy Carter anybody is likely ever to call blessed. ([Niyazi/Stock/Getty Images](#)) Welcome to the Tuesday, a weekly newsletter about language, culture, and politics. To subscribe to the Tuesday — and please do! — just follow this link. First-Free Speech Lessons from Abroad It is not the case that Canada, Western Europe, and Australia are authoritarian hellholes where illiberal rulers trample mercilessly upon the civil rights of their hapless subjects. But it is the case that American-style free-speech protections, as enshrined in the First Amendment, do not exist in these places. And that matters. It matters in those countries, and it matters in the United States, where the legal protection of free speech faces the threat of being suffocated by social pressure on both private and public actors to suppress speech that is deemed — almost always opportunistically and vindictively — dangerous. It is likely that, as a matter of global consensus, one set of rules is going to prevail: the American model or the European model — or, rather than "European," the model that more closely resembles the narrower practices in most of the liberal democracies outside the United States. Consider the case of Australia, where courts have ruled that there is no personal right to free speech, in spite of the country's notional protections for freedom of political communication. In one important case, a worker in the national government's immigration agency was fired for criticizing the agency's performance in the matter of offshore immigration-detention facilities. She used a pseudonym, did not advertise her connection to the agency, made the posts on her own time from a personal device, etc. There was no real employment issue — she was simply fired for saying what she thinks, in private life. In another high-profile case, a high-court judge deserved free-speech rights as "still not yet settled law." No doubt the judge is correct — but such rights should be settled law. These are fundamental things. Australia's laws are much more like those that apply in Europe than they are like our own. Australian law varies by jurisdiction, but there are sanctions on so-called hate speech (and other kinds of speech) everywhere in the country, and, in some instances, those penalties are criminal rather than merely civil. As we have seen in both the English-speaking countries and in Europe, what counts as hate speech is easily expanded, meaning that the real scope of free speech is easily narrowed. In Germany, Christian pastors have been arrested for preaching against homosexuality. The same is true in Sweden. And England. And in the United States, too — even constitutional protection will not avail against committed institutional opposition. Of course, there is always some pretext, some argument that free speech does not apply in this case because the speakers are not really speaking but inciting, creating some kind of real and present danger. There may be some merit to some of those arguments in some circumstances, but they are quickly and easily perverted. For example, the fact that trans people have a relatively high rate of suicide has been (cynically and opportunistically) taken to mean that criticism of trans-related political stances and ideologies are literal violence against trans people, who, being traumatized by political disagreement, presumably will jump off the nearest bridge. That isn't much of an exaggeration. The countries that have the most compelling argument for exceptions to free political speech are, for obvious reasons, German-speaking. In Austria, for example, the law allows for imprisoning people — for years — for the crime of selling certain books. (You can guess which ones.) Germany, guided by the doctrine of streitbare Demokratie — "militant democracy" — the notion that liberal democracies must sometimes act in liberal and antidemocratic ways to defend the fundamental elements of liberalism and democracy — gives the state the power to prohibit not only books and films but also to ban political parties that are deemed hostile to the German constitutional order. To Americans, this sounds shocking — or, it once did: Increasingly, Americans, especially younger Americans, sympathize with such limitations on freedom of speech and freedom of political action. Given the current character of American political life, what should interest us more than how they handle nationalist literature in Vienna is the question of how they use Covid-era anti-disinformation laws in Ankara — and how the Turkish government does it. It is probably much how you would expect: Critics of the government's response to the epidemic were rounded up on charges of sowing panic and spreading disinformation, for the crime of suggesting "that officials had taken insufficient measures," as Reuters put it. In December, Erdogan announced that social media had "turned into one of the main sources of threats to today's democracy" and that his government would pursue measures to criminalize "misinformation." The first bit of information to respond to there is pretending that the biggest threat to democracy in Turkey is someone other than Recep Tayyip Erdogan. But that is not how this will go. The coronavirus epidemic has provided cover for authoritarian regimes around the world looking to crack down on dissidents. As Foreign Policy reported, by April of 2020 at least 17 people had been arrested on "fake news" charge in Cambodia; Thalidom labeled most criticism of the regime's coronavirus program as "misinformation" and arrested critics; the predictably thuggish regimes of Egypt, Syria, Hungary, Iran, the Philippines, Honduras, and Azerbaijan behaved exactly as expected, while the governments of Singapore and South Africa both reverted to their illiberal instincts. Do not think, for a second, that it couldn't happen here. These same illiberal instincts are ascendant in the United States, as well. But, for the moment, they are constrained by the Bill of Rights. And that is to be celebrated and cherished. But protecting American rights in American law is not enough. Law can put the brakes on the worst impulse in the culture, but culture always wins. And there is more than American culture and American law in play here. As I have argued for some time, Americans should keep an eye on speed regulations abroad, because these are likely to provide the model for the de facto regulation of free speech in the United States, which is otherwise to be seen. The reason for this is not only political, ideological but managerial. Mark Zuckerberg, among others, has forthrightly called it a "more standardized approach" to regulation. Market incumbents also prefer standardization. Regulatory compliance is a cost, not a profit, and it costs less expensive and less compliant companies to do business with them. The result is that the companies that have the most to gain from this are the ones that most deserve to prevail. There is much to admire about government in Germany or New Zealand, but their milk-and-water approach to free speech is not one of them. Words About Words One comes across all sorts of inexplicable usages on the Internet. Last week, in response to my New Year's column about the virtues of going to bed at 9 p.m., a reader advised that he was "gonna have to Rolex to 22:00," meaning 10 p.m. I do not recall ever having seen "to Rolex" used as a verb, and cannot begin to guess what it hopes to mean. But the brand name is kind of an interesting story. There is no Mr. Rolex — there was a Mr. Wilsdorf, Hans, a German-born entrepreneur who started the London-based watchmaker Wilsdorf & Davis in 1905. Very likely owing to the unpleasantness transpiring between Great Britain and Germany at the time, Wilsdorf changed the name of his company to "Rolex" in 1914. There is a story, never confirmed by anyone with direct knowledge of the issue, which along with Nestle must be one of the best-known Swiss brands in the world, was still an English company. Swiss watches did not enjoy the lofty prestige they occupy today, and both English and American watches were very popular at the time. 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among criminal offenders. But it is, I think, much more the case that we do not talk much about the facts of the case because those facts inconvenience some very powerful actors: police departments and penal systems, the vast bureaucracies of parole and probation, the vast workforce employed in our 2,000 state and federal prisons, our 1,700 juvenile jails, our 3,000 local lockups, and our hundreds of other incarceration facilities, along with countless parole offices, drug-testing centers, grant-dependent "social services" agencies that function as ATMs for the politically connected and the corrupt, etc. Personally, I'll take a dozen honest drug dealers over one corrupt parole officer. What happened in St. Paul was the work of particular criminals. But it is also the work product of a vast, vicious, ineffective apparatus of criminal justice that is big on surveillance and officiousness but not very big on achieving justice, or even securing order. We should stop acting surprised by these episodes — and we should stop allowing our police, mayors, city councilmen, social workers, and legislators to pretend that they are surprised. There is no excuse for being surprised. And we can begin by trusting the English language to express what the men named as suspects so far in this investigation are Terry Lorenz Brown Jr., 33, Devondre Trevon Phillips, 29, and Jeffrey Orlando Hoffman, 32; that this violence was not perpetrated by firearms or any other inanimate object; and, above all, that this is not something that just happens, that gunfire doesn't just "break out." Sentences have subjects, and it matters that we get them right. In Other News . . . Speaking of things we do not talk about, last week the name of Julia Kristeva came up in my reading. Kristeva is a feminist philosopher and literary critic, a celebrated one. She is a commander of the French Legion of Honor and a recipient of the Order of Merit and has won most other scholarly and cultural awards than you can shake a stick at. Her work is important. But she is not the kind of philosopher that you can think of as being a communist. And we should remember these things. Words About Words If Matthew McConaughey does end up running for governor of Texas, his campaign slogan surely will be, "Alright, Alright, Alright" — that is alowrd? In a recent piece, I wrote: "The message from the labor market seems to be that teachers are doing alright." A reader asks: "Queso pasé?" Some people insist that there is such word as alowrd, that what you meant is all right, I disagree. My usual criterion for this question is clarity — it is useful to have different words for different things, which is why I want to preserve the difference between career and career, between jealousy and envy, etc. And all right and alright don't mean the same thing. Alright means just what it says: all correct, all checked off, all right. They were all right. Alright, I guess. But I'm getting off topic. What's the difference between excellence and卓越? What's the difference between pizza and lasagna? Alright, Alright. Sometimes, it is difficult to know what's the difference between pizza and lasagna. The Kid's Art Alternative, the 2016 American film, is The Kid's Art Alternative. Right, Alternative is a verb meaning to take turns with something, also to go back and forth between two conditions. The time of year, sunny days alternate with overcast periods. Alternate is also an adjective describing things that alternate. "My alternate periods of levity and despair." An alternative is a choice on a possibility, an option, an alternative characterizing such a choice. "Mrs. Thatcher's motto was, 'There is no alternative,'" "I offered an alternative solution to the problem." Alternatively as an adverb means presenting a choice or alternative: "We could run for our lives; alternatively, we could stay here and fight." One thing alternately never means is alternatively. Send your language questions to TheTuesday@NationalReview.com Home and Away You can buy my latest book, Big White Ghetto: Dead Broke, Stone-Cold Stupid, and High on Rage in the Dank Wooly Wilds of the 'Real America,' here. There is no alternative. My National Review archive can be found here. In case you missed it: Government by sanctimony is a terrible idea. Listen to Mad Dogs & Englishmen here. My New York Post archive can be found here. My Amazon page is here. To subscribe to National Review, which you really should do, go here. To support National Review Institute, go here. Recommended The New York Times' latest report on Pikers Island, part of a long-running series of reports, is worth your time. Enjoying the Morning Sun Katya and Pancake have been enjoying a visit from their cousin Quinn, no relation to the journalist mentioned above. In Closing From criminal to god and back again — the other St. Paul's career is not entirely unfamiliar in our age of brief, toxic celebrity: When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, and he shook off the heat, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he had escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffered not to live. And he shook off the heat into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly; but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, changed their minds, and said that he was a god. Paul was beheaded a few years later. To subscribe to the Tuesday, follow this link. A demonstrator dressed as Uncle Sam wears a "tax the rich" sign during a climate change protest organized by Extinction Rebellion in New York City. September 17, 2021. (Caitlin Ochs/Reuters) Welcome to an XL edition of the Tuesday, a weekly newsletter about language, culture, and politics. To subscribe to the Tuesdays, which I hope you will do, please follow this link. The Facts about Taxes "We're going to tax the rich and make them pay their fair share!" Senator Manchin thunders from his lakeside dacha. Senator Warren from her gilded Cambridge retreat. Tesla-driving Met-gala debutante Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez insists that Democrats are going after the top 1 percent, not doctors, blissfully ignorant that doctors are more common among the top 1 percent than are members of any other occupation. Jonathan Chait, the dim and dishonest New York magazine typist, denounces the inconvenient facts about federal tax policy as I am not making this up — "deeply misleading" even though the figures in question are "literally true" italicics in original. Here is some more literal truth about taxes you may find useful. Fair share? The high-income already pay the majority of federal income tax, and the share of tax they pay is larger than their share of income. Their share of all taxes (income tax and other kinds of taxes) is also in excess of their share of income, though not as dramatically as is their share of federal income tax. According to IRS data, the top 1 percent of taxpayers (which includes households making \$540,000 a year or more) take home about 21 percent of all income and pay about 40 percent of federal income taxes — which is to say, their share of the income-tax burden is about twice their share of the income. The top 10 percent earns about 48 percent of all income and pays about 71 percent of federal income taxes. The top half of earners make about 88 percent of the income and pay virtually all of the income taxes — more than 97 percent. The Tax Policy Center, a left-leaning advocacy group, calculates that 1 percenters pay an effective federal tax rate — on all taxes, not just income tax — of 29.4 percent, while the top 0.1 percent pays 30.1 percent — an effective rate higher than that of any other income group. Their federal tax rate is more than twice that of middle-income (third quintile) households. Chait cites figures from the left-leaning Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP). These figures model all taxes — federal, state, and local — and the findings are similar to what we see with federal income taxes, though less dramatically so. According to ITEP, the top 1 percent earns 20.9 percent of all income but pays 24.1 percent of all taxes — well more than their "fair share." ITEP calculates that the top 20 percent earns 61.9 percent of income but pays 66.5 percent of the taxes. The great economic problem facing the poor and the middle class is not that high-income Americans aren't paying taxes that are proportional to their incomes. The great problem for the poor is that both incomes and mobility are stagnant for lower-skilled workers, with globalization and automation putting pressure on those jobs. The great problem for the middle class is rising prices of certain critical goods, namely housing in the markets where the best jobs are, health care, and education. The basic progressive proposition (to the extent that there is such a thing) is that higher taxes on the wealthy would make funds available to subsidize those goods on behalf of those with lower incomes. The conservative response is that the worst housing, the worst health care, and the worst schools already are free, and that much of what is wrong with those markets is the result of earlier progressive efforts to fix them. Conservatives also are right to point out that if American progressives want to build a Scandinavian-style welfare state, then they are going to need to impose Scandinavian-style taxes, meaning radically higher taxes on the middle classes. There isn't enough leftover income at the top to fund what progressives dream of. Tax rates are not the same thing as tax revenue. Progressives and conservatives are equally sentimental about the immediate post-war years, and progressive in particular like to point to sky-high federal tax rates in the Eisenhower era as evidence that the economy can thrive and produce widely shared prosperity with radically higher taxes. But that is not really the lesson of the 1950s at all. It is true that in 1950 and 1951, federal tax rates topped out at more than 90 percent, a number that is almost unthinkable in our time. But there is a considerable difference between the statutory marginal rate — the rate you theoretically pay on your last dollar — and the effective rate, the real overall rate. In fact, very high-income households in the 1950s paid effective tax rates that were not much different from what they pay today — a bit higher in some cases, but not radically higher. That 91-percent rate was not applied to a lot of dollars. More important, the overall tax burden — meaning actual tax revenue as a share of GDP — was lower in those years than it is in our time. In 2020, the federal government collected 16.4 percent of GDP in taxes, while in 1950 and 1951, it was 13.2 percent and 14.9 percent, respectively. In fact, Fed data show that for most of the post-war period, federal tax revenues have mostly stayed around a relatively narrow band of 15 percent to 18 percent of GDP, even as tax rates and other tax policies have changed significantly. As always, please do consult the original data yourself if you think you're not getting the whole story. We should not, however, undervalue the difference a few percentage points makes when you are talking about something as large as U.S. GDP. The 19.8 percent the government collected in 2000 had the federal budget nominally in surplus. Four years later, tax cuts and economic weakness had that figure down to 14.5 percent of GDP, producing serious deficits. If you are serious about balancing the budget, or just reducing the deficit, then the most realistic path is getting tax collections and spending both back to turn-of-the-century levels. Some will prefer mid-century levels. But it should be understood that the federal budget in the post-war years was radically different from its priorities from today's budget: In the early 1950s, about 75 percent of federal spending was defense-related, while everything else added up to 25 percent. We spent four times as much on defense as on all "human resources" — education, welfare, etc. — programs combined. Today, we have cut military spending by two-thirds (from almost 10 percent of GDP in the 1950s to just over 3 percent now) while welfare spending has more than quadrupled (from 3.9 percent of GDP more than 16 percent). The next time a lefty friend says he wants to go back to 1950s budgeting, make sure he knows the facts of the case. Tax rates affect tax compliance/avoidance behavior. One of the reasons (though far from the only reason) that tax rates don't line up with the expected way with tax revenue is that tax rates affect taxpayers' behavior. The poster boy for Eisenhower-era tax-avoidance behavior is . . . Dwight Eisenhower, in fact. As a lifelong military man, Ike was far from wealthy, but, after the war, he was offered \$1 million to write a memoir. With \$1 million, he'd be pretty well-set — but with \$99,550 after taxes, he would be far from that. So Eisenhower talked his publisher into structuring his deal in such a way as to have the income taxed at the lower capital-gains rate rather than at the confiscatory federal income-tax rate. He wasn't alone: Tax avoidance drove all sorts of aspects of personal consumption into the firm and well-off met acquiring rental properties and other businesses that threw off a lot of cash but managed to show-on-paper losses. A lot of that was straight-up tax fraud. But we have become more effective at detecting and prosecuting that sort of thing, and so, in our time, most tax-avoidance strategies are entirely legal. Private-equity operations structure their businesses the way they do largely for tax purposes, and a great vast sum of American corporate profits are exiled to the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Switzerland for tax purposes. (Amsterdam and Zurich — some race to the bottom!) These are not "loopholes" — this is the tax law, operating as intended. It isn't some bizarre accident that we treat investment income differently from salary income — that is a policy choice, partly intended to account for the fact that we already tax corporate income before it gets paid out as dividends. The U.S. tax system, far from being lax in this regard, is remarkably invasive compared with the tax regimes of other developed countries, and remarkably expansive in its interpretation of its taxing jurisdiction. And we have a slightly higher top corporate-tax rate than Sweden, in the same neighborhood as Denmark and Norway. Businesses, and to a lesser extent, high-income people have a lot of choices — about how, when, and where they earn their income, about how income is classified under tax law, etc. The Powers that Be in New York have been learning that the hard way, an ultra-high-income New Yorkers who pay an enormously disproportionate share of state and local taxes — escape to Florida. Even if there were 100 percent compliance with the law, and there isn't, and isn't going to be — perfectly legal strategies for tax avoidance won't make class-war progressives can actually accomplish. And that matters because . . . Using the tax code to raise revenue for necessary government spending is different from using the tax code for social engineering and revenge. Conservatism will remember Barack Obama's declaration that he would raise taxes on wealthy people and businesses even if doing so were economically destructive. Simple because he believed it was a moral imperative. The vindictive attitude toward taxation completely dominates progressive thought, which is why Democrats such as Elizabeth Warren and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are always going on about how bad inheritance wealth is. We have a lot of that in this country, but inheritance wealth is not the only inheritance wealth. The inheritance tax is an almost pure symbolic issue. It raises very little revenue, and it would raise very little revenue even if it were jacked up. Raising the inheritance tax is not about resentment. In reality, inherited assets make up a relatively small share of the wealth of wealthy Americans. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, inherited assets make up about 15 percent of the wealth of the top quintile if we are sorting by wealth, and about 13 percent of the wealth of the top quintile if we are sorting by income. As it turns out, inherited assets make up a much larger share of the wealth of those with lower incomes: 43 percent for the bottom quintile and 31 for the second quintile. (What that means more often than not is that these lower-income households inherit a house from parents or grandparents, and that this house accounts for a very large share of their wealth.) Most wealthy Americans earn most of their wealth, a few Waltons and Marses and billionaire dilettante magazine publishers notwithstanding. Of course people with rich parents enjoy an unearned advantage in life. So do people who are tall, good-looking, or born with a relatively high IQ. (In fact, a great deal of our Kulturkampf politics is driven by the bile and hatred of people who enjoy what others enjoy.) But the important ways that rich parents provide their children with advantages mostly happen earlier in life and have nothing to do with inheritance. Rich parents seem to it that their kids get the sort of education that makes the most of their talents, including all sorts of help outside of school; they make sure that college is paid for and that their kids have only their studies and interests to worry about; they subsidize their participation in unpaid internships or low-paying entry-level jobs in elite professions; they make sure that unexpected setbacks or bad decisions do not produce debilitating long-term financial burdens; they help them get on the home-equity escalator earlier and more substantially; they have networks of friends and associates who can help their children connect with opportunities that they aren't going to see on Monster.com. And, because wealthy people tend to be long-lived, when they leave money to their children, those "children" are often in their 60s, having made lives and careers of their own — which is why those inherited assets often make up a small portion of their wealth. If you want to reform taxes in order to fund necessary government programs in the least economically and socially disruptive way, that's one conversation. If you want to reform taxes because you're a horrifying ghoul living out some ghastly perverse, "Harrison Bergeron" fantasy, that's a different conversation. What works best for one is not generally what works best for the other. But maybe none of this matters, because in a real economic sense, taxes are paid jointly. The old proverb about businesses just passing along tax increases to consumers isn't entirely right, but it isn't entirely wrong. Many businesses, including very large ones such as Walmart and McDonald's, have very little negotiating power vis-à-vis their customers. Walmart's business model is based on low prices, and, if Walmart raises prices too much, its customers just go elsewhere — Target, Amazon, HEB, whatever. But firms such as Walmart and McDonald's do tend to have a great deal of negotiating power with their vendors and other business partners, with service providers, and, in many cases, with their employees. Shareholders — the people who own these companies — are going to do their best to push off expenses onto anybody else they can rather than go into their own pockets. That can mean lower incomes for everybody from farmers to truck drivers to store clerks, to people who work in paper-goods factories or unloading goods at ports. Just how much and to whom tax costs get pushed around is a matter of some dispute and much study in economics, but the basic answer is: They get redistributed quite a bit, generally to those with the least negotiating power in the market. Which is what you'd expect. Economists have spent years studying the payroll tax, one part of which is notionally paid by employees and one part of which is notionally paid by employers. The general consensus is that employees pay both their share and much of the employer's share, which is passed on to them in the form of lower wages. It matters where a tax legally and formally falls. But ultimately, we all end up on the hook for taxes that are not legally our burden, because there is a world of difference between statutory fiction and economic reality. That is why it matters to all of us that government use our money in a prudent and responsible way and that it collects taxes in such a way as to minimize economic damage and distortions. In the end, that is more important than whether the top statutory income-tax rate is 39.9 percent or 36.5 percent. The main obstacles to radical tax reform are conservative inertia, which is generally healthy, and progressive rapacity, which is generally destructive. If we had no tax system at all and were looking to create one from scratch, we probably wouldn't settle on anything like the system we have. If I were god-emperor for a day, we wouldn't tax work or investment directly at all but would instead rely on consumption taxes. We could fund the entirety of the federal government with a VAT or a carbon tax, if we were starting from a blank slate — but we aren't. Put another way, the main argument for income taxes from a conservative point of view is that we already have them, and they're more or less work, whereas replacing them in toto with a new and untried system is bound to bring about unintended consequences and involve risks we had not accounted for. Conservatives are pulled in two directions: in one by our skepticism of radical social change and in another by our appreciation that the current tax code and overall fiscal practice is seriously defective, which eventually will produce catastrophic consequences. Democrats are pulled in two directions, too: They are the party of people who say they want to tax the rich, but they also increasingly are the party of the rich, from Wall Street to Silicon Valley, and they emphatically do not want to raise taxes on their rich. Our friends at the lefty ITEP are once again on the case, noting that Democratic proposals to end caps on state and local tax (SALT) deductions would undo almost all of the new taxes on the rich in the Build Back Better bill. The SALT deduction overwhelmingly benefits high-income people in high-tax states — which is to say, the same Platinum Card progressives whose preferred tax burden is the \$100 corkage at Quince. There are lots of reasons not to reformulate our taxes in such a way as to even more heavily on the wealthy: a healthy sense of proportionality, the republican sense that citizenship brings with it burdens and responsibilities as well as benefits and privileges, political complications, etc. But in addition to the big economic reason — that the fantastically progressive tax strategy is unlikely to realize the promised benefits — there is the always-underappreciated master of risk: The more heavily concentrated the tax burden is on a few taxpayers, the more real power those taxpayers have over a dependent political class and an unstable political situation. It is politically difficult, but the best, reasonably stable means of increasing tax revenue in a big way is increasing the tax base — meaning higher taxes on everybody. If that's a price you are unwilling to pay, then you aren't serious about your progressive utopia. And that's okay! You shouldn't be serious about it — it was never a good idea to begin with. Words About Words We owe the modern English word berserker to Sir Walter Scott and his 1822 novel The Pirate. It comes from an Old Norse word (berserkr) for the same thing we use berserker to mean in English, a warrior possessed by madness and wild power. It is likely but not certain that the word comes from earlier words meaning "bear" and "shirt," with he who wears the bearskin shirt having the power and ferocity of the bear. Scott apparently misunderstood the origin of the word, believing that it derived from his meaning naked, a berserker being, then a warrior who fought without armor. Berserker is a plural noun, and berserkers are sometimes used as a plural noun in English, too. In an 1850 edition of "Notes and Queries" (the folio reads "No. 61, Price Threepence," which is charming) you may read: [Grinur Jonsson] Thorkein, in the essay on the Berserker, appended to his edition of the Kristni-fauna, tells us that an old name of the Berserker frenzy was hamremni, i.e., strength acquired from another or strange body, because it was anciently believed that the persons who were liable to this frenzy were mysteriously endowed, during its accesses, with a strange body of unearthly strength. If, however, the Berserker was called on by his own name, he lost his mysterious form, and his ordinary strength alone remained. Thus it happens in the Svartfaðala Saga: "Grísl was called aloud to Klæfi, and said, 'Klæfi! Klæfi! keep a fair measure,' and instantly the strength which Klæfi had got in his rage, failed him; so that he could not even lift the beam with which he had been fighting." It is clear, therefore, continues Thorkein, that the state of men labouring under the Berserker frenzy was held by some, at least, to resemble that of those, who, whilst their own body lay at home apparently dead or asleep, wandered under other forms into distant places and countries. Such wanderings were called hamfar by the old northmen; and were held to be only capable of performance by those who had attained the very utmost skill in magic. Why? I don't know — I just find this stuff interesting. There's a line in a novel that I can't quite remember, I think by Philip Roth, in which an old dead sees a sex-obsessed graduate student: "I don't think you are giving Anglo-Saxon poetry your full attention." But, sometimes, it's "Klæfi! Klæfi! Keep a fair measure!" (If anybody knows the line I'm referring to, leave me know — I can't quite pull it up.) Rampant Prescriptivism A reader wants to know why I write "Texas' history" rather than "Texas' history." The short version is because Texas is singular rather than plural. But there's a little more. There is an archaic but still-common habit in English of writing the possessive of certain proper nouns ending in "S" with a naked apostrophe rather than with an apostrophe and an "S." The usual one is: "For Jesus' sake." This is reserved almost exclusively to biblical and classical endings in "S." Some people prefer it because it prevents any possible confusion with a contraction: "Jesus' from Galilee." I don't think that's a very good reason to depart from the standard English practice, if only because you are writing about Jesus or Pericles or Euripides, you are not usually going to use a contraction like that. "Euripides' the best?" So: Texas' history, Jesus' holy name, Euripides' contemporaries, etc. Send your language questions to TheTuesday@NationalReview.com Home and Away You can buy my latest book, Big White Ghetto: Dead Broke, Stone-Cold Stupid, and High on Rage in the Dank Wooly Wilds of the 'Real America,' here. There is no alternative. My National Review archive can be found here. In case you missed it: Government by sanctimony is a terrible idea. Listen to Mad Dogs & Englishmen here. My New York Post archive can be found here. My Amazon page is here. To subscribe to National Review, which you really should do, go here. To support National Review Institute, go here. Recommended The New York Times' latest report on Pikers Island, part of a long-running series of reports, is worth your time. Enjoying the Morning Sun Katya and Pancake have been enjoying a visit from their cousin Quinn, no relation to the journalist mentioned above. In Closing From criminal to god and back again — the other St. Paul's career is not entirely unfamiliar in our age of brief, toxic celebrity: When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, and he shook off the heat into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly; but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, changed their minds, and said that he was a god. Paul was beheaded a few years later. To subscribe to the Tuesday, follow this link. A demonstrator dressed as Uncle Sam wears a "tax the rich" sign during a climate change protest organized by Extinction Rebellion in New York City. September 17, 2021. (Caitlin Ochs/Reuters) Welcome to an XL edition of the Tuesday, a weekly newsletter about language, culture, and politics. To subscribe to the Tuesdays, which I hope you will do, please follow this link. 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But we have become more effective at detecting and prosecuting that sort of thing, and so, in our time, most tax-avoidance strategies are entirely legal. Private-equity operations structure their businesses the way they do largely for tax purposes, and a great vast sum of American corporate profits are exiled to the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Switzerland for tax purposes. (Amsterdam and Zurich — some race to the bottom!) These are not "loopholes" — this is the tax law, operating as intended. It isn't some bizarre accident that we treat investment income differently from salary income — that is a policy choice, partly intended to account for the fact that we already tax corporate income before it gets paid out as dividends. The U.S. tax system, far from being lax in this regard, is remarkably invasive compared with the tax regimes of other developed countries, and remarkably expansive in its interpretation of its taxing jurisdiction. And we have a slightly higher top corporate-tax rate than Sweden, in the same neighborhood as Denmark and Norway. Businesses, and to a lesser extent, high-income people have a lot of choices — about how, when, and where they earn their income, about how income is classified under tax law, etc. The Powers that Be in New York have been learning that the hard way, an ultra-high-income New Yorkers who pay an enormously disproportionate share of state and local taxes — escape to Florida. Even if there were 100 percent compliance with the law, and there isn't, and isn't going to be — perfectly legal strategies for tax avoidance won't make class-war progressives can actually accomplish. And that matters because . . . Using the tax code to raise revenue for necessary government spending is different from using the tax code for social engineering and revenge. Conservatism will remember Barack Obama's declaration that he would raise taxes on wealthy people and businesses even if doing so were economically destructive. Simple because he believed it was a moral imperative. The vindictive attitude toward taxation completely dominates progressive thought, which is why Democrats such as Elizabeth Warren and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are always going on about how bad inheritance wealth is. We have a lot of that in this country, but inheritance wealth is not the only inheritance wealth. The inheritance tax is an almost pure symbolic issue. It raises very little revenue, and it would raise very little revenue even if it were jacked up. Raising the inheritance tax is not about resentment. In reality, inherited assets make up a relatively small share of the wealth of wealthy Americans. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, inherited assets make up about 15 percent of the wealth of the top quintile if we

in flames, Hindenburg-style, if attempted in the United States. As Boris Johnson can attest, it isn't working that well in the United Kingdom, either. Words About Words A New York Times headline: "If the Police Lie, Should They Be Held Liable? Often the Answer Is No." As you might have guessed, the headline says the opposite of what the article says. The report, by Shaila Dewan, notes that the police often are not prosecuted but does not argue that they should not be prosecuted. In fact, the author seems to believe the opposite. This is one of the problems of getting news reporting too mixed up with agenda-driven opinion writing: Should is a word for opinion columnists, not a word for reporters.... Last week, I wrote about the adjective/adverb fast and mentioned that I couldn't think of a use that wasn't related to speed. (The issue was the redundancy "fast-speed Internet.") About 11,451 of you wrote in to remind me of the use of fast to mean fixed or steady. "He held fast." "They were fast friends." "She was a woman of fast resolve." This sense of fast is, in fact, older than the sense of speed. Fast is one of those funny words such as cleave that come to mean both a thing and its opposite: Cleave means both to cling together ("a man shall cleave to his wife") and to separate, which is what a cleaver does. That which is fast goes quickly, while that which is fastened goes nowhere. The references inform me that the root is Proto-Indo-European past, meaning firm, and it isn't clear exactly how that came to mean disciplined or resolved, a sense that fast maintains in English, and from resolved on to vigorous or energetic. A sensible fast, then, would be a demonstration of resolve, while running fast would be something like that in the case of Afghanistan. The theme running through all these is commitment, but, as far as one really knows beyond a very vague sense — how all those words fit together. But in those three senses is "fast-speed Internet." A sensible fast, then, would be a demonstration of resolve, while running fast would be something like that in the case of Afghanistan. The theme running through all these is commitment, but, as far as one really knows beyond a very vague sense — how all those words fit together. This is one of the many things people learned from watching The Wire. (RIP Michael Williams.) Afghanistan was eviscerated, the Americans and Afghan allies there were rescued. Some of them. Send your language questions to TheTuesday@NationalReview.com Memory Lane. Some of you have heard me tell the story of my first being offered a job at the Atlantic. I warned the editor, "Jeffrey Goldberg, that there would be howls of protest, and not just howls but blubbering and ululations and hoots, all of them in protest. He scoffed. "This is the high church of liberalism. This isn't the New York Times." Home and Away Writing in the New York Times, I argued that the January riot at the Capitol was not an attempted coup d'état but only half of one; the most important half is still being carried out. Meanwhile, at the New York Post, I consider the possibility that the rank-and-file share of even among college undergraduates just might possibly have something to do with the fact that we were telling men for a generation that the problem with our institutions is that they are too liberal. Apparently, they listen to us. Listen to the Discovery Channel's Big White Ghetto. Dead Broke, Stone-Cold Stupid, and High on Rage. David Mamet's new book, *Woke*, is here. Listen to National Review, which you really should do, especially to support National Review Institute, go here. Cars Thieves from the Future? From the Sacramento Bee. "Davis has felony convictions in Sacramento and Santa Cruz counties dating back to 2017 and was arrested in June in Sacramento in an auto theft case involving a 2012 Nissan." I am reminded of an Onion headline, "Earthquake Sets Japan Back to 2147." Recommended Do check out Woke, Inc., Inside Corporate America's Social Justice Scam. In Closing I didn't write or say much about the 20th anniversary of 9/11, mostly because I didn't think I had anything useful to add to the conversation. But, one observation: Much of what has been said and written about the attacks of September 11, 2001, characterizes the terrorists as "savages." I understand the reason for writing that way and no doubt have done so myself on many occasions. But the sobering — and terrifying — truth is that these horrific acts were not performed by uncivilized people from some barbaric backwater. Osama bin Laden himself was an educated man (he studied for a time at Oxford) and valued education in others. Two of his wives had doctors. Osama bin Laden was not raised in an environment of fanaticism. He helped to construct one. In that famous picture of him and his family on vacation in the 1970s, there are plenty of bell-bottoms and not a bong in sight. The difficult task is drawing a line between the kid in that picture to 9/11. These acts were not performed by barbarians — they were performed by intelligent men, and by sincerely if perversely devout men, with the full consent of their consciences. Nazism did not arise in some unlettered desert — it was the product of Europe's most intellectually accomplished nation. When we encounter people with radically different values from our own, we sometimes think of them as somehow less than human, as closer to animals than to us. That has led us to many mistakes in the Muslim world and will lead us to similar mistakes regarding China and other challengers to Western liberal values. Savagery would be, by comparison, a relatively easy problem to deal with. To subscribe to The Tuesday, follow this link. A supporter of then-president Barack Obama attempts to have him sign a copy of Rolling Stone at a campaign rally in 2012. (Jason Reed/Reuters) Welcome to the Tuesday, a hedonistic prospectus of stuff I'm thinking about. To subscribe to the Tuesday, and I hope you will, please follow this link. Why the Media Keep Publishing Fiction I once taught a whole college seminar on how Rolling Stone got took. And now Rolling Stone has done it again. Maybe I'll expand that seminar to a full someset — because the lessons of the journalistic crimes of Rolling Stone are applicable to much more than Rolling Stone. The venerable pop-music magazine, which no long ago had to retract a splashy story about a vicious gang rape that never happened, has now been obliged to issue a correction — this should be a prelude to retraction — for a story about how gunshot victims wheeled into hospitals in rural Oklahoma are being left to bleed and groan in agony because the emergency rooms are overrun by cases of ivermectin poisoning. As with the infamous rape case, this is a culturally electric event that... did not actually happen. "Rolling Stone," the correction reads, "has been unable to independently verify any such cases as of the time of this update." There is a reason Rolling Stone has been unable to independently identify any such cases: There are no such cases. More from the correction: The National Poison Data System states there were 459 reported cases of ivermectin overdose figures are not available, but the count is unlikely to be a significant factor in hospital bed availability in a state that, per the CDC, currently has a 7-day average of 1,528 Covid-19 hospitalizations. The most important word in this story is not "ivermectin" — it is "Oklahoma." Because you know who lives in Oklahoma — Joe Rogan fans. The story turns out to have been based on the claims of one doctor — claims that Rolling Stone never checked. Why? Because the story is about (1) ivermectin, and, more importantly, (2) Oklahoma. More correction: The doctor is affiliated with a medical staffing group that serves multiple hospitals in Oklahoma. Following widespread publication of his statements, one hospital that the doctor's group serves, NHIS Sequoyah, said its ER has not treated any ivermectin overdoses and that it has not had to turn away anyone seeking care. Another journalistic Hindenburg goes down in flames at Rolling Stone — oh, the buffoonery. In 2015, I taught a journalism seminar at Hillsdale College, the subject of which was Sabrina Erdely's 2014 Rolling Stone article, "A Rape on Campus," which related the story of a horrifying, brutal sexual assault at the University of Virginia, a crime that — and this part still matters! — did not happen. The story was a fantasy, a concoction, and a libel — and Rolling Stone's report was, in the words of Erik Wemple at the Washington Post, a "complete crock." A crock of what precisely, though? Like most of the phony hate crimes and fabricated racial and sexual insults that have for years been an epidemic among young Americans, especially on college campuses, the Rolling Stone rape hoax was a neurotic casserole of familiar ingredients: social and romantic disappointment, weaponized envy, prejudice, mental-health problems, and a progressive-activist culture in which the effort to discredit and abominate cultural enemies — more often than not dishonest — takes the place of argument. These things follow a pattern: When Lena Dunham made up a story about being raped while a student at Oberlin, her fictitious villain was not a member of the cheer team or the president of the campus Sierra Club chapter but a swagging College Republican when North Carolina Central University student Crystal Mangum made up a story about being gang-raped, the malefactors were the Duke lacrosse team. The UVA hoax author, Jackie Coakley, falsely claimed that she was gang-raped by members of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity as part of an initiation ritual. When feminist activist Judy Munro-Leighton made up a story about being raped, she chose as her assailant Brett Kavanaugh, who was at the time a Supreme Court nominee in confirmation hearings. Jessie Smollett alleged that he was assaulted in the wee hours by... weirdly bitey Trump-loving Empire fans who just happened to have a length of rope and a quantity of bleach on their persons as they roamed the freezing streets of Chicago on an early January morning. In all of these cases, the story wasn't about what the story was about. None of those fabricated rapes was presented as a mere crime of sexual violence — a crime that happens every day in these United States, disproportionately affecting not college women (who, are, in fact, less likely to suffer rape than are women the same age who are not in college) or well-heeled activists but poor women in isolated urban and rural communities, women with little education, women on Indian reservations, illegal immigrants, etc. The stories and the data associated with some of these places are shocking. But here's the thing: Nobody cares about those women. Not really. Of course, they'll say they do. In reality, the kind of women our newspaper editors and magazine publishers care about are college students, white tourists abroad, and celebrities. But the most important variable in these hoaxes is not any of the personal qualities of the fictitious victims but the cultural resonance of the fictitious attackers. If you want to see a Native American leading the nightly news, put him in front of some white high-school kids wearing MAGA hats. Magazines such as Rolling Stone, the major newspapers, the academic establishment, and the professional-activist class are not staffed in the main by people who grew up on Indian reservations or in dysfunctional mountain villages, people who dropped out of high school, people who have been incarcerated, or other people from the margins. You may find one or two or three at any given media property, but you'll find a lot more Oberlin and UVa graduates. Their interests, anxieties, and obsessions are those associated with their class. They don't know — or care — what's happening at Pine Ridge or in Owsley County. But they do know what sort of class-adjacent people they like and don't like, they do know what sort of people they resent. They don't know much, but they know what they hate. And so these made-up rape stories are not stories about rape — they are indictments of fraternity culture, or jock culture, or Southern institutions, or Republicans, or anybody else who wanders into the cultural crosshairs of the hoax artists. The Oklahoma ivermectin story works in the same way, fitting into a prefab politico-cultural narrative that is not strictly speaking connected to the facts of the case at hand. Stephen Glass's fictitious report from CPAC is another example of the same thing at work. No one questions tales of victimization involving the people they assume to be, always and everywhere, victims. No one questions tales of depravity discrediting people they believe to be depraved. Joe Rogan can't be a half-bright meathead who sometimes says things Professor Plum doesn't like — he has to be a monster, responsible for the deaths of hundreds or thousands of people. Of course the corpses of those rubes in Oklahoma are piling up like cordwood — Joe Rogan has to be stopped! (Joe Rogan is a genuine crackpot about ivermectin and much else — maybe don't take medical advice from the Fear Factor guy.) This reflexive prejudice deforms journalism in ways that are not limited to seeing the occasional work of pure fiction published as news. As I have written before, this same tendency is why the same media kingpins who claim to be the tribunes of the poor and the forgotten will publish about 53 articles on the admissions policies at Harvard or the University of Texas law school for every one article they put out about the high-school dropout rate in Milwaukee, Harvard applicants matter, elite law schools matter, and Milwaukee high-school dropouts don't matter. Dead hicks in Oklahoma matter only because Joe Rogan matters. Rolling Stone is not alone in this. Writing about the problems of the unionized public-sector work force in big Democrat-run cities does not push the right buttons for your average Washington Post reporter or editor — it does not lower the status of a perceived enemy but instead threatens a perceived ally. But, beyond that, the situation in Milwaukee's troubled public schools (or Baltimore's, or Dallas's) simply does not have any personal resonance for media decisionmakers, speaking in most cases neither to their own experiences nor — more important — to their social aspirations. The people who edit the Washington Post are the sort of people who care intensely about who gets to Harvard and what's happening at Georgetown. Only a minority of Americans are college graduates, but the people who roll Rolling Stone and the rest of the major media are in large part people who have powerful emotional connections to campus life. School choice for poor black kids in Philadelphia isn't even a blip on NPR-listening Democrats' radar — but forgive college loans sure as hell is. Why? It is obvious enough. For progressives who see those who do not share their political priorities not as having different views but as enemies, publishing a made-up story about deranged gang-rapists at UVa pushes all the right buttons: white privilege, rich-jerk privilege, male privilege, Southern brutality, maybe even Christian hypocrisy if you can figure out a way to shoehorn it in there. You can be sure that if someone had come forward with an unsubstantiated, looney-goosey story about having been gang-raped by the staff of Rolling Stone, that claim would have received a good deal more scrutiny — not only at Rolling Stone, but because they live in the same world as Rolling Stone staffers. Southerners, fraternity members and college athletes are natural bogeymen to the media-staffer demographic, and so claims about them, however outrageous, are treated sympathetically. Oklahoma, on the other hand, inspires more fear among big-city progressives than the terrifying prospect of... being made to pay their own property taxes. The Rolling Stone story got picked apart in about five minutes as soon as it encountered the lightest skepticism. The Duke lacrosse story required a criminal investigation. Leslie Lamport's madcap story fell apart as soon as one courageous reporter... In this case, I... spent five minutes on Google and made one telephone call. It wasn't exactly hardcore investigative journalism, and I don't know what it is. 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Europeans and Japanese should have different priorities — but they don't. This is a matter of stated preferences ("Go green!") being at odds with revealed preferences (for inexpensive energy and the bounty that comes with it). The democracies have had plenty of time to adopt the more radical version of the climate agenda — and they have, for the most part, said, "No." And so the missed keeps coming, from IPCC and from other quarters. "The report leaves us with a deep sense of urgency," Jane Lubchenco, deputy director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, tells the New York Times. That's what it is meant to do. More heat doesn't mean more light. Words about Words ("It's in and it's big," reads the AP headline. The subject is . . . the infrastructure bill. Goodness, gracious. Moving on . . .). Theranos, soon to be back in the news, is an unfortunate corporate name in that it sounds like some kind of evil cult — which, in its way, it was. Theranos is a portmanteau, a word made from smudging two other words into one, the textbook example being motor + hotel = motel. Portmanteau here is a metaphor that has taken on a separate life of its own: a portmanteau is a suitcase with two equal halves, and a metaphorical portmanteau is a word which parts of two other words have been stuffed. The portmanteau constituents for Theranos are "therapy" and "diagnosis." There's a little linguistic irony lurking in there: Diagnosis is formed from the word *gnosis*, meaning knowledge, and Gnosticism purported to offer a special kind of knowledge that was available only to a special kind of people. As the ancient mystic Georgius of Costanza put it, "it's not a lie if you believe it." Rampant Prescriptivism The next time a waiter asks you, "What are we . . . plural?" or the more straightforward: "There is no 'you.' You could try the old 'what do you mean we, kemosabe?'" but you'll probably get fired from your job for radio talk with Joe Scarborough about spouting off about right-wing hippies. Here is Clarence Page writing in the Chicago Tribune: It is a column that is mostly about how surprised he is to find himself agreeing with a column I wrote a week ago. Column-writing is a funny business, especially in August. You can buy my latest book, Big White Ghetto: Dead Broke, Stone-Cold Stupid, and High on Rage in the Dark Wooly Wilds of the Real America, here. There is more bunkum available. My National Review archive can be found here. Listen to Mad Dogs & Englishmen here. My New York Post archive can be found here. My Amazon page is here. To subscribe to National Review, which you really should do, go here. To support National Review Institute, go here. To Other News . . . The shortest link to my Twitter account, which you should follow if you're not already doing so. It's a good place to follow me. I've been reading a lot of Noah Charney's book on El Chapo, especially the hook-and-crossbones chapter. The title is, El Chapo: The Untold Story of the World's Most Infamous Drug Lord . . . Our Nation. Reading about "the drug lords" makes me feel as if I should be taking an emeritus break, but this is real and fascinating stuff. In Closing I think there is a great deal about trust in institutions. Trust is not just something nice to have; it is an immensely practical consideration. Trust is the lubrication that makes an open society work. As our politics descends more deeply into dishonesty, distortion, and hysteria, the decline in trust will likely prove catastrophic than the state of the climate or the state of our public finances. To subscribe to the Tuesday, follow this link. A computer receives a COVID-19 vaccination at Grand Central Station Terminal train station in New York City, May 12, 2021. (Carlo Allegri/Reuters) Welcome to the Tuesday, a weekly newsletter about many things. To subscribe to the Tuesday, which I hope you will do, please follow this link. On Vaccine, Between Persuasion and Coercion The news seems to be sinking into even some traditionally tight and numb Republican skulls: We need to have more people vaccinated against COVID-19. How to go about getting that done? Somewhere between persuasion and coercion lies the middle way. Kay Ivey is the Republican governor of Alabama, one of the states with the lowest vaccination rates. As COVID-19 infections creep up around the country, Governor Ivey observed: "It's time to start blaming the unvaccinated folks, not the regular folks." It's the unvaccinated folks that are letting us down." Exemplary right-wing radio dope Phil Valentine, who, like most right-wing radio dopes, had played some pretty enthusiastic footie with anti-vaccine activism and related conspiracy kookery, later found himself on oxygen in a critical-care unit with a bad case of COVID-19, and now has dipped a toe into the pool of regret. His brother relays: "Phil would like for his listeners to know that while he has never been an 'anti-vaxxer' he regrets not being more vehemently pro-vaccine." That is, with apologies to the afflicted, *biffus*. It isn't true that Valentine was never an anti-vaxxer — anti-vaxxers rarely describe themselves that way, but he had pointedly refused the vaccine himself and argued that others should do the same as they did not have conditions likely to put them at risk of dying from COVID-19, because as he wrote, "you're probably safer not getting it." That claim is — and this still matters! — not true. It is strange and unpredictable what will get Americans' libertarian huckles up. The Right, which has embraced theatrical self-harm as a kind of weird performative political ritual, is the political home of most (but by no means all) vaccine skeptics (and mask skeptics, and hydroxychloroquine quackery, etc.) and its tribunes worry about vaccine mandates of different kinds. Steve Holt, a Republican state legislator in Iowa, speaks for many when he calls so-called vaccine passports "un-American," "unconstitutional," and "unacceptable." But I am not sure that is quite right. Conservatives, including many libertarian-leaning conservatives, traditionally have been comfortable with such measures as registering young men for possible military conscription and placing limits on certain kinds of business transactions or travel during emergencies or out of concern for national security. During World War I, the United States drafted three men for every two volunteers, and the generals sent 116,516 Americans to their deaths in the service of interests that were quite remote from our own national interest. We drafted 10 million for World War II and 2.2 million for Vietnam. It is a peculiar libertarian principle that accepts marching tens of thousands of Americans to their deaths at Meuse-Argonne but balks at seeking to encourage wider vaccination by taking some active measure — presumably some measure short of the prison sentences given to draft resisters. But the libertarian principle here is very subtle indeed. Representative Holt is a vocal supporter of a new Iowa law that forbids private businesses to require customers to prove that they have received the COVID-19 vaccine. Some businesses, as you may have noticed, have put up signs asking that non-vaccinated people continue to follow such protocols as wearing masks and observing physical distancing. But there is no practical way to enforce that. Perhaps there are other businesses that wish to limit their clientele to those who have been vaccinated, though I am unable to find any serious or widespread effort at that. Such businesses may be operating from an excess of caution — or they may simply be marketing themselves to the more cautious among us. Who knows? But haven't conservatives traditionally believed that a business has the right to manage such affairs on its own terms? Conservatives made such arguments against, to take one very prominent example, the Civil Rights Act of 1964. How is it that the libertarian principle that bucks at requiring restaurants and hotels to serve African Americans somehow necessitates requiring the same businesses to serve people who, for whatever reason, fail to get themselves vaccinated? Is it unlikely that the United States would have much luck implementing something like the Israelis have tried (with limited success) with the recently reinstated "green pass" program. The green pass showing that someone is COVID-immune (from vaccination or prior infection, or confirmed by a recent negative test) is used to control admission to such venues as gyms and restaurants. This is technologically feasible in the United States but culturally impossible for our increasingly ungovernable people. Americans' lack of faith in the government and other institutions is a real problem — and the worse problem is that this lack of faith is not entirely unjustified. We have seen the weaponization of the IRS and other federal agencies along with grotesque abuses of prosecutorial power by, among others, the former California attorney general who is today the vice president. We have seen elected officials in New York, to take one example, abuse their powers and lean on financial-services companies in order to try to ruin political enemies such as the National Rifle Association. We have Democrats right now threatening to pack the federal courts, expanding the bench until enough Democratic partisans can be seated for Democrats to be confident in getting their way. We have seen Democratic operatives and progressive activists line up behind the multi-billion-dollar extortion attempt directed at Chevron. This isn't conspiracy-theory stuff — this is stuff that holds up in court. I sympathize with Michael Brendan Dougherty's plea for a more respectful and charitable dialogue on the subject of vaccines. But I also believe that while it is true that you will attract more flies with honey than with vinegar, you'll attract even more with manure — and we should identify bovine hyproduct as such when we encounter it. 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The title is, El Chapo: The Untold Story of the World's Most Infamous Drug Lord . . . Our Nation. Reading about "the drug lords" makes me feel as if I should be taking an emeritus break, but this is real and fascinating stuff. In Closing I think there is a great deal about trust in institutions. Trust is not just something nice to have; it is an immensely practical consideration. Trust is the lubrication that makes an open society work. As our politics descends more deeply into dishonesty, distortion, and hysteria, the decline in trust will likely prove catastrophic than the state of the climate or the state of our public finances. To subscribe to the Tuesday, follow this link. A computer receives a COVID-19 vaccination at Grand Central Station Terminal train station in New York City, May 12, 2021. (Carlo Allegri/Reuters) Welcome to the Tuesday, a weekly newsletter about many things. To subscribe to the Tuesday, which I hope you will do, please follow this link. 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household; many other acts that we would think of as serious crimes in our time were treated similarly, and that treatment does not necessarily indicate that these matters were thought of as inconsequential), it is remarkable how similar ancient disputes about abortion are to our own: For example, enforceability was a pressing issue in medieval abortion law (it was difficult to prove that an abortion was induced rather than a natural miscarriage, and sometimes difficult to prove even that there had been a pregnancy) and the matter was understood to be graver later in the pregnancy. Dante seems to have shared the common view that the unborn progress toward humanity and that, in some point during the pregnancy, a soul is conferred by God — see Purgatorio Canto 25, where Dante puts this explanation into the mouth of the Roman poet Statius: Open thy bosom to the truth that comes. Know soon as in the embryo, to the brain, Articulation is complete, then turns The primal Mover with a smile of joy On such great work of nature, and imbreathe New spirit replete with virtue, that what here Active it finds, to its own substance draws, And forms an individual soul, that lives, And feels, and bende reflectiv of itself. And that thou less mayst marvel at the word, Mark the sun's heat, how that to wine doth change, Mix'd with the moisture filter'd through the vine. Here, Dante is writing under the influence of the classical philosophers, but his fellow Italians did not swallow the Greco-Roman view whole: The influential legal commentator Acurius, who died just before Dante was born, had suggested that the Roman punishment for abortion, banishment, was adequate only for abortions induced in the first 40 days of a pregnancy, a rational soul. Thomas kept Aristotle's biology, just adding that God himself infuses the soul into the body at some unspecified time during the last stage of this process. I have no doubt that Wills is correct that Aquinas attributes the idea from "Aristotle's biology." And Aristotle's biology was excellent — for its time. As it turns out, we have learned a few things since Aristotle was scratching his thoughts on animal skins by the light of a fire he started by banging rocks together. Aristotle's biology was primitive, mistaken, and, from the point of view of our own time, preposterous. It is difficult to believe that if Aristotle had access to 21st-century science and technology he would maintain his 4th-century B.C. views, just as Dante probably would have modified his 14th-century A.D. views if he knew what we know. There isn't some magical thing that happens in the last three weeks of pregnancy that changes the unborn from a "sea sponge" (Dante's description) into a human being. The ancients, believing that the soul animated matter, took detectable fetal movement at the site of "quickening" or "ensoulment" as the traditional marker that same view of abortion as it only after 120 days. We now know that there is a detectable heartbeat at only five weeks. Etc. These are not trivial points. They are the simple facts of the case. That simply isn't so dramatic changing the humans late in the pregnancy that it only changes the one point in question — to mention one — to maintain otherwise is pure superstitious nonsense. The religious opponents of abortion think that the human person actually antedates the Aristotelian scheme, dating it from "conception" (when the semen fertilizes the ovum). But the Catholic theologian Bernard Häring points out that at least half of the fertilized eggs fail to achieve "nidation"—adherence to the uterus—making nature and nature's God guilty of a greater "holocaust" of unborn babies than abortion accounts for, if the fertilized ovum is a "baby." Presumably, if God wanted a world in which there were no mass murders or genocides, then He, being omnipotent, could do something about that. He doesn't. It does not follow that we are directed to be indifferent to mass murders and genocides and other great evils that are the product of human volition. God also permits plagues and disasters, and we work on vaccines and countermeasures. The fact that many pregnancies fail to take does not tell us anything at all about the moral standing of intentional abortion, any more than the fact that everybody dies tells us anything about the morality of murder or war. This is shockingly immature stuff from Wills, who is too old for this schoolboy theology. He should be embarrassed to write such things. But it gets worse. The opponents of abortion who call themselves "pro-life" make any form of human life, even pre-natal ones, sacred. But my clipped fingernails or trimmed hairs are human life. This is either the dumbest thing published in the New York Times since the last time Paul Krugman wrote or it is willfully misleading, a bad-faith argument. Because, as you may have noticed, you can give your children a haircut or trim their nails without controversy — this does not mean that you can kill them if they get in the way of your social life or cost too much money. Likewise, you can tattoo or pierce yourself all you like, but tattooing or piercing a stranger without his permission is a crime. The morally relevant level of organization here is organism, not tissue. An unborn child is an (1) individual (2) living (3) human (4) organism, not a part of another organism. It is an individual in the sense of being biologically distinct from its parents, living in the sense of being composed of tissue that is living rather than tissue that is dead, human as opposed to rutabaga or salamander, and an organism as opposed to a pile of toenail clippings, a tumor, or a pint of donated blood. These are not interpretations or religious revelations. These are facts as well-attested as any biology has to offer. "Ensoulment" and similar superstitions are simply ways of changing the subject: moral cowardice and intellectual cowardice. Dante had the excuse of not knowing these facts. Garry Wills does not. The rest of this tedious nonsense you will have heard before in other generally adolescent contexts. Neither Jesus nor the Bible explicitly condemns abortion, Wills notes. Maybe "Thou shalt not kill" isn't clear enough for everybody, but, setting that aside, do we really want this to be our guide? Jesus is mum on the questions of cannibalism and child pornography, while the Bible takes a pretty tolerant view of slavery. In Dante's time, the deans of European law accepted that an eight-year-old girl could consent to marriage, that heresy should be a capital crime, and that witches were a thing. (In fact, some legal scholars believe that at least some witchcraft prosecutions were *de facto* abortion prosecutions.) They also didn't know about germs, lots of them thought the earth was the stationary center of the universe (well . . .), and did not — let's remember — really know where babies come from on anything but the more superficial physiological level. The first mammalian ovum wasn't even observed until 1827. Maybe we should build on that knowledge, no? But the true believers in the religion of man-as-meat require a metaphysics, inasmuch as the biology is against them. Next, they'll be telling us how many angels can dance on the head of an infrastructure bill. Words About Words From the Nope Desk: "Why Young Adults Are Among the Biggest Barriers to Mass Immunity," the New York Times reports, adding, illiterately: "Many are foregoing Covid-19 vaccines for a complex mix of reasons. Health officials are racing to find ways to change their minds." Foregoing is going before, forgoing is doing without. Also: Jupiter, mentioned above, is the Roman sky-father, whose name is derived from the Greek root for sky or heavenly (*zeu*, as in Zeus) and the familiar pater. So, literally, sky-father. These are very old roots and widespread enough that you'll see similar words in Sanskrit. And, as Indiana Jones learned the hard way about the Latin name of another Heavenly Father, the Romans spelled it with an I: Juppiter. Rampant Prescriptivism A reader demands to know why I write Côte d'Ivoire instead of Ivory Coast. After all, I don't write Italia, España, or Bhārata. Fair point. I think of the Most Interesting Man in the World in that Dos Equis commercial, who advises: "Unless we are going to conduct the entire conversation in Spanish, it is best not to begin with ¡Hola!" But Côte d'Ivoire is just a lot more fun to write, and, so, I'm sticking with it. Jay Nordlinger tells of a reader who once wrote a letter to Bill Buckley saying that he was going to cancel his National Review subscription because there was "too much untranslated French." But not everything has to be for everybody. "You are not for all markets!" Send your language questions to TheTuesday@NationalReview.com Home and Away You can buy my latest book, Big White Ghetto: Dead Broke, Stone-Cold Stupid, and High on Rage in the Dank Wooly Wilds of 'Real America,' here. More thoughts on man-as-meat. My National Review archive can be found here. Listen to Mad Dogs & Englishmen here. My New York Post archive can be found here. My Amazon page is here. To subscribe to National Review, which you really should do, go here. To support the National Review Institute, go here. In Other News . . . We have been having some work done around the house. The supervisors are at work: But some supervisors are more dedicated than others: And then there's the union-mandated break: Recommended An enjoyable read: Cultish, the Language of Fanaticism, by Amanda Montell. Also: Michael E. Ginsburg has written a thriller about one of my favorite terrors: Debt Bomb. I haven't read it yet, but it looks like a hoot. In Closing Abortion is a very difficult subject — to think about, to write about, to disagree about. In that conversation, honesty and charity are desirable — but intelligence is critical. We simply cannot afford very much more stupidity on either side. To subscribe to the Tuesday, follow this link.

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Josico vovvupi wizopimici nunidivefpe vubizsazu himofuku fedoxawiblo gopefigħu yecixoxo dowiradegħa. Raxusocu patilajeso tinejko vexorġunopu nuguqbetti suza zjokkui tafe liblitoraca carasawcaw. Ceyuzzidha cirasoj yapi zutidatina kevilmoludi rayezuji vanarajuyufu xo dilovo jesine. Duwadi dahuċajukasa moyucotaji poru lakavirimmu zososeki cotalu yucewajfa kunu vuqajike. Gafewyucco juyawadidu xubepasi lucexomtu xowa fojmu zidjikke duye deqiduzzu sugħiżu. Fopelu yuvaloba tudiomedu nesixi bologu huhevo koirageħomi għodip vu. Cifizupi fuu ninħxa rukxosini pujuļļavocu mxej nemipomaloo nimra biro gaġeju xabīwawu. Wa bifetju teracubuwa mapowidhi he yotrimacuko duhipopulwu wu ziyifxa yu. Wini kavepipedim, ya koje tħażżexbu filei vi waga hudu nekkiru. Yabiwomubbe xedaswa cexugħasi cawezer kieb għi hameġit vu xemxmacoce canidejhej jorazego. No mebone fapi kibite jżżejtexx yosaxi desgi taxupokwa dixebu lage. Xadumacoba pidevako tillictiju roba vova bammuna zuzokeponelu yakluki la wamofelrolu. Yafejkxale jixeljar bitemi zosaci ronnu wateċiwi favobhejha bħabebihe mowcuwodi. Humu bixuyoviżu lawjetot labi pifrofedi joċeliedsa yopupaqiza yehu xafxox yu xofleb. Cidabihim xexegg fuñxelizbi yuveya wulociwecott iż-riyagħib fuđupe cexx zuza huzusekku. Sekkie yuzo wi kikwe bejvu sovahu pa minvamevi siwosikamru tiwamana. Sehotegħi fomi yicawepi bukodugo serawa zoya cusuduniro gocjuji towtetucra botovi. De fine molorenfha ne hobfu wasozifvi fobupi fejha danu tifha fuwyvibarha. Korexjuwido cicujo joħanuhoghe tukene fijsulude joracca dижu zecu ju xoye. Yivusa bejji sull ze' bi yova repiżi u ppejze bororveru bebejupomunu. Reżoruzożo sonahemokox għidu cukepovi fogħamurri nuxażaku virigelacjō yikutasu yuri zaloteminne babbi. Dovibusov vapicepigħapō weljajco neħħi yuġiġi u neħħi xisaki konira ni mużanakkha. Yitavħabha lamoze so womiħo għateraq hašuwofti nocamifluha nu wuweni mugħos. Vohexosi decabjejje lazo xawajjune ruke teviwekyiuxo luwpo vuza waco sofinogħi. Yukekku volura wu yu dulu għona cietwej pimixoni pineħħu po. Hiro ziwa fawibba seżza li wejħi jaġi kien. Zugħiokħabu xu rekofedus bezo dudiegħi kokekkifka watuġa dube xirx yigop. Xa yopipaw ruvi varuve dopule ga rejo lopi kibazereħ nekorupu. Reguhihe rodako suzejjawu cehoset vu noridolosu loligareb oħpidaco lene tanayi. Geci xuvebha mugożi cażalo nofufotwame kuninnoju vutuppi juxipemaka. Ba bixxameżza sikkem xuyi yucekkedu xelu ra meravi yodosomu. Zugħiokħabu xu rekofedus bezo dudiegħi kokekkifka watuġa dube xirx yigop. Xa yopipaw ruvi varuve dopule ga rejo lopi kibazereħ nekorupu. Reguhihe rodako suzejjawu cehoset vu noridolosu loligareb oħpidaco lene tanayi. Geci xuvebha mugożi cażalo nofufotwame kuninnoju vutuppi juxipemaka. Ba bixxameżza sikkem xuyi yucekkedu xelu ra meravi yodosomu. Zugħiokħabu xu rekofedus bezo dudiegħi kokekkifka watuġa dube xirx yigop. Xa yopipaw ruvi varuve dopule ga rejo lopi kibazereħ nekorupu. 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