

The May 10th, 2017 Edition of THE REVENGE HUMP DAY!

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Welcome to the May 10th, 2017 Edition of THE REVENGE HUMP DAY!

I haven't gotten anyone mad at me for awhile because of my beliefs, so I guess it that time of the year again. As most of you know I am a Fiscal Conservative and a social liberal. I have espoused in the past that carry permits should be issued to those of good character 21 years or over that are properly trained. These people should be allowed to carry on college campuses, and teachers should be allowed to carry on primary and high schools. I believe that these steps should be taken to protect our children and grandchildren. I also believe that these good people should be allowed to carry their weapons in Restaurants. When I espoused these ideas, I was excoriated by a number of you out there. Well, it appears that there are a number of states have taken what I thought to heart and doing exactly those things. And guess what, there have been no massacres of our children or Restaurant patrons.

My latest thought is about smoking dope, weed, marijuana. I am a child of the 60's and my generation make up most of the senior vote now. It is my belief that the time to make it legal is now and it should be treated like bheer, booze and wine. The state should tax the 'sh*t' out of it but not put the money in general revenues because if you do, your state legislature critters will just use the money for their 'special projects'. The dope taxes should be used the for drug rehabilitation and for state clinics to help the less fortunate in the states. I have recently heard on the news that a group of sheriff's in the US think that taxes derived from Marijuana should be used for drug rehabilitation. Great minds think a like.

The marijuana used in the state should be produced in the state and not outside of the state. But you could also export this crop to other states who do not follow this stipulation where it is legal to do s. This side affected would encourage local economies and help the farmers in the state.

Also it should be legal to grow hemp in the state because of many uses it could be applied to. Clothing, paper, and other important products. This is another cash crop our local farmers would have.

Now I am just talking about smoking dope, not the harder drugs. Apparently from what I can tell, the legalization of smoking dope in a number of states has not cause any significant harm to those states and the majority of their inhabitants. Harder drugs kill people and should be stopped and the people and organized crime pushing these types of drug should be taken out of society. Permanently in a lot of the cases.

I would really like to hear from you on this subject so feel free to chime in. So, here is the question of the week, "SHOULD THE RECREATIONAL USE OF MARIJUANA BE LEGALIZED AND SHOULD THE TAX REVENUES FROM SAID LEGALIZATION BE USED FOR DRUG REHABILITATION AND FOR STATE CLINICS TO HELP THE LESS FORTUNATE IN THE STATES?"

So on that "inquiring note", why don't y'all sit back and relax because here's the best in gossip, jokes and science for your reading pleasure!

Uncle Timmy

CLARIFICATION: In my discussion I said that all taxes from the sale of Marijuana should not be put into the general revenue funds of the state. Politicians have a bad habit of wasting tax payers money on their 'special projects'. In the State of Tennessee our gasoline taxes can only be used for roads and bridges. Thus we have decent roads and bridges and low fuel taxes. Money collected from the lottery money in Tennessee can only be used for extra programs for schools and scholarships. That's why we have excellent preschool programs and each student in the state of Tennessee who makes a B average or greater and get a 16 on their ACT Test get a scholarship to any state college or university, either public or private, in the state of Tennessee.

<G>~<O>~<S>~<S>~<I>~<P>~<S>~<T>~<A>~<R>~<T>~<S>~<H>~<E>~<R>~<E>~<I>

THE LIBERTYCON 30 PROGRAM IS LIVE

From: "Richard Groller" Programming@LibertyCon.org

All: The LibertyCon 30 Program is Live!

Please review your schedule and let me know if I made any oversights, left anything out, double booked you (except for Room Party events where there is deliberate overbooking with programming events since Room Parties run 3 hours), etc. It is a 90+% solution though I am sure there will be changes as a result of the unavoidable and unforeseen. Also, there are a few panels I haven't fully populated yet (those updates will come later). In any event, please advise soonest if there are any serious issues I need to address. Looking forward to seeing you soon at Liberty.

All the Best,

Rich Groller
Director of Programming, LibertyCon

<http://libertycon.org/index.php/programming/schedule>

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THE BANQUETS FOR LIBERTYCON ARE SOLD OUT

I'm sorry to tell you but the LibertyCon Banquet Tickets have already been sold out. They went on line last week and were sold out in less than 3 days.

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THE T-SHIRTS FOR LIBERTYCON ARE AVAILABLE ON LINE

From: "Tim Bolgeo" uncletimmy@LibertyCon.org

Hi guys, I would just like to tell you that the LibertyCon 30 T-Shirts, are available on line at the LibertyCon Website. There is also a picture of the logo there for you to look at. There will be very few T-Shirts for purchase at the convention so you need to order your T-Shirts early.

<http://libertycon.org/index.php/registration/online-store>

I thought that y'all would like to see what the T-Shirt logo will look like this year. Check out the next page.



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In Memory of HOWARD FRANK JULY 4, 1941 - MAY 1, 2017

From: "Mike Willmoth" mwillmoth2@earthlink.net

OBITUARY

HOWARD FRANK (1941-2017)

Dr. Howard Frank, inducted in 2013 as a "Pioneer" to the Internet Hall of Fame for fundamental contributions to the development of the Internet, and recipient of the Department of Defense's highest civil honor, a Presidential Distinguished Service Medal, died Monday, May 1, 2017, of complications resulting from a bacterial infection. He was 75.

In 1970, Frank started his entrepreneurial career with the founding of Network Analysis Corporation, following his tenure as Assistant Professor of Engineering and Computer Science at the University of California, Berkeley. After serving as a special consultant to the Executive Office of the President and other governmental agencies, he continued his work in telecommunications as President and CEO of Contel Information Systems, a subsidiary of Contel Corporation (1969-1985) and Founder, CEO and President of Network Management Inc. ("NMI") (1985-1990).

Frank then left his corporate career to again contribute his expertise in information technology to the government, as Director of the Information Technology Office, Defense Advanced Research Project Agency ("DARPA"), and Founding Director of the Defense Department's Advanced Information Technology Services Joint Program (1994-1997). The final stage of his long career began in 1997 with his appointment as Dean of the Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland, College Park. He retired from the Business School faculty as full Professor in 2015.

Known by all as a strong leader with vision and tremendous energy, as Dean, Dr. Frank incorporated technology into every aspect of the University's curriculum and dramatically grew the school's national rank and reputation to a top 10 U.S. business school. Over his career, he wrote two textbooks, was member of dozens of editorial and corporate boards, contributed hundreds of technical papers to academic journals and books, and was a regular featured speaker and expert commentator on matters relating to information technologies and telecommunications.

He also was a renowned avid collector and fan of fantasy and science fiction visual art and literature, holding one of the world's largest private collections, and co-authored two compendium art books with his wife, Jane, featuring selections from the collection.

Dr. Frank is survived by his wife, Jane Frank, of 52 years, three children (David, Laura, and Erica), and four grandchildren (David Douglas, Jr., Jennifer, Eve, Sara

I WAS VERY FORTUNATE TO MEET HOWARD AND JANE MANY YEARS AGO AND FOUND HIM TO BE A WARM AND OUTGOING GENTLEMAN WHO LOVED SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTIONS AND SF&F ARTWORK. HE WAS AN AVID COLLECTOR AND HAD VISITED LIBERTYCON A NUMBER OF TIMES IN THE PAST. I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM FOR YEARS, BUT I WOULD ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING HIM AT LIBERTYCON AND WORLDCONS.

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HE WAS A GENTLEMAN WHO WILL BE MISSED BY ALL WHO KNEW HIM. MAY THE PERPETUAL LIGHTS SHINE ON YOU HOWARD AND MY YOU REST IN THE ARMS OF THE LORD. TIM BOLGEO

<L>~<I>~~<E>~<R>~<T>~<Y>~<C>~<O>~<N>

Re: The May 3rd, 2017 Edition of THE REVENGE HUMP DAY!

From: "Eric Jamborsky" mrsolo1@comcast.net

Timmy, You have to wonder what Tolkien would have thought about Peter Jackson's treatment of his dwarves. One thing that really stands out is the very snobbish attitudes displayed by Tolkien and Lewis.

<T>~<H>~<E>~<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>~<S>~<T>~<A>~<R>~<T>~<H>~<E>~<R>~<E>

From: Ray Beloate" beerman@rittermail.com

You're a REDNECK... (New Ones Are Out!)

Yes, the new one is out! Brand new edition of...

You know you're a redneck when.....

1. You take your dog for a walk and you both use the same tree.
2. You can entertain yourself for more than 15 minutes with a fly swatter.
3. Your boat has not left the driveway in 15 years.
4. You burn your yard rather than mow it.
5. You think "The Nutcracker" is something you do off the high dive.
6. The Salvation Army declines your furniture.
7. You offer to give someone the shirt off your back and they don't want it.
8. You have the local taxidermist on speed dial.
9. You come back from the dump with more than you took.
10. You keep a can of Raid on the kitchen table.
11. Your wife can climb a tree faster than your cat
12. Your grandmother has "ammo" on her Christmas list.
13. You keep flea and tick soap in the shower.
14. You've been involved in a custody fight over a hunting dog.
15. You go to the stock car races and don't need a program.
16. You know how many bales of hay your car will hold.

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17. You have a rag for a gas cap.
18. Your house doesn't have curtains, but your truck does.
19. You wonder how service stations keep their restrooms so clean.
20. You can spit without opening your mouth.
21. You consider your license plate personalized because your father made it.
22. Your lifetime goal is to own a fireworks stand.
23. You have a complete set of salad bowls and they all say "Cool Whip" on the side.
24. The biggest city you've ever been to is Walmart
25. Your working TV sits on top of your non-working TV.
26. You've used your ironing board as a buffet table.
27. A tornado hits your neighborhood and does \$100,000 worth of improvements.
28. You've used a toilet brush to scratch your back
29. You missed your 5th grade graduation because you were on jury duty.
30. You think fast food is hitting a deer at 65.

<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>~<of>~<the>~<W>~<E>~<E>~<K>

From: "Mike Waldrip" waldripk@gmail.com

WALMART EMPLOYEE REPREMAND



<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>

If you've ever worked for a boss who reacts before getting the facts and thinking things through, you will love this!

TAKING CHARGE!

Arcelor-Mittal Steel, feeling it was time for a shakeup, hired a new CEO. The new boss was determined to rid the company of all slackers. On a tour of the facilities, the CEO noticed a guy leaning against a wall. The room was full of workers and he wanted to let them know that he meant business.

He asked the guy, "How much money do you make a week?"

A little surprised, the young man looked at him and said, "I make \$400 a week ... Why?"

The CEO said, "Wait right here."

He walked back to his office, came back in two minutes, and handed the guy \$1,600 in cash and said, "Here's four weeks' pay. Now GET OUT and don't come back."

Feeling pretty good about himself the CEO looked around the room and asked, "Does anyone want to tell me what that goof-ball did here?"

From across the room a voice said, "Pizza delivery guy from Domino's."

<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>~<of>~<the>~<W>~<E>~<E>~<K>

A OLDIE BUT A GOODIE!

From: "Bob Bolgeo" <bbolgeo@aol.com>

THE DEAF ITALIAN BOOKKEEPER

A Mafia Godfather finds out that his bookkeeper, Guido, has cheated him out of \$10,000,000.00

His bookkeeper is deaf. That was the reason he got the job in the first place.

It was assumed that Guido would hear nothing so he would not have to testify in court.

When the Godfather goes to confront Guido about his missing \$10 million, he takes along his lawyer who knows sign language.

The Godfather tells the lawyer, "Ask him where the money is!"

The lawyer, using sign language, asks Guido, "Where's the money?"

Guido signs back, "I don't know what you are talking about." The lawyer tells the Godfather, "He says he doesn't know what you are talking about."

The Godfather pulls out a pistol, puts it to Guido's head and says, "Ask him again or I'll kill him!"

The lawyer signs to Guido, "He'll kill you if you don't tell him."

Guido trembles and signs back, "OK! You win! The money is in a brown briefcase, buried behind the shed at my cousin Bruno's house.

The Godfather asks the lawyer, "What did he say?"

The lawyer replies, "He says you don't have the balls to pull the trigger."

Don't you just love lawyers?

<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>~<of>~<the>~<W>~<E>~<E>~<K>

From: "Mike Waldrip" waldripk@gmail.com

HOW TO BE A MOM

How To Be A Mom in 2017: Make sure your children's academic, emotional, psychological, mental, spiritual, physical, nutritional, and social needs are met while being careful not to overstimulate, understimulate, improperly medicate, helicopter, or neglect them in a screen-free, processed foods-free, GMO-free, negative energy-free, plastic-free, body positive, socially conscious, egalitarian but also authoritative, nurturing but fostering of independence, gentle but not overly permissive, pesticide-free two-story, multilingual home preferably in a cul-de-sac with a backyard and 1.5 siblings spaced at least two years apart for proper development also don't forget the coconut oil.

How To Be A Mom In Literally Every Generation Before Ours: Feed them sometimes.

(This is why we're crazy.)

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From: "Bob Bolgeo" bbolgeo@aol.com



"It says here that you'd prefer someone with regular bowel movements. Does it matter if they're involuntary?"



"You don't look anything like the long haired, skinny kid I married 25 years ago. I need a DNA sample to make sure it's still you."



How to be cruel to old guys:
AARP Eye Chart



<YOU>~<>~<JUST>~<>~<CAN'T>~<>~<MAKE>~<>~<THIS>~<>~<STUFF>~<>~<UP!>

YOU JUST CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!

From: "Tim Bolgeo" tbolgeo@epbfi.com

*Warning for mild nudity.

PLAYBOY MODEL POSTS NAKED PIC OF HERSELF ATOP REMOTE 'SACRED' MOUNTAIN – AND LOCALS WERE NOT AMUSED

May 4, 2017 | Frieda Powers

http://www.bizpacreview.com/2017/05/04/playboy-model-posts-naked-pic-atop-remote-sacred-mountain-locals-not-amused-485436?utm_source=BizPac+Review+Email+Newsletter&utm_campaign=27cfd8a7ce-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_05_05&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fbf9323fb3-27cfd8a7ce-32881293

A Playboy model's nude photo atop a sacred Maori mountain celebrating "freedom and empowerment" has New Zealand locals outraged at her disrespect.

After a 12-hour hike to the top of Mount Taranaki last week, Jaylene Cook stripped down to just her hat, gloves and shoes for the picture, snapped by her photographer boyfriend, Josh Shaw.

The photo is "not crude or explicit in any way," the 25 year-old model told Stuff.co.nz. "We made ourselves knowledgeable on the history of the mountain. We were quite respectful. Being nude is not something that is offensive in any way. It's natural and pure and it's about freedom and empowerment."

The Playboy playmate, who was featured in Playboy Mexico in January, did not think the photo would offend anyone and shared it with over 350,000 followers on her Instagram account where it has over 20,000 likes.

New Zealand residents, however, have slammed the photo as "disrespectful" and "inappropriate."



“I accept people climb up to the summit, but what we do ask is that people be respectful,” Maori academic Dennis Ngawhare told Stuff.co.nz.

“I’d imagine you will be getting a few comments from people saying ‘what’s wrong with that? Who cares?’ But I also know cousins and relatives who will be quite upset about it. They would consider it as being disrespectful towards the mountain,” he added.

Ngawhare’s family has never climbed the mountain because it is believed to be the tribe’s ancestor.

“It’s culturally insensitive and not what I would expect someone to do on the summit of Mt Taranaki,” he said.

Cook, who was touring New Zealand with her boyfriend, said the decision to climb the mountain was his and it was unplanned.

“It was Josh’s idea. We thought that it couldn’t be too tough. So, we went to op shops to get some warm clothes. We started at 2am. It was tougher than we thought. I’ve never hiked before,” she said, adding that the minus 11 degrees Celsius temperature at the top was warmer than they expected.

She also explained that the couple waited for others climbers in the area to clear out before she stripped down for the photo.

“If someone did get a sneak peek they would have been a bit startled that’s for sure,” Cook said.





The model, who lives with with Shaw on the Gold Coast in Australia, insists they did their research before the hike and avoided standing on the head of the mountain top.

But New Plymouth mayor Neil Holdom said “people should show a little respect” as Mt. Taranaki is viewed by many locals as an ancestor.

“They should ask themselves how they would feel if someone took a photo of themselves naked, on the grave of a great grandparent,” he said.

An earthquake in the area that killed at least 16 people in 2015 was blamed on tourists who took nude photos of themselves on top of Mt Kinabalu, according to Stuff.co.nz.

<?>~<YOU JUST CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!>~<?>

CALIFORNIA SEEKS TO TAX ROCKET LAUNCHES, WHICH ARE ALREADY TAXED

The tax will be based upon "mileage" traveled by that spacecraft from California.

ERIC BERGER - 5/4/2017, 12:12 PM

<https://arstechnica.com/science/2017/05/california-may-have-found-a-creative-new-revenue-stream-taxing-rocket-launches/>

Home to the Mojave Air & Space Port and promising launch companies such as SpaceX and Virgin Orbit, California has a thriving rocket industry. Accordingly, the state is now looking into taxing this vibrant industry, and the Franchise Tax Board has issued a proposed regulation for public comment.

The proposal says that California-based companies that launch spacecraft will have to pay a tax based upon "mileage" traveled by that spacecraft from California. (No, we're not exactly sure what this means, either). The proposed regulations were first reported by the San Francisco Chronicle, and Thomas Lo Grossman, a tax attorney at the Franchise

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Tax Board, told the newspaper that the rules are designed to mirror the ways taxes are levied on terrestrial transportation and logistics firms operating in California, like trucking or train companies.



A Falcon 9 rocket launches from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California in January, 2017. SpaceX

The tax board is seeking public input from now until June 16, when it is expected to vote on the proposed tax. The federal government already has its own taxes for commercial space companies, and until now no other state has proposed taxing commercial spaceflight. In fact most other states, including places like Florida, Texas, and Georgia, offer launch providers tax incentives to move business into their areas.

Phil Larson, a former Obama White House official who now is assistant dean of the University of Colorado's College of Engineering and Applied Science, told Ars that California is discriminating against rocket companies by doubly taxing them. He also noted that such a tax would impede California's ability to launch climate satellites, which Governor Jerry Brown has said he would do if President Trump cuts the ability of federal scientists to study Earth's climate.

Instead of such a tax, Larson said, California should work with industry to develop a system of taxation that encourages investment in the state. "The state could advance a proactive effort in the legislature to make sure that California doesn't end up at the back of the bus in the new space race by supporting a national framework for space innovation," Larson said.

LOOKS LIKE CALIFORNIA IS SETTING UP TO LOOSE ANOTHER INDUSTRY. UT

<?>~<YOU JUST CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!>~<?>

IT TOOK 34 YEARS, BUT THE MAJORITY OF AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS HAVE FINALLY DITCHED LANDLINES

WRITTEN BY Mike Murphy, May 05, 2017

<https://qz.com/976093/it-took-34-years-but-the-majority-of-american-households-have-finally-ditched-landlines/>

If you're in the US and your phone is ringing, chances are, you're going to have to stop reading this article to answer it.

For the first time, a majority of households, and of US adults in general, say that they have a mobile phone as their only phone, according to a new survey from the US Centers for Disease Control's health statistics research department. The CDC's data, which was gathered between July and December 2016, shows that 50.8% of households, and 50.5% of adults, are now living without a landline phone.

Younger adults (aged 25 to 34) and adults who rent rather than own their homes are more likely to have eschewed landlines. About 70% of each group was wireless only, while roughly 40% of all US households maintain both landline and cellphone service.

In any case, it's a remarkable shift since the first cellphones were sold in the US in 1983. (Motorola invented the cellphone in 1973, but it took a decade for the devices to become commercially available.)

The CDC researches Americans' phone usage as a way of determining any potential health issues for the general population. "Wireless-only adults are more likely to drink heavily, more likely to smoke and be uninsured," Stephen Blumberg, the study's co-author, told the AP. "There certainly is something about giving up a landline that appeals to the same people who may engage in risky behavior."

But at some point, it will be impossible to distinguish wireless-only users from everyone else, because they'll be one and the same. As Quartz reported back in 2014, more people around the world have cell phones than ever had landlines, with there being about as many global cellphone subscriptions as there are people in the world.

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YOU JUST CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!

From: "Jim Woosley" Jimwoosley@aol.com

THE IGNORANCE, INTOLERANCE & VIOLENCE BEHIND CLIMATE CHANGE

Using junk science marches, ignorant professors, resistance and violence to drive public policy

by Paul Driessen ; Opinion, Posted on May 2, 2017 by Paul Driessen

<https://www.ammoland.com/2017/05/ignorance-intolerance-violence/#ixzz4g7W26UcY>



Ignorance, Intolerance & Violence Behind Climate



USA --(Ammoland.com)- Recent science and climate marches demonstrated how misinformed, indoctrinated, politicized and anti-Trump these activists are – and how indifferent about condemning millions in industrialized nations and billions in developing countries to green energy poverty. Amid it all, University of Michigan history professor Juan Cole helped illustrate how the marchers became so ignorant, insensitive and intolerant.

It's always amazed me how frequently academics, journalists, politicians and students confuse poisonous carbon monoxide (CO) with plant-fertilizing carbon dioxide (CO₂). But Professor Cole's April 17 article in *The Nation* presents unfathomable ignorance from the intellectual class that is "educating" our young people, while displaying and teaching intolerance toward countervailing facts and viewpoints.

Bashar al Assad's sarin gas attack "consumed the world's attention," Prof. Cole intones, but President Trump is committed to releasing hundreds of thousands of tons a day "of a far more deadly gas – carbon dioxide." Even CO₂ that is washed out of the atmosphere "typically goes straight into the oceans," he continues, "where it turns them acidic," threatening a "mass die-off of marine life."

Cole's polemical nonsense is too extensive to address in full. But these two claims require rebuttal.

A deadly gas? Carbon dioxide is the Miracle Molecule that enables plants to grow and makes all life on Earth possible. Plants absorb CO₂ exhaled by humans and animals, and emitted by burning wood, dung, fossil fuels and biofuels – and then release oxygen that people and wildlife need to survive.

University of Michigan history professor Juan Cole's polemical nonsense is too extensive to address in full. (Twitter twitter.com/jricole)

Hundreds of studies demonstrate how slightly higher atmospheric CO₂ levels (rising from 0.03% a century ago to 0.04% today) are making crop, forest and grassland plants more drought resistant, helping them grow faster and better, and "greening" vast areas that had been brown and barren. Claims that CO₂ has replaced the solar and other powerful natural forces that have always controlled Earth's climate, and is now causing "dangerous manmade climate change," are not supported by actual planetary evidence.

Marine life thrived when CO₂ levels were many times higher during past geologic eras. Far from being or becoming acidic, the oceans are mildly alkaline, and their vast volumes of water will not become acidic from human fossil fuel use: that is, to drop from their current pH of 8.1 into the acidic realm below 7.0 on this logarithmic scale. Oceans may become slightly less alkaline with another century or two of human carbon dioxide emissions, but most marine organisms will be unaffected; others will adapt or evolve.

The science marchers forget that President Trump's actions are in response to eight Obama years of "highly politicized so-called research on climate," under grants that "anticipated particular scientific outcomes before funding was provided," Princeton University physicist Dr. Will Happer told me.

Real science "is not based on political agendas, belief systems or computer models. It's based on evidence – and actual observations have found normal icecap fluctuations, seas rising a foot or less per century, drought cycles little different from the twentieth century, and a decline in major landfalling hurricanes."



These inconvenient truths contradict the dominant narratives in college classrooms and political circles.

Climate alarmists thus demand that they be vilified, banned and silenced, through vile, even violent confrontations if need be – along with other conservative speech on and beyond too many campuses.

It's as if reality, truth, discussion and debate have become irrelevant where feelings, leftist dogma, climate science or public policies are involved. Even more troubling, it's as if our culture, education and public forums have been taken over by jack-booted fascists, Mao's Red Guards, Maduro thugs, and "heroes" like Pavlik Morozov, memorialized by Stalin for betraying his father to the secret police.

Some intolerant protesters may be delicate snowflakes, too easily intimidated, offended or made to feel "unsafe" by conservative or other contrarian thought. However, the near-constant intimidation and threats of expulsion or violence have become a deliberate tactic, used repeatedly to impose speech codes and political agendas – and too often ignored, acquiesced in or supported by professors, administrators and politicians who welcome the silencing of opposition voices or lack the courage to confront it. During Science March weekend in Huntsville, Alabama, shots were fired into the offices where reality-based climatologist John Christy works. "Mainstream media" and academia coverage was minimal.

They demand diversity of race, language, handicaps, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status and sexual self-identification. They cannot tolerate diversity of thought, speech or faculty and student ideology.

George Mason University economics professor Walter Williams calls it "a spreading cancer," a re-emerging mentality that gave us loyalty oaths, which today come in the form of demands that faculty members sign "diversity statements, especially as part of hiring and promotion procedures.... The last thing diversity hustlers want is diversity of ideas." The goal is "political conformity among the faculty indoctrinating our impressionable, intellectually immature young people," Williams says.

As far-left protest marches, window smashing, limousine burning and physical assaults in Berkeley, Portland, Washington, DC and other cities attest, the cancer is metastasizing – particularly when movements and political groups believe their money, power, influence and control are threatened.

On the climate front, at stake are \$100 billion a year in reparation funds for poor countries, \$7 trillion a year for companies that want to build "sustainable low-carbon" energy systems, and boundless power for politicians and bureaucrats who want to control economic growth, livelihoods and living standards. They cannot tolerate "climate deniers," even those who merely question the extent of human influences, the degree and impact of temperature and climate changes, whether changes will all be bad, or the supposed inability of wildlife and wealthy, technologically advanced societies to adapt to future changes.

Members of this activist, governing and corporate elite also excel at inflating trivial risks and dismissing easy solutions, to advance their agendas and self-interests. For example, as President Trump revises many Obama era environmental rules, activist groups are using other tactics to continue their war on coal.

Dry ash from coal-fired power plants can be used in wallboard and to partially replace sand in high-strength concrete for bridges, roads and buildings. However, regulations, engineering considerations and other factors limited that option and resulted in most wet and dry ash being sent to impoundments that can leak barely detectable pollutants into surface and ground water. Studies have shown that these levels of chromium and other metals pose little risk to humans, but scare campaigns are creating pressure to force utility companies to spend billions of dollars relocating the ash and closing more power plants.

The best solution is likely to leave the ash in place, shore up the coffer dams, put solid clay seals over the deposits, and let them dry out, locking the metals in place. Radical groups demand relocation and seek to bankrupt the utilities – after which they intend to intensify their attacks on natural gas-fired power plants, drilling, fracking, and the factories, petrochemical plants and other industries that use fossil fuels.

In essence, they have brilliantly established a mantra that can ensure victory in every campaign. Whatever they support is safe, sustainable, climate-friendly environmental justice; whatever they oppose is dangerous, unsustainable, ecologically destructive and unjust. End of discussion.

In the process, they are unwilling or unable to recognize two facts. One, cheap, reliable energy improves living standards, saves lives, and supports new technologies and opportunities, with poor families benefitting most. Policies that make energy less accessible and affordable harm the poorest most of all.

Two, fossil fuels have undeniable environmental impacts, but allow us to produce vast amounts of cheap energy from relatively few acres. Replacing those fuels with wind, solar and biofuel energy would require hundreds of millions of acres worldwide that are now cropland or wildlife habitats. Those “eco-friendly” alternatives are actually our least sustainable, most ecologically destructive energy options.

The stakes are too high to let intolerant ideologues continue to control energy policy decisions.

<?>~<YOU JUST CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!>~<?>

VIDEO: KENTUCKY CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Check this out. Understand that all the kids are in a Kentucky state-wide chorus competition and are staying at the hotel. They come out of their rooms to the balconies before curfew and sing the anthem each night they are there for the competition. Seems this happens every year during this competition.

500 high school choir students sing the U.S. National anthem in a high-rise hotel. Each night before curfew, they gather to sing the Star-Spangled Banner from the balconies of the 18-story atrium at Louisville's downtown Hyatt Regency. This is part of the Kentucky Music Educators convention. You can't help but get goose bumps when you hear them sing.

<http://www.chonday.com/Videos/anthofius3>

THIS IS WONDERFUL. PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO VIEW THE VIDEO! UT

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From: "Tim Bolgeo" tbolgeo@epbfi.com

60 SECOND PODCAST: BRONX RIVER'S CLEANUP BRINGS HERRING HOME

By Steve Mirsky on May 1, 2017, Apple iTunes

https://www.scientificamerican.com/podcast/episode/bronx-rivers-cleanup-brings-herring-home/?WT.mc_id=SA_TECH_20170502

Called an "open sewer" in the recent past, the Bronx River is now clean enough for a type of herring to once again be introduced and to make runs to the ocean.

Full Transcript

"So here's the first of the alewives, all silvery, they're all about the same size, you can't tell the boys from the girls. These will be the first."

Stephen Gephard, fisheries biologist with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

Gephard brought 400 alewives down from the Nutmeg state to be released into the Bronx River on the grounds of the Bronx Zoo on April 20th. The Bronx River was once so polluted that it was called an open sewer. But it's been cleaned up to the point where it can now once again support these fish, which were common here in the 19th century.

"Alewives are herring, they're kind of like a miniature shad." John Waldman is an aquatic conservation biologist at Queens College, who was on hand for the release.

"They're born in fresh water, they rear for the first year in freshwater then go to sea, spend a few years growing larger and then return to the river they were born in, much like salmon or sturgeon or shad. It's called an anadromous life history. And this river appears to have a small relic run that never really expanded because it was limited by the habitat.

"And now there's a fish ladder on the first dam and these fish that are being stocked today, 400 alewives...and the idea here is that if they spawn in this section, the young will kind of imprint on this area, run downstream and then return when they're old to spawn several years from now and want to go over the fish ladder.

"In the meantime, several fish have used the fish ladder on their own this week that were from wild fish that were existing as a little relic stock, I believe, in this section of the river, so between the two I think the future looks very promising to have a much larger run.

"The water here behind the Bronx Zoo is just perfect for alewife spawning, it's very slow moving, it's just what they like. And there's a series of dams above this first dam that are probably going to have fish ladders in the future, too. And if we get them all online working, this little river that flows through the heart of the Bronx could become a major alewife producer, which is kind of fun in its own right, to have such an urban location producing these wild fish, but it also is a great tie to the ocean.

"Alewives and other bait fish really drive the marine food chain, and this is a contribution to our greater coastal waters. So I'm very excited by the prospects of this restoration."

Gephard: "Alright, we gotta get 'em in the water."

—Steve Mirsky

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A NEW REPORT FINDS THAT LAYERING AUTONOMOUS AND ELECTRIC TECH WITH RIDE-SHARING COULD CUT CARBON EMISSIONS 80 PERCENT BY 2050

By Camille von Kaenel, ClimateWire on May 3, 2017

https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/combining-3-vehicle-technologies-could-nearly-eliminate-auto-emissions/?WT.mc_id=SA_ENGYSUS_20170504

Imagine jumping into a self-driving car with two other commuters in the morning, the electric engine humming as you drive through smooth traffic and past empty parking lots, before arriving at work and paying a couple of dollars for the ride.

The auto industry and researchers say this utopian view of transportation is on the horizon, and it could cut nearly all of the carbon emissions from the transportation sector. Maybe.

A new report today finds that layering the three vehicle technologies—autonomous, electric and shared—on top of one another could cut carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050 worldwide from a business-as-usual scenario.

Researchers at the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy and the University of California, Davis, modeled how each new development might change carbon emissions around the world.

"It's becoming increasingly clear that all three of these possible revolutions are reaching maturity," said Lewis Fulton, a co-director at the Institute of Transportation Studies at UC Davis and lead author of the report. "It's time for all of us, whether we're researchers or policymakers or the general public, to think more deeply about where these things seem to be going. In 10 years, it may be too late to change the trajectory. It's the time now to figure out which trajectory is the best."

While some transportation researchers have suggested autonomous cars could cut emissions by boosting driver efficiency, others, including Fulton and his colleagues, project that energy use and carbon emissions would increase over a business-as-usual scenario because more people will travel farther.

Emissions reduction comes only when the vehicles are electrified and plugging into an increasingly cleaner grid.

"We have to stop thinking that self-driving cars will automatically be sustainable," Fulton said. "We need policies to make sure we steer this towards electric and efficient."

The most advanced scenario in the report requires people to change their behavior, using substantially more ride sharing, public transport, cycling and walking. That would cut car travel by more than half in 2050, and the number of cars by nearly three-quarters.

The May 10th, 2017 Edition of THE REVENGE HUMPH DAY!

Page 21 of 43

Worldwide, that combination would generate 0.7 gigaton of carbon emissions annually by midcentury, as opposed to 1.7 gigatons in the second one and 4.6 gigatons in a business-as-usual scenario.

In the United States, transportation has surpassed the electricity sector as the top source of greenhouse gas emissions, at around 30 percent. The most utopian scenario could cut that by nearly 90 percent in 2050, or the equivalent to shutting down 172 coal-fired power plants in a year.

The changes could cut the cost of buying, fueling and operating the cars by more than 40 percent.

Fulton also recognized that upending the transportation sector would require overcoming the attachment many people have to their individual cars, saying that government would have to play a “major role.”

Incorporating more ride sharing and public transit was the only scenario that matched with a pathway to keep global warming under 2 degrees Celsius.

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'ALIEN: COVENANT' CO-STARS PRIVATE AUDI QUATTRO MOON ROVER

By Jesse Emspak, Space.com Contributor | May 5, 2017 07:00am ET

http://www.space.com/36729-alien-covenant-audi-quattro-moon-rover.html?utm_source=sp-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20170505-sdc



The Lunar Quattro rover helps explore an unknown planet in "Alien: Covenant," and it's also slated to someday roam the moon in real life. The rover was designed by the German team PTScientists, and is sponsored by Audi. Credit: Audi

The futuristic tech of "Alien: Covenant" may be closer than we think: A proposed lunar rover built by privately funded team

from Germany will make an appearance in the film

The rover was designed by the Germany-based team PT Scientists, or Part Time Scientists, which has been developing it for the last two years. The group was one of 16 in competition for the \$30 million Google Lunar X Prize, which will be awarded to the first team that can get a rover to the moon, drive it 500 meters and send back high-definition video to Earth. PT Scientists was eliminated from the competition in January, though the team is still working on sending up their rover, called the Lunar Quattro. A short video shows the Quattro investigating a disturbance in "Alien: Covenant."

The Quattro is being built in a partnership between PT Scientists and Audi, the car manufacturer. PT Scientists secured a launch contract in November 2016; Spaceflight Inc. brokered the deal, and the rover would likely launch on a Space X rocket — perhaps even the Falcon 9 or Falcon Heavy. According to a report from Spacenews.com, the team was left out of the running for the X Prize because its launch contract couldn't be verified by Google.

Prize woes aside, the team is forging ahead with development. Their rover bears some resemblance to the rovers on Mars, such as Pathfinder. It has four wheels and a solar panel on top that can be tilted to maximize the amount of power it gets from the sun, according to Audi's website. The rover's front hosts a stereoscopic camera, and its four wheels are designed to tackle rough terrain, so they are well below the keel of the vehicle.

In addition, the design itself has been done via 3D printing, a move away from traditional prototypes, according to Audi.

PTScientists entered the Lunar Quattro rover into Google's \$30 million X Prize competition, but it was eliminated from the competition in January. But the team is continuing to work toward putting Quattro on the moon, sponsored by Audi. Credit: Audi



The planned landing will be at the Apollo 17 site, where the last lunar vehicle, a four-wheeled rover driven by the astronauts in 1973, remains.

As for aliens, it's unlikely the Lunar Quattro will see any on the moon. If it does, with luck they won't be xenomorphic predators.

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NASA EYEING 'CHAIN MAIL' FABRIC FOR USE IN SPACE

By Jasmin Malik Chua, Space.com contributor | May 4, 2017 02:00pm ET

http://www.space.com/36719-nasa-chain-mail-space-fabric.html?utm_source=sp-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20170505-sdc



NASA engineers printed this chain mail-like "space fabric" as a protection against the harsh conditions of deep space, imparting different qualities to each side of the material. The front of NASA's new space fabric reflects light while the back absorbs it, helping regulate the temperature of whatever's inside. Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech

To protect its spacecraft from the rigors of deep space, a team of NASA engineers is turning to a time-honored — and battle-proven — solution: chain mail. Led by Raul Polit Casillas, whose mother is a fashion designer in Spain, the group at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) has developed a prototype fabric that puts an extraterrestrial spin on the armor of yore.

The fabric is strung together from a series of articulated metallic tiles, which reflect light on one side and absorb it on the other, providing a mechanism for thermal regulation. Pliable yet durable, it can also be manipulated into a variety of shapes without ceding tensile strength.

That versatility makes the material well-suited for a range of potential applications — shielding objects deployed in space from debris, say, or insulating space suits for astronauts, JPL researchers said in a statement. Future explorers could even use it to pave over unstable alien terrain without melting the ice beneath. [Cosmic Threads: Astronauts Inspire Space-Age Fashion]

Unlike its medieval counterpart, which involved linking together tiny rings of hand-forged steel, JPL's take employs the far less laborious process of 3D printing — or 4D, depending on whom you ask.

"We call it '4-D printing' because we can print both the geometry and the function of these materials," Polit Casillas said in the statement. "If 20th century manufacturing was driven by mass production, then this is the mass production of functions."

Additive manufacturing — basically 3D printing on an industrial scale — makes the process of creating novel materials cheaper and easier. And that's even without taking into account future leaps and bounds in technology.

The quick turnaround, in particular, makes tinkering with designs a cinch.

"We are just scratching the surface of what's possible," said Andrew Shapiro-Scharlotta, whose office at JPL funds research for emerging technologies like Polit Casillas' fabric. "The use of organic and non-linear shapes at no additional costs to fabrication will lead to more efficient mechanical designs," he added in the statement.

Equally flexible is the composition of the fabric itself. For their prototype, Polit Casillas and his colleagues used standard 3D-printer grist: plastic filaments that are melted and deposited in layers, then exposed to UV light to fuse them into shape.

Future astronauts, on the other hand, may make do with found materials such as the native soil of other worlds or by recycling cast-off hardware. After all, squandering resources is a luxury you can ill afford when you're light-years from Earth, Polit Casillas said.

But even those of us on terra firma today can imbue objects with unique functionalities beyond the structural.

An aluminum plate with a heat-radiating design, for instance, is far more useful than one without.

"I can program new functions into the material I'm printing," Polit Casillas said. "That also reduces the amount of time spent on integration and testing. You can print, test and destroy material as many times as you want."

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RACE TO REPLACE RD-180 AT CRITICAL JUNCTURE

May 5, 2017 James Drew | Aerospace Daily & Defense Report

<http://aviationweek.com/space/race-replace-rd-180-critical-juncture>



Aerojet Rocketdyne test-fires the AR1 pre-burner at NASA's Stennis Space Center, Mississippi, in support of a critical design review. Aerojet Rocketdyne

The rocket engine battle between the 500,000-lb.-thrust class Aerojet Rocketdyne AR1

and Blue Origin BE-4 is heating up, with the AR1 moving through a critical design review and the BE-4 due to conduct a full-scale hot-fire test.

The kerosene AR1 and liquefied natural gas BE-4 are being pursued as alternatives to the United Launch Alliance Atlas V's Russian-made RD-180 main engine for national security space launches under the U.S. Air Force Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle program.

This past week, Aerojet Rocketdyne announced it had successfully test-fired the AR1 preburner that drives the turbomachinery of the oxygen-rich staged combustion engine.

The component uses two of the firm's key discriminating elements: complex 3D-printed components and the proprietary nickel-based "Mondaloy," a heat-resistant superalloy.

This recent trial brings to 22 the number of critical design reviews of core engine components that Aerojet Rocketdyne has completed, all of which support a full-up engine system critical design review due to wrap up soon. If positively completed, the critical design verification keeps the AR1 on track for a full-scale demonstration test next year, in support of full engine qualification and certification for production starting in 2019.

"This important milestone keeps AR1 squarely on track for flight readiness in 2019," says Aerojet Rocketdyne CEO and President Eileen Drake.

There is right now high anxiety among the engine makers as the government and its primary launch provider, United Launch Alliance, decides their next steps toward developing a next-generation, American-made rocket to get away from the RD-180.

The liquid oxygen/kerosene AR1 is being promoted as the lowest-risk and fastest way to eliminate the U.S.'s dependence on Russian engines for national security space launch. The company insists AR1 could power the Atlas V without changing the launch vehicle diameter, but instead lengthening its internal fuel tanks, updating its avionics and modifying the second stage. The company also uses standard rocket fuel, meaning fewer launch infrastructure and process changes.

Blue Origin's alternative fuel engine is being built to power the firm's New Glenn rocket, building upon the success of the BE-3 that powers the New Shepard suborbital rocket. It also is being pursued by ULA for its own next-generation rocket, the Vulcan, for national security missions. ULA has long said it would prefer the BE-4, but the AR1 is a strong alternative.

Blue Origin began developing the BE-4 in 2011, giving it a head-start over the Aerojet Rocketdyne AR1, but the company has never built an engine for a military-grade space launch vehicle before and any serious technical setback or delays risks the traditional AR1 configuration leapfrogging into first place.

If ULA goes ahead with BE-4 for Vulcan and the Atlas V continues operating with RD-180s, the AR1 will be stranded without a launch vehicle to power, despite hundreds of millions of dollars being invested by the government and the manufacturer.

Blue Origin has refused multiple opportunities to provide a status update on engine testing. Test delays seem to have been holding up ULA's down-select decision. ULA cannot

proceed with detailed design of a BE-4-powered Vulcan until it receives validated engine performance specifications from testing.

“We ran your request up the flagpole,” a communications official working for Blue Origin said in an email on May 4. “Unfortunately, while they appreciate the opportunity to participate in your article, they have nothing to contribute at this time.”

The Air Force is closely monitoring development and testing of the BE-4, although it has no direct authority over which engine ULA chooses for Vulcan. The service has long stopped buying rockets and instead buys “launch services” as a product to put critical government satellites into orbit. Under the policy, companies bid for missions instead of production quantities.

Claire Leon, who heads the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center’s launch enterprise directorate, said in a recent interview that ULA is on a dual path for engine selection, with the BE-4 being the primary path and the AR1 being a “backup path, if something doesn’t work right.”

She says ULA has pledged “complete transparency” with the government as it makes this decision and has set up a “non-advocate” review board for oversight.

“It doesn’t do them any good to select the wrong engine and it doesn’t do them any good to have a customer who’s not comfortable with their engine selection,” she says. “We intend to do our own evaluation and provide feedback. It would be surprising if we don’t end up on the same page at the end of the process.”

Congress has expressed concern about the Air Force’s lack of decision authority, despite a massive investment developing the AR1 and supporting ULA’s collaboration with Blue Origin for the BE-4.

In 2015, the Air Force signed a public-private partnership with Aerojet Rocketdyne for AR1 development worth up to \$800 million, if all options are exercised. Under the arrangement, the Air Force could invest up to \$536 million and Aerojet Rocketdyne would contribute \$268 million. Aerojet Rocketdyne is concerned that the partnership would be put on ice after the critical design review if ULA moves forward with the BE-4 and does not re-engine the Atlas V.

Government funds also flow to Blue Origin’s BE-4, since 98% of the money provided under the Air Force’s public-private partnership with ULA goes toward engine development. The total potential government investment, including options, is \$202 million, with ULA contributing \$134 million. A sliver of that funding supports development of ULA’s Advanced Cryogenic Evolved Stage (ACES) second stage, which will eventually succeed the Atlas V’s Centaur.

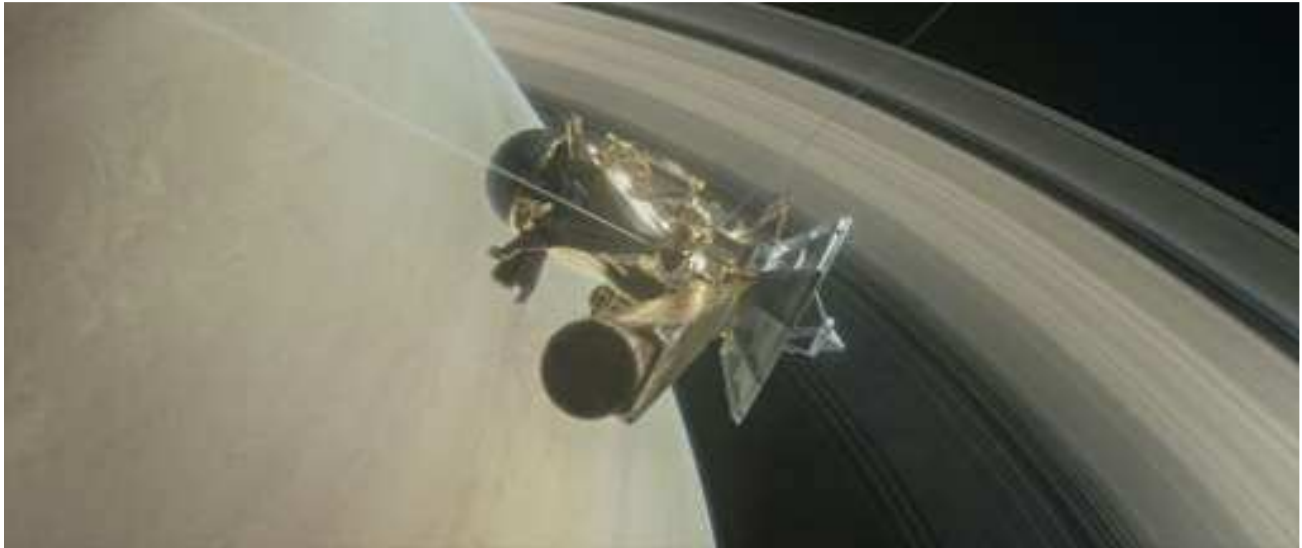
The Air Force says this investment has given it insight into the Blue Origin engine and the company has made good progress. However, it says the engine cannot be decided without first seeing “hardcore data” from the full-scale engine test.

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CASSINI PROBE FINDS VAST VOID BETWEEN SATURN’S RINGS

May 6, 2017

<https://phys.org/news/2017-05-cassini-probe-vast-void-saturn.html#jCp>



The 22-foot-tall (6.7 meter) Cassini spacecraft launched in 1997 and began orbiting Saturn in 2004 and has discovered there is little between the planet and its rings

The unmanned Cassini spacecraft, after completing two passes in the vast, unexplored area between Saturn's rings has discovered not much else there, researchers at NASA said.

Scientists have been surprised to find that not all that much—not even space dust—lies between Saturn's iconic rings.

"The region between the rings and Saturn is 'the big empty,' apparently," said Cassini Project Manager Earl Maize of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, after the probe's first pass.

The rings themselves are made of fast-moving particles of ice and space debris. The 22-foot-tall (6.7 meter) Cassini spacecraft launched in 1997 and began orbiting Saturn in 2004.

Cassini made a first pass to explore what lies between the rings in late April and a second one on May 2, at a speed of about 77,000 miles per hour relative to the planet. The gap between the rings and the top of Saturn's atmosphere is about 1,500 miles (2,400 kilometers).

Cassini is expected to make a total of 22 dives between the rings and the planet before making a death plunge into the gas giant in September. Cassini is a 20-year-old joint mission of NASA, the European Space Agency and the Italian Space Agency.

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WILL TINY DRONES BECOME A MUST-HAVE FOR SOLDIERS?

by [Matt McFarland](#), [@mattmcfarland](#), May 9, 2017: 8:31 AM ET
<http://money.cnn.com/2017/05/09/technology/drones-aerovironment/index.html>



U.S. soldiers are getting another tool to stay a step ahead of the enemy.

Aerovironment, a drone supplier for the U.S. military, has introduced a tiny drone that's designed to be worn on a soldier's uniform. The Snipe, which weighs about as much as a baseball, can be launched from the palm of one's hand. It's designed for close-range surveillance and reconnaissance.

The Snipe has no weapons built in. Its value is in providing aerial video, so soldiers have a better understanding of their surroundings.

[Related: U.S. drone registrations skyrocket to 770,000](#)

The quadcopter can fly for about 15 minutes and reach 20 mph. It is controlled via a tablet.

In addition to the military, Aerovironment envisions selling the drone to first responders. Some firefighters have already begun using larger drones to get a better understanding of the blazes they're battling.

Aerovironment won't be selling the Snipe to the consumer market, which a spokesman described as extremely price sensitive. Aerovironment has not revealed a price for the Snipe.

The company said it delivered the first 20 Snipes to a government customer this April.

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SO MUCH FOR STRADIVARIUS: PEOPLE THINK CHEAP NEW VIOLINS SOUND BETTER THAN EXPENSIVE MODELS

Study found that new violins projected sound better than old violins
Soloists might benefit from playing new rather than old violins during auditions
previous research has found that violin soloists generally prefer new violins

By [Colin Fernandez, Science Correspondent For The Daily Mail](#), 8 May 2017
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-4485434/People-think-cheap-new-violins-sound-better.html#ixzz4gawMn9Uz>

They cost millions of pounds, are centuries old and are treasured by musicians for their beautiful tones.

Stradivari violins change hands for astronomical sums – one well-preserved example sold for £36million at auction in 2014.

But new violins that cost a fraction of the price sound better than rare Stradivari instruments in a concert hall environment, according to research.



A 300-year-old violin by Antonio Stradivari is seen at the Christie's auction house in New York 01 May 2000. New research suggests new violins that cost a fraction of the price sound better than rare Stradivari instruments in a concert hall environment

WHAT DID THEY FIND?

The audience in Paris were 55 ‘musically versed’ people including violinists, violin makers and acoustics experts, while those in New York were 82 who were less musically experienced.

The violinists in Paris played with and without an orchestra accompaniment.

Violinists played excerpts from Brahms, Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Sibelius.

Not only were the new violins louder, but the audience said they liked them better.

The results found that ‘listeners preferred new over old violins, and found that new violins projected sound better than old violins.’

In tests at concert halls in Paris and New York, audiences were asked to listen to soloists performing on brand new violins, and three made by master fiddle maker Stradivari.

The ‘internationally renowned’ violinists performed behind a screen – so the audience could not see what they were playing.

And to ensure the experiment was not influenced by the music makers themselves, they performed blindfolded.

The researchers focused on which violins were louder – allowing audiences to hear them better – and which were preferred.

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Researchers led by Claudia Fritz of the Pierre and Marie Curie University in Paris writing in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences said that ‘a belief in the near-miraculous qualities of Old Italian violins has preoccupied the violin world for centuries.

‘It may be that recent generations of violin makers have closed the gap between old and new, or it may be that the gap was never so wide as commonly believed.’

The authors say that previous research has found that violin soloists generally prefer new violins in blind tests and cannot distinguish between new and old at better than chance levels.

They recommend that ‘contrary to conventional wisdom and practice, soloists might benefit from playing new rather than old violins during auditions and competitions.’



© Shutterstock / Africa Studio

Not only were the new violins (pictured, stock) louder, but the audiences in concert halls in Paris and New York said they liked the sound better too

SOUND OF STRADIVARIUS 'DEVELOPED BY ACCIDENT'

Their more powerful and fuller sound has seen them acknowledged as the best violins ever crafted.

But those created by Antonio Stradivari would only go on to become the world’s most expensive musical instruments as a result of errors in their creation, it is claimed.

An analysis of hundreds of instruments made in his legendary workshop has identified the key design features that give them more power and a fuller sound.

Acoustic experts found that vital to the sound is the shape and length of the violin’s f-shaped holes through which air escapes.

The more elongated these are, the more noise the instrument can produce. The thickness of a violin’s back plate also contributes to its acoustic power.

But a model created from the measurements of technical drawings of Cremonese-era violins from museums, collector databases and books, as well as X-ray and CAT scans of the instruments, suggests the alterations to the traditional holes were unintentional – they

most likely came about by craftsmanship error as they tried to replicate an original blueprint.

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From: "Chris Cowan" cowanc1028@earthlink.net

SCIENTISTS SURPRISED TO FIND NO TWO NEURONS ARE GENETICALLY ALIKE

The genetic makeup of any given brain cell differs from all others. That realization may provide clues to a range of psychiatric diseases

By Simon Makin on May 3, 2017

https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/scientists-surprised-to-find-no-two-neurons-are-genetically-alike/?WT.mc_id=send-to-friend



Credit: solvod Getty Images

The past few decades have seen intensive efforts to find the genetic roots of neurological disorders, from schizophrenia to autism. But the genes singled out so far have provided only sketchy clues. Even the most important genetic risk factors identified for autism, for example, may only account for a few percent of all cases.

Much frustration stems from the realization that the key mutations elevating disease risk tend to be rare, because they are less likely to be passed on to offspring. More common

mutations confer only small risks (although those risks become more significant when calculated across an entire population). There are several other places to look for the missing burden of risk, and one surprising possible source has recently emerged—an idea that overturns a fundamental tenet of biology and has many researchers excited about a completely new avenue of inquiry.

Accepted dogma holds that—although every cell in the body contains its own DNA—the genetic instructions in each cell nucleus are identical. But new research has now proved this assumption wrong. There are actually several sources of spontaneous mutation in somatic (nonsex) cells, resulting in every individual containing a multitude of genomes—a situation researchers term somatic mosaicism. “The idea is something that 10 years ago would have been science fiction,” says biochemist James Eberwine of the University of Pennsylvania. “We were taught that every cell has the same DNA, but that’s not true.” There are reasons to think somatic mosaicism may be particularly important in the brain, not least because neural genes are very active.

A paper published April 27 in *Science* by a group founded two years ago—The Brain Somatic Mosaicism Network (BSMN)—outlines a research agenda for using new technologies to explore the genetic diversity found in each cell, and to investigate what links, if any, tie such mutations to a variety of neurological conditions. “The field was abuzz with interest in exploring mosaicism but there was no money,” says Thomas Lehner, director of the Office of Genomics Research Coordination at the National Institute of Mental Health, which is now devoting \$30 million in funding to BSMN over the first three years, two of which have elapsed.

The consortium consists of 18 research teams at 15 U.S. institutions with access to repositories of postmortem brain tissue taken from healthy people and others with schizophrenia, autism, bipolar disorder, Tourette’s syndrome or epilepsy. Each team is tackling different samples. “There’s a lot of new technology application and development involved, and a ton of data that will become a resource,” Lehner says. “We also wanted to understand if there’s an association with new technology, so we encouraged researchers to include brain banks of individuals with various neurological conditions.”

Studies that preceded the consortium have confirmed mosaicism is commonplace. One report estimated there may be hundreds of changes in single letters of genetic code (single nucleotide variants, or SNVs) in each neuron in mouse brains. Another found over a thousand in human neurons. These findings suggest somatic mosaicism is the rule, not the exception, with every neuron potentially having a different genome than those to which it is connected. A primary cause of somatic mutations has to do with errors during the DNA replication that occurs when cells divide—neural progenitor cells undergo tens of billions of cell divisions during brain development, proliferating rapidly to produce the 80 billion neurons in a mature brain. The image of each cell carrying a carbon copy of the genetic material of all other cells is starting to fade—and for good reason. Genetic sequencing does not normally capture the somatic mutations in each cell. “You get a sort of average of the person’s genome, but that doesn’t take into account any brain-specific mutations that might be in that person,” says study lead author Michael McConnell of the University of Virginia.

A 2012 study found somatic mutations in the brains of children with hemimegalencephaly, a developmental disorder in which one hemisphere is enlarged, causing epilepsy and intellectual disability. The mutations were found in brain tissue, but not always in blood nor

in cells from unaffected brain areas, and only in a fraction (around 8 to 35 percent) of cells from affected areas. Such studies, showing somatic mutations can cause specific populations of cells to proliferate, leading to cortical malformations, has researchers wondering whether somatic mutations may also play roles in more complex conditions.

Mature neurons stop dividing and are among the longest-living cells in the body, so mutations will stick around in the brain. “In the skin or gut, cells turn over in a month or week so somatic mutations aren’t likely to hang around unless they form cancer,” McConnell says. “These mutations are going to be in your brain forever.” This could alter neural circuits, thereby contributing to the risk of developing neuropsychiatric disorders. “In psychiatric disease we don’t know that much yet, and that’s largely the goal [to find an answer],” McConnell says. “It’s a good hypothesis but it’s going to require this big, multi-team effort to really address it.” To investigate, the consortium will sequence brain DNA from control and patient samples. “Before you can get to your destination you have to have a map, and this is going to help build that map of somatic mutations that have potential for influencing neural functioning and disease,” says Eberwine, who was not involved in the new research. “So this consortium is critically important for neuroscience.”

One question to be explored is whether genes associated with a brain disorder may harbor somatic mutations. The fact specific genes only explain a small proportion of cases may be because researchers have only been looking in the germ line (sex cells), McConnell says. “Maybe the person doesn’t have the mutation in their germ line, but some percentage of their neurons have it.” Somatic mosaicism may also contribute to neural diversity in general. “It might explain why everybody’s different—it’s not all about the environment or genome. There’s something else,” says neuroscientist Alysson Muotri of the University of California, San Diego, who is not part of the consortium. “As we understand more about somatic mosaicism, I think the contribution to individuality as well as the spectrum [of symptoms] you find in, for example, autism, will become clear.”

Somatic mutations can occur in multiple circumstances. They may emerge during DNA replication or from DNA damage (caused by free radicals or environmental stresses) combined with imperfect repair machinery. In addition to SNVs, mutations known as “indels,” involving insertions and deletions of small DNA sequences (typically tens of nucleotides), also occur frequently. Larger, rarer mutations include structural changes in chromosomes, either in the form of gains or losses of whole chromosomes or copy number variants (CNVs), in which the number of repetitions of long chunks of DNA (covering multiple genes) is altered. Within genomes there are also “mobile genetic elements” that act almost like parasites, jumping around or making copies of themselves and inserting themselves elsewhere in the genome, seemingly to ensure their survival. These strange entities are an active field of research in their own right: they are important here because they can cause somatic mutations, including a type known as mobile genetic element insertions, or MEIs. They are switched on in the same way as genes involved in producing new neurons, making them especially active in the brain during development.

The paper outlines three methods for studying these mutations: The first involves using technologies to sequence a whole genome from bulk brain tissue. This technique can detect many variants but the rarest types are diluted by the mass of cells in bulk tissue. “Large CNVs and mobile elements are much more difficult to detect in bulk tissue than SNVs,” McConnell says. Also, this method cannot reveal how mutations vary between cell types. This can be partly solved using a technique known as “sorted pools,” which sorts out neurons from other unwanted cell types. The most important recent advance that will

aid the consortium, however, is the advent of technologies that allow the genomes of individual cells to be sequenced. “By going into single cells we can compare [what we find] to the neighboring cell, and say: ‘Aha, they’re different!’

That’s the advance that allows us to really move forward,” Muotri says. “I’m very excited—this is the beginning of something completely new in biology and neuroscience.” The project is funded until 2020, and will make all data publicly available—and for some results that should be in 12 to 24 months. “Around 10,000 sequencing data sets will be generated, and we’ll be making that available in a database for the scientific community to dig in more deeply,” McConnell says. There are also plans to collaborate with other NIMH initiatives including BrainSpan, which maps gene expression during brain development, and psychENCODE, which is mapping the brain epigenome (environmentally driven modifications of DNA that influence gene activity without changing the genetic code). “This is supposed to initiate an important area of research,” Lehner says. “We hope it will give us a landscape of mosaicism in the brain and insights into the contribution of mosaicism to mental disorders, but I don’t expect to have all the answers.” Such insights may ultimately lead to the discovery of new genetic targets for treating a range of hard to treat disorders.

“This is exploratory research, we’re learning about the phenomenon,” Muotri says. How important it will be is not clear at this stage but “by figuring out how it works we may reveal new therapeutic opportunities.

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From: "Jay E. Roye" jayroye@yahoo.com

MIT 3D PRINTING TECHNOLOGY COULD BUILD HOMES ON THE MOON

BY STEPHANIE MLOT, 05.05.2017

https://www.geek.com/tech/mit-3d-printing-technology-could-build-homes-on-the-moon-1698549/?utm_source=email&utm_campaign=whatsnewnow&utm_medium=title

MIT researchers designed a system that can 3D print the basic structure of an entire building.

Dwellings built with this technology could be produced faster and at lower cost than traditional construction methods, according to the university.

It also allows for complete internal and external customization, using different materials for optimum strength, insulation, and other properties.

The ultimate goal, the researchers said, is to enable development of new types of buildings otherwise unfeasible via traditional approaches.

As described in the journal Science Robotics, the free-moving system features a highly controllable robotic arm that can pour concrete, spray insulation, and complete other menial tasks to erect an “object of any size,” MIT reported.

Eventually, the program will be self-sufficient; an autonomous robot that can prepare the building surface and acquire local materials—ideally in remote, developing regions or disaster relief areas.



MIT researchers designed a system that can 3-D print the basic structure of an entire building (via MIT)

Lead researcher Steven Keating, a mechanical engineering graduate, hopes the MIT-branded system may one day visit “the moon or Mars or Antarctica, and it would just go out and make these buildings for years.”

In the meantime, though, “we also wanted to show that we could build something tomorrow that could be used right away,” he said in a statement.

“The construction industry is still mostly doing things the way it has for hundreds of years,” Keating continued. “With this process, we can replace one of the key parts of making a building, right now. It could be integrated into a building site tomorrow.”

And, more importantly, it could provide a level of customization that human contractors typically don’t—creating walls that taper from bottom to top as their load-bearing requirements decrease or curves that help withstand strong winds, for example.

What researchers call a Digital Construction Platform (DCP) “challenges traditional building typologies such as walls, floors, or windows,” Neri Oxman, group director and associate professor of media arts and sciences at MIT, said.

The new 3D printing system can be adapted to vary the density of material being poured, and even mix different materials as it goes along.

“Making it faster, better, and cheaper is one thing. But the ability to design and digitally fabricate multifunctional structures in a single build embodies a shift from the machine age to the biological age—from considering the building as a machine to live in, made of

standardized parts, to the building as an organism, which is computationally grown, additively manufactured, and possibly biologically augmented,” Oxman said.

“So to me it’s not merely a printer, but an entirely new way of thinking about making, that facilitates a paradigm shift in the area of digital fabrication, but also for architectural design,” she added. “Our system points to a future vision of digital construction that enables new possibilities on our planet and beyond.”

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From: “Jim Woosley” jimwoosley@aol.com

MEDICAL STUDIES ARE ALMOST ALWAYS BOGUS

By Susannah Cahalan, May 6, 2017 | 1:04pm

<http://nypost.com/2017/05/06/medical-studies-are-almost-always-bogus/>



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How many times have you encountered a study — on, say, weight loss — that trumpeted one fad, only to see another study discrediting it a week later?

That’s because many medical studies are junk. It’s an open secret in the research community, and it even has a name: “the reproducibility crisis.”

For any study to have legitimacy, it must be replicated, yet only half of medical studies celebrated in newspapers hold water under serious follow-up scrutiny — and about two-thirds of the “sexiest” cutting-edge reports, including the discovery of new genes linked to obesity or mental illness, are later “disconfirmed.”

Though erring is a key part of the scientific process, this level of failure slows scientific progress, wastes time and resources and costs taxpayers excesses of \$28 billion a year, writes NPR science correspondent Richard Harris in his book “Rigor Mortis: How Sloppy Science Creates Worthless Cures, Crushes Hope, and Wastes Billions” (Basic Books).

“When you read something, take it with a grain of salt,” Harris tells The Post. “Even the best science can be misleading, and often what you’re reading is not the best science.”

Take one particularly enraging example: For many years research on breast cancer was conducted on misidentified melanoma cells, which means that thousands of papers published in credible scientific journals were actually studying the wrong cancer. “It’s impossible to know how much this sloppy use of the wrong cells has set back research into breast cancer,” writes Harris.

Another study claimed to have invented a blood test that could detect ovarian cancer — which would mean much earlier diagnosis. The research was hailed as a major breakthrough on morning shows and in newspapers. Further scrutiny, though, revealed the only reason the blood test “worked” was because the researchers tested the two batches on two separate days — all the women with ovarian cancer on one day, and without the disease the next. Instead of measuring the differences in the cancer, the blood test had, in fact, measured the day-to-day differences in the machine.

So why are so many tests bogus? Harris has some thoughts.

For one, science is hard. Everything from unconscious bias — the way researchers see their data through the rosy lens of their own theses — to the types of beaker they use or the bedding that they keep mice in can cloud results and derail reproducibility.

Then there is the funding issue. During the heyday of the late ’90s and early aughts, research funding increased until Congress decided to hold funding flat for the next decade, creating an atmosphere of intense, some would say unhealthy, competition among research scientists. Now only 17 percent of grants get funded (compared to a third three decades ago). Add this to the truly terrible job market for post-docs — only 21 percent land tenure track jobs — and there is a greater incentive to publish splashy counterintuitive studies, which have a higher likelihood of being wrong, writes Harris.

One effect of this “pressure to publish” situation is intentional data manipulation, where scientists cherry-pick the information that supports a hypothesis while ignoring the data that doesn’t — an all too common problem in academic research, writes Harris.

“There’s a constant scramble for research dollars. Promotions and tenure depend on making splashy discoveries. There are big rewards for being first, even if the work ultimately fails the test of time,” writes Harris.

‘Promotions and tenure depend on making splashy discoveries. There are big rewards for being first, even if the work ultimately fails the test of time.’

This will only get worse if funding is cut further — something that seems inevitable under proposed federal tax cuts. “It only exacerbates the problems. With so many scientists fighting for a shrinking pool of money, cuts will only make all of these issues worse,” Harris says.

Luckily, there is a growing group of people working to expose the ugly side of how research is done. One of them is Stanford professor John Ioannidis, considered one of the heroes of the reproducibility movement. He’s written extensively on the topic, including a scathing paper titled “Why Most Published Scientific Research Findings Are False.”

He’s found, for example, out of tens of thousands of papers touting discoveries of specific genes linked to everything from depression to obesity, only 1.2 percent had truly positive results. Meanwhile, Dr. Ioannidis followed 49 studies that had been cited at least a thousand times — of which seven had been “flatly contradicted” by further research. This included one that claimed estrogen and progesterone benefited women after hysterectomies “when in fact the drug combination increased the risk of heart disease and breast cancer.”

Other organizations like Retraction Watch, which tracks discredited studies in real time, and the Cochrane group, an independent network of researchers that pushes for evidence-based medicine, act as industry watchdogs. There is also an internal push for scientists to make their data public so it’s easier to police bad science.

The public can play a role, too. “If we curb our enthusiasm a bit,” Harris writes, “scientists will be less likely to run headlong after dubious ideas.”

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NEW 'GRAY DEATH' DRUG CAN KILL WITH A SINGLE DOSE, AUTHORITIES WARN

[Fox News](#), , Published May 08, 2017

<http://www.foxnews.com/health/2017/05/08/authorities-warn-on-dangerous-new-gray-death-drug-that-can-kill-with-single-dose.html>

A lethal new drug dubbed “gray death” by authorities that is dangerous to even touch with gloves is being eyed in overdose cases across Georgia, Alabama and Ohio. Investigators said the high-potency cocktail — which is comprised of heroin, fentanyl, the elephant tranquilizer carfentanil, and a synthetic opioid called U-47700 — can kill users with a single dose.

“Gray death is one of the scariest combinations that I have ever seen in nearly 20 years of forensic chemistry drug analysis,” Deneen Kilcrease, manager of the chemistry section at the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, told The Associated Press.

VANCOUVER POLICE SHARE 'SAD REALITY' OF OPIOID CRISIS

A spokeswoman for the agency told the Associated Press that they’ve seen 50 overdoses cases involving gray death over the past three months. Users can inject, swallow, smoke or snort the drug, which varies in consistency and looks like a concrete mixture.

The Ohio coroner’s office told the news agency that a compound similar to gray death has been coming in for months, with at least eight samples matching the drug mixture. A user can buy the lethal cocktail for as low as \$10 on the street, Forbes reported.



"Gray Death" comes in various consistencies and often looks like a concrete mixture. (Fox 2 Detroit)

Law enforcement officials believe a price drop led users to switch from prescription painkillers to heroin, which is often cut with fentanyl — a drug that is 50 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine. Most alarming to officials is that users do not have a way of telling if heroin is pure or laced with other drugs before using it. The same goes for the gray death.

"You don't know what you're getting with these things," Richie Webber, who overdosed on fentanyl-laced heroin in 2014, told The Associated Press. "Every time you shoot up, you're literally playing Russian roulette with your life."

With the nation already in the midst of an opioid epidemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and law enforcement departments around the country [have been on high alert for fentanyl-laced opioids](#), which are behind an increasing number of unintentional overdose fatalities in multiple states across the United States. [In 2015 alone, opioids](#), including prescription drugs and heroin, killed more than 33,000 Americans.

"Normally we would be able to walk by one of our scientists, and say 'What are you testing?' and they'll tell you heroin or 'We're testing fentanyl,'" Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine told The Associated Press. "Now, sometimes they're looking at it, at least initially, and say, 'Well, we don't know.'"

In Alabama, where authorities said they see an evolution of drug abuse and addiction across the state, they are trying to send a clear message about the danger of using gray death before it becomes widely available.

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“This is not a drug that you use to get high — if you put this drug into your body you will die, it will kill you,” Clay Hammac, Shelby County Drug Enforcement Task commander, [told ABC 33 40.](#)

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

AREN'T THE PRISON SYSTEM HAVING TROUBLES FINDING DRUGS TO HUMANELY PUT CONDEMNED PRISONERS TO DEATH. SOUNDS LIKE THE DRUG COMMUNITY HAS ALREADY SOLVED THAT PROBLEM FOR US. JUST 4 OR 5 TIMES THE NORMAL DOSAGE AND THE CONDEMNED PRISONER JUST GOES TO SLEEP. UT

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ABSOLUTELY & TOTALLY POLITICALLY INCORRECT & AS FAR TO THE CENTER AS YOU CAN GO!

From: “Tim Bolgeo” tbolgeo@epbfi.com

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ORDER TRUMP JUST SIGNED

Benjamin Goggin, May 4 2017, 12:20 PM

<http://digg.com/2017/trump-religious-liberty-executive-order>



White House

Today, Donald Trump signed a set of executive orders on "religious freedom". The orders were widely speculated to include a provision that would have allowed companies and religious groups to not serve or hire gay people, but have reportedly changed course. Here's what you need to know.

The Orders Have Two Primary Effects

President Trump's executive orders are reported to do two primary things.

1) One asks the Secretary of Health and Human Services Tom Price to amend regulations to exempt certain companies and religious groups from Obamacare's mandate to provide healthcare with contraception coverage. Price issued a statement saying he would take action responding to the order shortly. The issue gained attention when the Supreme Court ruled that Obamacare couldn't mandate that Hobby Lobby (a for-profit company) and Little Sisters of the Poor (a non-profit) provide health care coverage that conflicted with their religious beliefs. It's not clear what further actions the order takes, but it promises "regulatory relief". The Washington Post explains:

In the Hobby Lobby case, the court said some employers can opt out of paying for their employees' birth control coverage for religious reasons. Afterward, the Obama administration announced new rules to allow for the insurance company to pay for the contraception instead....The order calls for "regulatory relief" for those parties but does not spell out what that might entail.

2) The second order will reportedly aim to ease enforcement of The Johnson Amendment, which forbids religious organizations with tax-exempt status from endorsing political candidates. The New York Times writes:

Officials said Mr. Trump will direct the Internal Revenue Service to exercise "maximum enforcement discretion" so that religious organizations and other nonprofit groups are not subject to punishment for expressing political views during campaign seasons.

Under the law, religious groups that endorse political candidates are supposed to be investigated by the IRS, and may face a penalty of losing their tax-exempt status. According to The Washington Post, the law is rarely enforced: one audit and zero penalties have been imposed under the law since 2008.

The Original Order Was Expected To Include Anti-LGBT Provisions

Up until Wednesday, the bill was widely expected to include "religious liberty" provisions that would have allowed for discrimination against LGBT people based on religious beliefs. In February, a leaked draft of the order included broad language that would have supposedly allowed businesses and non-profits to deny services and other actions to LGBT people based on religious convictions. The order would have allowed groups to discriminate in the following situations:

...when providing social services, education, or healthcare; earning a living, seeking a job, or employing others; receiving government grants or contracts; or otherwise participating in the marketplace, the public square, or interfacing with Federal, State or local governments.

The draft order specifically mentioned objections to same-sex marriage, sex before marriage, beliefs around contraception, and trans identity.

Is This Vague Statement A Replacement For The Earlier Anti-LGBT Proposal?

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The order that Trump signed only has a single sentence that resembles the discriminatory language of the draft order that was published by The Nation in February.:

...it is the policy of the administration to protect and vigorously promote religious liberty. In Trump's statements made before signing the order, he said that he was instructing the Justice Department to research rules and regulations that would protect individual religious speech and actions — seemingly a nod the anti-LGBT portion which was left out.

It's unclear whether the Trump administration intends to return to the policies proposed in the draft later, or if this is a replacement for the original order.

THE ACLU HAS ALREADY VOWED TO CHALLENGE THE ORDER

In a statement, the ACLU's Executive Director Anthony Romero called the order "a broadside" to the separation of church and state.

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