

Chomping on Food for Thought vs. Just Deserts

Written by Alex Baer

Tuesday, 25 February 2014 15:52

It's nice of the universe to cut me some slack now and again. Usually, life serves up swarms of fastballs quicker than a bank of berserk robo-pitchers in a major league batting practice, making me the unwitting mole in the Whac-A-Mole game, getting bonked witless, and scared, um, excretion-less.

Whatever. Life is probably quite good at throwing racetrack walls at you, too, just as you're punching out of the turn, just in time to catch sight of the slippery, surprise pool of motor oil now under your racing slicks -- apparently and simultaneously, according to your vision, both beneath and above your cartwheeling car frame as it bash-dances on the track.

Yeah, I've hit that same wall, on fire, and at a high rate of speed, as it is said. Life has no compunctions about such things. I try to not take things personally, even when it is damn personal and completely unpersonable.

Usually, The News is the instigating propellant in this mad equation of consciousness. I have no idea what 9 out of 10 doctors may make of things, but, for me, The News makes me *foamingly* loco about 479 times out of 10, not to put too fine a point on it.

The plan here: Impossible math counters insane developments -- I hope -- or, at least provides some sort of interim shield, like zombies passing up unhealthy hosts. The more I stroke out at The News, the universe provides more counterbalancing fluff pieces.

I always know when I'm hitting my maximum limits on global-and-local inanity and and downright insanity when I find myself suddenly drowning in snack-package, so called "fun" sized bites of sugary, nonsense news. How else to explain all the crazy puff pieces that seem to have homing instincts, seeking me out, just in time, before my brainpan gets broiled?

It's the universe, I just know it, sensing that I am building dangerous levels of steam for my aging boilers to contain, takes little last-minute pity, and throws me some antacids, chucks me something for acid reflux, and parachutes in some crates of Pepto.

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Pity they don't make Milk of Amnesia. Or Liquid Smote. Those are two products that would become mainstays in my cupboards. I'd be happy to provide them my Seals of Approval for Enhanced Sanity, Security, and Survival.

Anyway, the respite is appreciated, just as a tireless competitive-eating champion appreciates an all-you-can-eat buffet after a month's fasting. Whether these lighter-than-air tidbits are food for thought, or are my just desserts, I haven't a clue. I am notoriously bad at ordering from the menu of life. Life, is fine with that, and takes a delicious, malicious pleasure in burning my toast and scorching my buns.

So, after the gristle-and-bone-spur entrees, I'm always relieved, if not deliriously pleased, to see what will show up on the rollaway cart -- appetizers, puff pastries, coffee and brandy...

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You know, come to think of it, I'm at a loss to explain why it is we have competitive eating events in this country. You don't find such things in Bangladesh, Botswana, or Burundi, say. Of course, obesity is probably pretty low there, too.

Must have something to do with the rainbow arc of choices amidst our great plenty here, and the crazy-quilt cornucopia that capitalism still creates, and caters, for those with the cash.

Once again, we could learn a thing or two from other countries, once we allowed as how it is possible for superior ideas to exist beyond our borders, beyond our imaginations, beyond our tunnel vision.

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So, for me, it always boils down to the same old loopy, looping scenario:

- Observe the Middle Class becoming extinct
- Look at the crush of increasing numbers of poor
- Grasp the triggers, the cascading issues, the interlocking forces at work
- Understand the widening gap of income and wealth distribution
- See the ongoing consolidation of power and resources at the top
- Take in the further unfair, imbalanced tipping of the level playing field
- Fathom the ignorance, the apathy, the dumbing down, the powerlessness
- Learn how reality is shaking out for a clear majority of the country
- Realize the answer comes from people banding together, acting as one
- Know that those at the top will prevent any and all unifying actions
- Perceive the only option is to wait for historical cycles to catch up
- Comprehend the best option: Encourage education, pass the baton, wait it out.

After all, one can only hit the wall just so many times, on fire, shattered, before there's no car left. Funny thing that's not so funny? I keep remaking my car. Over and over and over.

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So, while we're waiting for History to set up the steam table, dish out some fresh offerings, and hope not too much chaff, and nothing too chafing, comes from the chafing dishes on the buffet line at Life's Restaurant, here are today's specials:

Seven-ton mango missing: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/26324023>

The disease-fighting cake: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/3277967.stm

Make them eat cake, in Paris no less: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-12635496>

Cake stolen; taken from Leek:

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<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-stoke-staffordshire-26316689>

Let them eat polystyrene: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-sussex-14043466>

Full-sensory scarfing: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/0/20253159>

Tales of the Spamming 'Fridge: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-25780908>

Tales of the Spamming Python: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=anwy2MPT5RE>

The Spam (R)(TM)(C)(SM) Museum -- careful, don't hurt yourself on all those "registered" symbols: <http://www.spam.com/spam-101/the-spam-museum>

Hormel at the movies: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6gnFO11JY>

Mac & cheese goes Glam: http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/glam_mac_and_cheese_92848

Always use a forklift when you eat: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-26282532>

The Hemingway burger: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-magazine-monitor-26160596>

Food porn: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-26189607>

How *munchies* works:

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<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2014/02/10/274660785/munchies-neuroscience-why-the-scent-of-a-burger-gives-us-a-high>

Subway stretches a bread point no more: <http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/06/health/subway-bread-chemical/>

You put *what* on your sandwich?!

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2014/02/10/274725631/sandwich-monday-subways-fritos-chicken-enchilada-sub>

Growing out of the food desert: <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2014/02/10/273046077/takes-more-than-a-produce-aisle-to-refresh-a-food-desert>

OK, show's over -- now, release the garlic hunters!

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-25915354>

Give it to Abe -- he'll eat anything:

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2014/02/17/277059262/what-honest-abes-appetite-tells-us-about-his-life>

First, the threatened Velveeta crisis - now beer, too? <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/why-you-wont-be-drinking-a-bud-during-the-super-bowl-2014-01-31?reflink=e2emsn>

Protein martinis for all, barkeep:

<http://www.marketwatch.com/story/would-james-bond-drink-a-quinoa-martini-2013-09-20?reflink=e2emsn>

Talk about experiencing life in a bottle: <http://www.drinkneuro.com/the-drinks/sleep/>

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There go the fish stories:

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/kruhwich/2014/02/05/257046530/big-fish-stories-getting-littler>

And, a special bonus category for coffee, featuring Starbucks, the not-Starbucks, and the continuing climb on the Mount Dumberest of the *du*
mb-and-dumberer-ing
of America:

Ouch goes the coffee deal: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-24921098>

Can't wait for the Stupefyingly Dumb Starbucks, the Really Stupefyingly Dumb Starbucks, the Original Really Stupefyingly Dumb Starbucks... <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-26131013>

Dumb is as dumb does -- shop for a favorite *dumb*:

http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=dumb+starbucks&sm=1

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I really don't seek these things out. They find me. This both scares hell out of me and offers some sort of strange, queasy, Invisible-Hand-of-the-Universe comfort.

... just like finding out what's been lurking in Aunt Bertha's famous super-secret-ingredients, mixed grill, smoked-'n'-poached, Flora-and-Fauna casserole all these years.

Today's Bonus: If you think this piece has been too darn flip, let's flip-flop things around this time and put the really *serious* food for thought way down here, where the fun stuff usually goes:

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Fukushima update: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-26329323>

Bon appetit.