

✚ Leading up to the 2016 presidential election, I wanted to see Bernie Sanders run against DT. The Democratic National Party overruled Sanders because he threatened to upset too many applecarts of their political privilege.

✚ Initially the Republican party also thought Trump would upset applecarts... but when he mopped the floor with one primary opponent after another, they realized it was either him or the Democrat. So the party got what for decades it had pined for – a businessman to run the show like a CEO.

✚ So here we are again. Yes, DT has done a lot of damage. One of the first things a new president does is visit England, where DT stood in front of Queen Elizabeth reviewing troops. Basically he farted in her face. Following up on the U.S. tradition of supporting death squads that disappeared family members in Latin America, he caged children. When a court ordered him to reunite families, he replied, “we’re not sure where they are.” And that was just his first month.

But I’d like to talk about the weather. That seems to be what people think “global warming” is. To the globe, the end result is warmer, so technically it’s accurate. What’s the big deal about five degrees warmer, I’ve seen 30 degree changes from one day to the next, it’s called a jacket, put it on or take it off.

I don’t care if DT has bad manners, as long as he enlists his talents in the real war. He hasn’t built his wall. He must know most of the illegal immigrants aren’t crossing in the dark. Most of them just overstay their visas. Picture them flying over the wall in a paper airplane.

Maybe he’s a visionary, building the wall for your future. If you’ve spent any time on planet earth, you know seeds need a certain amount of moisture and time at a certain temperature to sprout. And wisely or unwisely, plants banked on insects in their evolutionary strategy. The insects were faster and better for pollination than wind. But in the last few decades ago half the insects have disappeared.

There was no civilization until after agriculture began. Crops have started to fail in Central

America. Maybe DT thinks the trickle at the border will become a flood. But the U.S. will have its own crop failures. So the wall will be, in the words of General Patton, a “monument to human stupidity.”

But maybe DT has a secret project to solve climate change, like at Area 51 in Roswell. I remember a bunch of guys were going to go look. If plants banked on the insect DT to evolve, would they?

**The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do**

Not deciding is deciding. If (1) people are basically bad, and (2) the value of a thing is less when there is a lot of it -- like people -- well, both could be true, or either, or neither.

If people are destroying the world and fewer of them have any possibility of surviving in the future, you might as well collect guns. Make a wall and wait for “them” to come. I’m working on a puzzle with a piece missing.

**DT is John the Baptist for Bernie Sanders**

So how would the other applecart upsetter accomplish anything he’s advocating? One big difference is most people in the country agree with what Sanders is advocating. Why don’t they stand up for it? “Oh, gee, Medicare for all would cost \$100 trillion over 10 years? We can’t afford that.” We already are. If you count the insurance industry paper pushers, accountants, lawyers, CEOs, and stockholders... the important number is how much it would cost to transition to affordable health care.

All those insurance company bean counters would have to be re-trained to count other things. And the executives and big stockholders have enough to live on canned pork and beans for a little while. They can last a little longer by not having to buy politicians to pass insurance laws guaranteeing them continued obscene wealth. But since lobbyists typically get 100 to 1 returns on their investments, that won’t buy much pork and beans. Politicians are so cheap these days.

Just as an exercise, let me recreate the health insurance industry as if it never existed. We get together with a hundred friends and each pitch in \$100 a year, knowing that 1% of us will need a heart operation sometime, but not knowing who.

Now we need someone to watch the money, and we choose someone to take it to the bank. But he says, "hey, let's take it to Wall Street and make our money into more money." Naturally for his expertise in picking stocks he deserves to receive some of that money. Then he ventures into the field of statistics. He decides the money should only be used for triple bypass heart surgeries. So you save all the money that would have been spent on single and double heart bypasses, and the quadruple bypasses probably would have died anyway, so he deserves another bite from an even bigger pile of money. Ta-da: your life is all about someone keeping their job and someone else's money.

### **What is wisdom?**

I'm 68, and I don't feel wise. I feel 68. I remember the weather when I was young, and it's different now. Mainly in the extremes: a heatwave or rain lasting a week... not a month. Around 1990 I found a book at a local library about wildlife in Kent County, Michigan, where I live, that talked about minks and otters. I thought that's strange, and checked the copyright: 1970, about the time I moved here. I read some more and thought, no, not right. In smaller print it said reprinted from 1950, before I was born. I regret not acquiring a copy of that book.

I used to think the one animal about which there is nothing good to be said is the mosquito. My earliest sighting of the year for a mosquito is January. On a 10-minute walk in the woods, I once killed 22 that were biting me. Since then, I read that only pregnant female mosquitos bite, meaning at least 3/4 of the time mosquitos are pollinators. Probably more than 3/4; it's the same arithmetic principle as the toilet seat controversy. Coincidence? Meanwhile, I haven't seen a mosquito in a year.

### **MacDonald's ad: hamburgers grow on trees**

It's the same everywhere. A DT-wannabe in Brazil jailed the man opposing him for election, and now he's turning the Amazon jungle into a cattle ranch. But nothing will grow in Brazil after they burn down the jungle to get a few years of hamburgers from nitrogen-rich ash, because most of the energy and material of the jungle are above ground, and what little topsoil there is, will wash out to sea.

There's a new word scientists came up with, it's eusocial.

Science starts with observation and a hypothesis. The scientist says, "Hey, maybe there's a reason something happens the way it does, that no one imagines right now, and it's dot-dot-dot." He's telling you he sees something you can't see. No wonder you say, "Why should I believe you, you're seeing things."

### **You can be forgiven for thinking that whatever scientists said last is half wrong**

To me, Einstein's equation " $e=mc$ -squared" seems like a mashup of apples and oranges -- it's energy and weight and the speed of light. What bugs me is, speed is a measure of distance over time. I studied 3-D programming for awhile, the kind they use to make special effects for all sci-fi movies, and a lot of other movies these days. Say you're building a ship or a plane in your computer. As it moves you can specify directions like forward, vertically, and horizontally... also called yaw, pitch and roll. When they talk about time as a fourth dimension, I can't quite see which wave hitting your boat will send you back to Tuesday. What I see is will you drown or will you not go out in the storm to begin with?

Some engineers built the machine Einstein predicted, and when they pressed the button they got an atomic blast. The proof of science is in the engineering. They're just working on puzzles; they'll let you know when they're done.

So don't feel bad if you don't get it; 99% of us don't. After all, it takes millions of dollars and man-centuries of labor to build a nuke. If you were a hobbit facing an invincible dragon, you could build a giant tower of jenga, piling up hundreds of thousands of logs for 50 years. One day the dragon comes along and you pull one log out from the bottom, and voila -- squashed lizard. Genius lies in seeing the whole from start to finish all at once, but anyone can get there. In time.

But back to eusocial. You don't like that word, do you? Sounds like socialism.

The specifications are technical, but eusocial species are characterized as having the highest level of social organization. They include ants, bees, wasps, termites, some mole-rats, some shrimps, and... people. Actually, the tech specs don't quite jibe for humans, but what about humans is not different?

The ribbon-tailed astrapia is a bird of paradise species, about a foot long. The tail of the male is about a yard long, and has no known survival function. If a one-foot bird has a three-foot tail, its equivalent in a 6-foot human would be an 18-foot tail. But it evolved because females tend to choose males with longer tails. I would characterize it as a case of genetic exuberance. The bird's DNA is so robust that it could afford to splurge on a body part with no rational or utilitarian purpose.

But now species that evolved under condition A are having to adapt to condition B. They will all need genetic exuberance to not go extinct.

But no, you're not a social creature, much less a socialist. You're a rugged individualist who knows his needs and desires, and everybody else has the same needs and desires, and everybody knows that and should just shut up and respect your freedom and dignity.

✂ And if someone has the bare-faced cheek to question your obvious wisdom, you need to band together with all the right people under some strong man who will relegate the enemy to the dustbin of history under a tombstone saying "communism" or whatever insult pops into his head.

I don't have any faith in predictions of where humans will end up. I do know we have transformed most of the earth to serve short-term human purposes and polluted at will. Life on earth has evolved in sulphurous, boiling water under thousands of pounds of pressure at the bottom of the ocean, so I don't think we can destroy all life. If life is a food pyramid with us at the top, our fate may depend on how far down the pyramid we damage it.

We are in the sixth great extinction right now. 99% of the species that ever lived are extinct now — but they had millions of years to evolve into other species before disappearing. Right now they're disappearing faster than since 65 million years ago when the poster child for extinction, the dinosaurs, disappeared. They were the dominant life form, further up the food chain than the little mammals that lived under their feet. Their investment in size was wiped out, with none but lizards and birds surviving. That gave mammals, the second-stringers, the opportunity to move into a new ecological niche, and get bigger. And in 65 million years, we evolved. Along with millions of species that make up the Amazon rain forest, living off each other and continuing to evolve, all on one inch of topsoil. But greed only sees dollars, and wants to remove pieces from the tower of life and cash them in.

Science can shift the timetable of the changes that are coming, making it unpredictable. They're trying to figure out how to chemically remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere. Maybe they can invent new species to make up for the ones disappearing. Maybe they can take us off the planet altogether. But if we can't make it here, nowhere else will be easier. To paraphrase Voltaire, I see the best of all possible worlds being made worse.

The reason humanity's inclusion among the ranks of eusocial species is disputed is this: the other eusocial species have rigid distinctions between reproductive and non-reproductive castes. Like queens, drones and workers.

✂ People seem to forget the subtext of “grab ‘em by the pussy.” It was about what rich and powerful men can do. In a genetic evolutionary setting, women benefit from associating with rich and powerful men. The offspring and the genes continue regardless of whether the woman was persuaded or not, perhaps to the exclusion of a man's genes who was only intelligent, and not rich or powerful. But do you think that will save your children? I wouldn't say that's dumb; dumb is too good a word for it. Dumb can mean mute.

### **You have an app for that**

✂ You don't need a pot of gold to understand. You need a brain that understands arithmetic. The difference between arithmetic and mathematics is that arithmetic is what I understand and mathematics is what I don't. No, you need a pot of gold to NOT understand arithmetic, as DT proves daily.

When did intelligence start meaning secret information? Well, this is no secret: when women have reproductive freedom, they have a higher standard of living. Sounds like maybe they can make intelligent choices.

But a big strong man doesn't need other people to choose, or even think. So if you're a frat boy at a party and you see some drunk girl who is otherwise acceptable, you go for it. Because you may never see another opportunity to promulgate your genes with so little future expenditure of energy -- who is going to know? Leaving you free to double your gene promulgation elsewhere. This is not thought; this is genes. Everyone's doing it. And that's why you belong on the Supreme Court.

Richard Nixon once said, “If the president does it, it's not a crime.” Because around the same time some lawyer at the Department of Justice wrote a memo saying, “Hey, the president appointed my boss, the attorney general, so how could I ever charge the president with

a crime? Why, it would just be wrong.” Later Nixon said, “I am not a criminal.” So given the choice of president or criminal, the choice America made for him was unemployment.

### **Ouch yer ass**

When the Supreme Court gave Florida to Bush, the Republicans announced, “The adults are in charge again.” The Republican Party used to stand for something. Like fiscal responsibility and rectitude, which means a stick up the ass in order to stand straight.

When FDR started the New Deal they freaked out: “Too much money!” FDR solved the problem by taking the US off the gold standard. Meaning before you hand a man a piece of paper money and tell him to fill a pothole, you no longer had to go dig some more gold out of the ground to guarantee that paper. So for the next 50 years the Republicans continued to scold and warn about the irresponsible and naive Democratic Congress.

### **Then they got tired of losing**

✂ They stopped saying the word democratic. They hurled the word democrat, little flecks of vitriolic spittle flying every time. Debating Carter, Reagan interrupted with “there you go again.” Not really a debate if you don't let the other finish a thought before nitpicking a word. I haven't seen a debate since. That thing where Hilary was speaking and DT crept across the stage and up behind her, looming like a Halloween ghoul? Clown show.

Now the Republicans are just the party that wins. No standards. No gold, no manners, no morality. And no facts. Remember the DT mouthpiece talking about “alternative facts?” I don't understand irony.

I understood “all politics is local” when it was true. But guess what, the internet has changed the world. Who remembers the good old Soviet days? As long as they could squelch dissent, the government just made up whatever they wanted. But now the down-sized product, Russia, can’t suppress information. So the Russian government did the next best thing: they added to it. They flooded the country with so much misinformation that people became apathetic.

### **There, there, don’t worry your pretty little head about it**

Well, maybe. I don’t live in Russia. But we know that Facebook helps its clients micro-target people, and you don’t need gold. They take money. And nobody knows anything about it but Facebook. And they’re just writing algorithms, too busy to notice.

In 1970 everybody was reading “The Greening of America,” a non-fiction book by Charles Reich. Wikipedia now calls it “a paean to the counter-culture,” but it was about the future. Which I guess is now the present. I didn’t buy the rosy picture coming down the pike, but what stuck with me was one little cloud on the horizon... information overload.

What do you do with too much information? You put it on a computer and sort it out. Wait. We’re little people, we don’t program. In fact, our computers are delivering more information every millisecond. Or as Google puts it, 884,000 results in 0.47 seconds. But if the answer you need is not in the first few results, it probably isn’t there. Maybe in a century Google will be wise. Meanwhile, I have books that are older than me, and 10 times older than Google.

### **Should I stay or should I go?**

I knew from campouts in the boy scouts and the army that the weather was trying to kill me. Why would you respect something when your job is to survive it?

Humanity spread across the globe in less than an ice age. In geological time, that’s virus-like speed. We wiped out other species as we

went. But each tribe faced choices: move on, or stay and live within the requirements of an ecosystem.

I’ve heard that indigenous people chose the latter, to stay and live within, and therefore they’re the wise ones we should follow.

My tribe chose the former, and moved on. They came to America from Germany and Ireland. To escape slaughter in some war of political redistribution, or was it because the family cow died? I don’t even know why. But there are people who have lived for thousands of years, right here.

We’re out of frontiers. We’re standing on a cliff. You act like you’ve been asked to jump. All you have to do is turn. All you have to do is change.

Come on, you know how to change. You collected 100 guns, 1,000 cans of pork and beans, and 10,000 bullets. To turn away poisoned air and water and radiation, you need the right number.

I like to deconstruct movies. If you consider all nine Star Wars episodes as a single movie, my problem is motivation. The guys with “the force” won because they were willing to use the dark side as well as the light. They killed their enemies, too, didn’t they? Deifying the darkness is just an obsessive compulsion.

### **You don’t know the power of the dark side**

And yet some creature (or machine) at the bottom of a hole is tweeting smart and cruel things like he knows a shortcut to truth or reality. “Greed is good” is smart and cruel and dumb. I could explain, but I’d need charts and graphs...

Alright, let’s define our terms. If  $A = B$ , does  $B = A$ ? In what world does good mean greed?

## **Eat your next door neighbor but don't forget to say grace**

Let's try: if  $A = B$ , and  $B = C$ , then  $A = C$ . Greed is predictable. Predictable is good. Therefore greed is good. Well, predictability depends on controlling variability. If capitalism requires corporations to destroy competitors, shouldn't we convert the other inhabitants of our cul-de-sac to a protein resource?

We're not animals, I hear you cry. We have ethics, and religion to show us which ethics are right, and when to apply them, if at all.

How did our ancestors pass down rules about what to do and what not to do? Passing on stories, like "don't kill and eat animals with cloven hooves, because God says don't." But was the intent to breed and propagate another animal because it's more efficient or sustainable? Isn't it interesting that "barely-historic" is used as an indication of "pre-historic." But now we're thoroughly modern, and we can safely say we've reached the end of history and the perfect religion.

It's Christianity. Where else can a man find comfort in the thought of working the rest of his life to raise a child he didn't sire? It's probably for the best, since you'll never really know. Why, it's a veritable social contract: shut up, and we won't laugh at you.

Okay, I'm a little sarcastic about the perfectibility of religion. Growing up Catholic, I couldn't respect Protestants when they proclaimed they'd taken truth and given it a make-over to correct its faults. That would kinda violate the assumptions of any religion. Later, I noticed that the talk of many Jews sounded like philosophy, more like "What if?" than about deity worship. Then there's the latest and most correct religion, Islam, where one of their favorite names is Abdullah, translated as slave of god. But they all let us talk to each other without using the word "you."

## **Why sci-fi?**

What if? That's where it starts. I used to think the facists popping up everywhere were the result of abuse as children. If not physically,

then mentally. As devotees of brutal power, why did lower echelon Nazis follow Hitler so enthusiastically? I think it was because they religiously believed that power belongs to the most brutal, and since they were slightly less brutal, they owed obeisance to Hitler. And those lower in the pecking order owed obeisance to them. Together, they would rule everyone else. Like an axe handle bound with additional wooden staves for extra strength -- the original facses.

Individuals must carry the genes to win through, but every species' survival is still a struggle. When predators sought to convert us to a protein resource, the genes for biggest and baddest were beneficial. Brutality to each other was not fatal and the important thing was to grow the population.

But now we've taken over the world, and there are no more frontiers. There is no "away" where you can throw your garbage that is not someone else's back yard. If there is no "other," or enemy, or direction, the brutes must imagine them. The alternative is rage that consumes itself.

A different set of skills is required for the future. I wonder if the impulses of brutes can be redirected in a socially useful way... sublimated is the technical term... until women have had time to remove those genes from the gene pool.

I can't point to the gene in men which expresses itself as aggression, but like the male's tail in the bird of paradise, it does seem to be sex-linked. Sounds like a tall order for mere females. It would take time, which we don't have enough of, with the world changing under our feet.

One searches for an out, for a way to go, and after all these years I know when it comes to taking advice, I prefer my own counsel, and I'm terrible at taking orders. But it sounds like a Lysistrata moment.

I see you scurrying rat-like through the mud under the burned towers of corporate greed with your precious rifle, to be sure you're the last to die. I'm right behind you.

✂Gee, I hope I don't sound threatening to the baddest ruggedest individualests. I sure hope they get everything they want before karma catches up with them. Karma is a religious concept I sometimes entertain. I imagine Saddam Hussein or Hitler feeling depressed because they couldn't do even more damage. I imagine DT in prison where he makes a reality TV show that he can't make any money from because felons aren't allowed to profit from their crimes. But it's just daydreaming and it won't matter and if I have the opportunity I will give God a hand and send DT straight to hell. Then the light of day would shine on the millions-long daisychain of power worshippers.

### **Do you get as much pleasure from your gun when it's cold as when it's hot?**

You don't seem to mind waiting. You've heard there's an existential threat to the earth, or at least many threads of the tapestry. Millions of species will disappear, maybe including us, because what was will be changed forever. Is this one of those "alternative facts," so you just deny it exists? It would be like a robber telling you at gunpoint, "Give me your money," and your reply is, "Unicorns eat rainbows." If it exists, you're as useful as a broken clock.

Remember when DT said he's better because he's a genius, but that wasn't superlative enough because there's lots of geniuses, so he chimed in, "a very stable genius." Wow, like three-part harmony... must have been a real wet-dream. Grab your gun and wait for the "others." At least you can have some fun.

Reminds me of a corporal who thought he knew better than his generals. Before he put a bullet in his brain Hitler declared, "The German people do not deserve to rule the world." Whether those people included himself is a toss-up, as it later became known he was part Jewish. Back then you could suppress information if you controlled newspapers and radio.

### **"If we had some ham, we could have ham and eggs, if we had some eggs"**

You know you can't trust "them." Because you know they can't trust you. You've heard the question whether people are good or bad. It

must be very instructive, gnawing on your gun barrel.

By the time your teeth-gnashing is over and you finally have a target for your AR-15, you'll be dead because two other strong men who are always right go with nuclear first strike. We've already got one.

Here's an example of why memory's funny. See if you can figure out why -- but no using search engines!

Someone once said that one man, who probably lived sometime in the 1700s, was the last man who could know everything, before science made things complicated. If any humans long survive, which is looking increasingly unlikely, there may be some (again?) who know everything.

Why? Because in a destroyed world, there will be so much less to know. Or you could work with others to make the best of a diminishing world.