

## A Bad Case of the -shuns

Written by Alex Baer

Wednesday, 23 April 2014 20:34

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There are still plenty of ripping, searing, wrenching, and devastating problems on this singular space ship which we call home, and equally important challenges all among its incredibly motley, and sometimes endearing, crew, too. I get that. This stuff is absolutely not news to me. I learned to read quite a while back, using newspapers that -- dare I say it, even in irony? -- Adam and Eve used to cave-break their pet dinosaurs.

No, I have not slipped away in the night. I have not yet been allowed to sublease my apartment at the Sanity Arms. I have not yet checked out of the Human Hotel. I am, by the way, still dawdling around here at the By-and-By B and B, hoping that someone will present a final statement and then, hang around long enough to help me make some sense out of the thing.

Comprehension comes later, I hope. However, just now, I am trapped here, where life often feels like the waiting room for every tire installation joint I've ever inhabited: Crap coffee, crap chairs, lava-esque (in summer) or icicle-bound (in winter). It's the sort of a place with the kind of noise that makes fingernails on a blackboard seem soothing -- and where the place smells like it had its last change of air in 1639, by a galley mob fresh off a galleon, and where the ambience is an eye-crossing, nose-hair-depleting cross between gym locker stench, burning dog hair, and a berserk, shrieking offspring of sulfur and ammonia. Still in diapers.

*Does. □ Not. □ Compute.*

And yet, try as I might, understanding eludes me every bit as much as if I were try to speak aloud the ancient Egyptian language, based only upon my untrained eye looking at a wall filled with perplexing hieroglyphics, or by spying some stuttering chisel marks from overtired transcriptionists from King Tut's time, or from trying to decipher construction marks made by the equivalent of sheet rock hangers and interior decorators from a time when the Sphynx was new, sleek, and chic.

My general *bestumping puzzlements* take on a great pyramid in shape: Way up on top, at the peak, are a few big things, Incredibly Important Things, that are still vast mysteries on a cosmic scale. Then comes a big chunk of Really Important Things, and then Pretty Important Things, and so on, down the slopes of the general structure of my *befuddling bafflements*, until things start to pool around the base of the pyramid, and in great numbers.

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It is here, where items of relatively little importance, but great nuisance, collect under the couch cushions of my reality like tarnished pennies, half-popped popcorn kernels, and remote controls finally surfacing -- now that the matching base units have moved on to The Final Recycling, and soldiering on to the Great Unsoldering.

I walk away muttering some of the *shuns*: Foxification, deification and *religification*, *Republification*,  
bastardization,  
*Rushification*  
, crazy-ass nation, not enough vacation, no explanation, loopy nightmares not even  
*close*  
enough for publication... Definitely not for any passing  
*mentation*  
or even fleeting  
*emotionalization*  
, either...

*Does. □ Not. □ Compute.*

I have been beside myself so often, in waves of frustrated non-understanding, that I'm starting to think of myself as identical twins. Yes, I see myself coming and going. I am commuting a lot between the two poles of sanity, and my mileage not only varies, it just plain sucks.

I'm even starting to make up words to try to express what's happening in my woozy head. My latest invention? That would be *ignatience* (IG-nay-shens). Or *ignorance* (IM-nur-ens). Trying to combine ignorance and impatience is not as easy as one might first think, at least, not in speech and vocabulary. So far, it's happening a hundred times a second though, in the culture all around me -- with none of it escaping the notice of lunatic media, running as fast as it can to rush over and pick up the latest shiny streamer, then run all over hell with it, joyously, wildly, herky-jerky, like over-sugared kids at a birthday party, tottering around with pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey tags, looking for unprotected, unsuspecting adult posteriors to surprise.

I remain a permanently surprised pincushion, thanks to the media, over and over and over

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again, every single day. I am becoming tired of the media. I would like to someday sit down again, but have no idea how to pluck out this many donkey-tag quills. Reclining has become a blissful memory. I am too tired for sleep-walking. The best I can do is sleep-leaning. This may make me a pioneer, although I am not sure what of, except to say that I doubt I would want any part of it, if I were really still me. *See?*

*Does. □ Not. □ Compute.*

It's been building for some time now. It's not any one thing, although it sure seems like there's been an informal competition going on for some time now, with each new report trying to out-crazy the previous one.

- Suburban crimewatch patrols by the KKK ?
- Bonuses for IRS employees who fail to pay their taxes?
- Teenaged stowaway in an airplane wheel well?
- Big Universal Bang = Big U.S. Doubt?
- A homeless Jesus statue?
- Slap-Ass Friday in school?
- Fossil credits or else?
- One North Korean haircut fits all?
- North Korean embassy upset at barbershop ad?
- No tacos for Putin?
- GOP: Women should not be paid as much as men. *Huh?*

... plus, this just in: *The U.S. is an oligarchy.* Yes, and water is still wet. Gravity still works. And, the moon is not made of cheese -- even if the North Koreans take time out of their busy haircut-planning-and-grousing schedule, to learn to make French Emmental.

After a brush with The News anymore... well, let me say this: Without trying to be ethnically insensitive here, I can only say that I'm feeling like a de-hatted, de-toupeed bald guy in a room full of barbershop scalpels -- and not the ticket-selling kind, either.

It began in 1980s. Things hadn't been that great so far that decade -- decidedly schizophrenic, in fact. Mulletts paraded around on men's heads, *all business* up front, and *all party* in the back. President Reagan, a former union president, had already fired the air traffic controllers and

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started busting up unions.

For fun, he'd already blown the lid off the deficit, tripling spending while denouncing that spending, nearly snapping his neck with the terrific speed used to backtrack, and then turn away from the S & L debacles, all while using the bully pulpit to inspire national confidence in those same pickpocketed, burglarized institutions. He conned us into ponying up pools of money for retirement plans -- creating pools of money easily raided by investment cronies.

It was downhill from there. Things really picked up a head of speed when something called a *Rush Limbaugh*

took to the public airwaves in order to make fun of poor people, and the helpless, and to belittle intelligent thought, critical thinking, and overall rational contemplation -- all while beating the fear-and-scapegoats drum kit, helping himself to millions in paychecks in the process.

Thus the ooze of The Brain Drool Radio Rule began. Rush begat psycho after psycho. We've moved on to TeeVee Trauma Rules now, too, and are knee-deep in weeping psychos -- and very few viewers and listeners can say for sure which ones, if any, are play-acting. This is how much the control group, aka The Entire Country, has spun out of control. And, you know what? We're no longer bothering to steer into the skid. We're content to let the speeding 18-wheeler of the nation drift this way and that, sliding in and out of lanes of oncoming traffic, blowing through traffic lights, rolling through school zones and crowded crosswalks, crunching up onto sidewalks, bashing through awnings and storefronts...

*Does. □ Not. □ Compute.*

Today, despite small transfusions from legitimate brain trusts, *Rong-wing* hate radio continues to make its participants much wealthier than many nation-states, despite the bottled toxic sewage, flowing without end from its fouled, polluted headwaters -- the minds of con-men who have pledged allegiance to making more money, and to themselves. And that's it.

There is still no law requiring *Rong-wing* hate radio to identify itself as hazardous lies. That's because it's Entertainment -- even if the presentation is approached as broadcasted truth, justice, and the American way. Individual players justify and defend themselves as entertainers -- and, hey, if the public should believe them to be delivering the real, actual, no-kidding news of

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the day, and as the honest, common-sense truth, well, that's not  
*their*  
fault!

*Does. Not. Compute.*

But then, since February 2003, a Florida Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Fox, saying there was no obligation to tell the truth in news broadcasts. So: We should not be at all surprised that The Era of Incredulously Large Lies began in earnest on 12/12/2000, when the Supreme Court threw Democracy under the bus -- then invited tanks, half-tracks, APCs, and a herd of trumpeting elephants (all clad in GOP party-streamers and tinfoil hats) to roll over, shred, and stomp on the remains, while they're at it.

*Facts? □ Data? □ Perspective?* We don't even know when we're being lied to anymore. There is almost no way to tell. Few people have the resources, time, or energy to scour data pools and fish out schools -- or even minnows -- of truth. But, facts are needed to help keep logic alive. And facts must be dug out, one by one, and one person at a time, in an absurd DIY-News game combining elements of mini-golf, Monopoly, Clue, and Whac-A-Mole.

*Needle. □ Haystack.* Only the haystacks are on an infinite number of planets. Really far away. Only one needle. Ready to find it? *Begin.*

*Does. □ Not. □ Compute.*

*More?* OK: Critical thinking is out the window -- it's no longer taught, there are too many cultural distractions, just too many Big Lies permanently welded together, far too many Small Lies braided tightly, and triple-knotted, to know where to begin.

Propaganda-generation mills sprout under think-tank logos that sound genteel, honorable, and flag-colored, but operate under the auspices of self-involved, cutthroat operators scheming for revolving-door lobbyists fed by tax-stuffed corporations and trotted around by the idle rich. Memes and talking points feed the sound bytes, and sound bytes substitute for news. Everyone

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in the chain must be paid. *Hey, ☐ everyone -- take a pound of flesh as this thing goes by, and we'll see how far the carcass will go.*

*Lies of Mass Destruction. ☐ Bush-league stuff with big-league impact. ☐ Sky's the limit, all bets are off, money is speech, corporations are people, the planet is smothering... The world economies -- the poor and the middle class -- are being slow bled out while the rich are gorging on blood... Most people are either comatose, or conked on the head, unconscious, out cold, or scampering around for increasingly extinct cash...*

*And SCOTUS is all sewed up, all nice and tight.*

*Operation Dubya Pleasure, Dubya Fun: ☐ It's been a long time coming -- Mission Accomplished.*

*- Parting Apparitions -*

*The 1980s were the height of the mullet's popularity in continental Europe. ☐ This era, I have read, has been described as an age of singing, tattooed ☐ Swedish Flokati Rugs. There is no possible way I could ever hope to improve on that, in also describing America, from 12/12/2000 to present -- not even if I had access to Timothy Leary's heyday stash.*

This is Day 4,873: The -shuns are running me over, even as I try to run them down. *Medicatio*  
*n's* not the  
answer. Or  
*inebriation*

*Identification*

, of the culprits and goals, at least, would help, but only in the long run.

*Capitulation? ☐ Resignation? ☐ Concessions? ☐ Secession? ☐ Exhaustion? ☐ Prostration?*

More self-prostitution and business as usual, or is this the time for meaningful emancipation?

*Discretion*

or

*vulcanization? ☐ Action*

or

*deterioration? ☐ Depression*

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or  
*optimization?*

Absolute, total stupefaction, *now reinforced by millionaire-chatterbox liars:* □ *Talk about your breakthroughs in modern living and crowd control!* □ *My Lethal Limbometer* (\$19.95, via Better Homes and Handrails, and at all Mental Marts) *says the pole can't be set any lower, that the lowest common denominator has been reached -- just before the pole goes lower and the reach gets deeper...*

I check my paranoia at the door, and it keeps coming back, sniffing me out at the grocery store, the movies, the library, everywhere. I move to the next town, without leaving a forwarding address, and it tracks me down in nothing flat, a heat-seeker locked on my heart rhythm, like snuffling antipersonnel mines homing in on my brain waves. I may have to try moving to the next state -- and I'm not sure if that next state will be physical or mental. Or how much of me will be left to move. Or who will do the moving. Voluntary or not.

It's also looking like I'm going to have to get used to being totally *beside myself* a whole lot, to my being identical twins. Well, that way, at least, I can blame the newly-expanding paranoia on the other one, on my opposite number, on my other me, on my new twin. Sooner or later, my twin's going to have to settle down, get over itself, and just get used to me worrying -- twice as much as usual -- if we're paranoid  
*enough*

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After all, we'll now be thinking, and pacing, for two.

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KKK: <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/4/22/kkk-pennsylvanianeighborhoodwatch.html>

IRS bonuses:  
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/ashleaebeling/2014/04/23/miscreant-irs-employees-get-bonuses/>

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Teen stowaway: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-27100395>

Small bang: <http://apnews.excite.com/article/20140421/DADAKOLG0.html>

Homeless statue: <http://www.npr.org/2014/04/13/302019921/statue-of-a-homeless-jesus-startles-a-wealthy-community>

Slap-ass: [http://www.upi.com/Odd\\_News/2014/04/04/Slap-ass-Friday-is-an-issue-at-Las-Vegas-middle-school/9481396625017/?spt=secv=on](http://www.upi.com/Odd_News/2014/04/04/Slap-ass-Friday-is-an-issue-at-Las-Vegas-middle-school/9481396625017/?spt=secv=on)

Fossil credit: [http://www.upi.com/Odd\\_News/2014/04/02/SC-lawmaker-wont-let-mammoth-become-state-fossil-unless-God-is-credited-as-creator/2331396457296/?spt=secv=on](http://www.upi.com/Odd_News/2014/04/02/SC-lawmaker-wont-let-mammoth-become-state-fossil-unless-God-is-credited-as-creator/2331396457296/?spt=secv=on)

One haircut: <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-26747649>

Upsetting ad: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-27038723>

Say cheese: <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-27101634>

Putin-free taco stand: [http://www.upi.com/Odd\\_News/2014/04/04/Russian-President-Vladimir-Putin-banned-from-all-Mighty-Taco-locations/9551396626504/](http://www.upi.com/Odd_News/2014/04/04/Russian-President-Vladimir-Putin-banned-from-all-Mighty-Taco-locations/9551396626504/)

Pay fairness: <http://www.politico.com/story/2014/04/senate-blocks-paycheck-fairness-act-105529.html?hp=f1>



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Oligarchy nation: [http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/US/2014/04/16/The-US-is-not-a-democracy-but-an-oligarchy-study-concludes/2761397680051/?spt=mps\\_v=1](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2014/04/16/The-US-is-not-a-democracy-but-an-oligarchy-study-concludes/2761397680051/?spt=mps_v=1)

and:

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2013/05/billionaire-donors-political-power-dark-money>

Behold, the Power of the Mullet: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mullet\\_\(haircut\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mullet_(haircut))

### ***Today's Bonuses:***

I think I'm in love: <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-27066962>

A burning love: <http://www.npr.org/blogs/krulwich/2014/04/23/305859231/music-that-burns-lite-rally>

Paint me, play me: <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-26822067>