

February 26, 2014

John Fund highlights a moment in Ukraine when journalists were no longer able to lie for the regime.

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*"You probably want to hear a story from me about how with my bare hands I restrained a whole Berkut unit, and how one of the Berkut officers fell in love with me and I fell in love with him. But I'm going to tell you another story. About how with my bare hands I dragged the bodies of those killed the day before yesterday. And about how two of my friends died yesterday. . . . I hate Zakharchenko, Klyuev, Lukash, Medvedchuk, Azarov. I hate Yanukovych and all those who carry out their criminal orders. I came here today only because I found out that this is a live broadcast. I want to say that I also despise Inter because for three months it deceived viewers and spread enmity among citizens of this country. And now you are calling for peace and unity. Yes, you have the right to try to clear your conscience, but I think you should run this program on your knees. I've brought these photos here for you, so that you see my dead friends in your dreams and understand that you also took part in that. And now, I'm sorry, I don't have time. I'm going to Maidan (**Independence Square**). Glory to Ukraine."*

Danylyevych immediately tried to return to the night's topic of reconciliation. But he was stopped by guest Konstantin Reutsky, a human-rights activist from Luhansk. Reutsky agreed with Pankiv, saying that Inter journalists had "lied and distorted information about Maidan over the last three months." ...

Roger Simon says that after Ukraine we should think about the need for an American Spring. Pickerhead thinks that could happen when journalists here stop lying for the regime.

We are not in the situation of the Ukraine, however that turns out, but the events in that Eastern European country should remind us all of the sad condition of our nation, how much we now need an American Spring in the USA.

Not a Spring like the Arab Spring, of course, which was and is a nightmare beyond anyone's wishes, but something more like the original Prague Spring that remade the Czech Republic into the vibrant country and society it is today.

The Obama administration has been the culmination of the advancement of state intrusion into our lives that began roughly a hundred years ago and has reached such a point that the originality and the intentions of our country are barely recognizable. The results of this have been disastrous both economically and socially, most of all in terms of the personal freedom and liberty of our citizens.

We have gone backwards in many ways, not the least of which is that race relations have deteriorated during the administration of the first African-American president, largely due to state meddling. We are divided as we have never been since the Civil War, and for really no good reason.

The people aren't the problem. It's the state. ...

Charles Krauthammer examines the myth of settled science.

I repeat: I'm not a global warming believer. I'm not a global warming denier. I've long believed that it cannot be good for humanity to be spewing tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. I also believe that those scientists who pretend to know exactly what this will cause in 20, 30 or 50 years are white-coated propagandists.

"The debate is settled," asserted propagandist in chief Barack Obama in his latest State of the Union address. "Climate change is a fact." Really? There is nothing more anti-scientific than the very idea that science is settled, static, impervious to challenge. Take a non-climate example. It was long assumed that mammograms help reduce breast cancer deaths. This fact was so settled that Obamacare requires every insurance plan to offer mammograms (for free, no less) or be subject to termination.

Now we learn from a massive randomized study — 90,000 women followed for 25 years — that mammograms may have no effect on breast cancer deaths. Indeed, one out of five of those diagnosed by mammogram receives unnecessary radiation, chemo or surgery.

So much for settledness. And climate is less well understood than breast cancer. If climate science is settled, why do its predictions keep changing? And how is it that the great physicist Freeman Dyson, who did some climate research in the late 1970s, thinks today's climate-change Cassandras are hopelessly mistaken? ...

Howard Kurtz posts on the intolerant left that attempts to quiet Krauthammer.

Charles Krauthammer says it right up front in his Washington Post column: "I'm not a global warming believer. I'm not a global warming denier."

He does, however, challenge the notion that the science on climate change is settled and says those who insist otherwise are engaged in "a crude attempt to silence critics and delegitimize debate."

How ironic, then, that some environmental activists launched a petition urging the Post not to publish Krauthammer's column on Friday.

Their response to opinions they disagree with is to suppress the speech. ...

John Hinderaker of Power Line posts on yet another attempt by the left to silence critic - we allude to the Mark Steyn suit. You can follow the link and read Mark's latest brief. *As all the world knows, climate buffoon Michael Mann is suing Mark Steyn, National Review and others for disagreeing with him about global warming—not just disagreeing, but doing so in colorful language. As happens so often on the Left, Mann found himself losing the debate on a public issue of great importance. Rather than admit that he was wrong about the hockey stick—one of the most notorious errors, or frauds, in the history of science—he is trying to shut his opponents up through litigation.*

Steyn was unhappy with how the lawsuit was going, so he dismissed the lawyers that were representing him and National Review and is now pro se. Rather than engage in further procedural maneuvering, Mark wants to fight out what he sees as the central issue—free speech—in the court of public opinion. So yesterday another shoe dropped: Mark served an answer and counterclaim against Mann in which he requested damages from the discredited scientist. You can read the pleading [here](#). It is entertaining; it should be, Mark wrote it himself. ..

Salon on the foods supposed to be bad for us and turned out to OK, and even beneficial at times.

In the future, when we're zipping around the biosphere on our jetpacks and eating our nutritionally complete food pellets, we won't have to worry about what foods will kill us or which will make us live forever.

Until then, we're left to figure out which of the food headlines we should take to heart, and which should be taken with a grain of unrefined, mineral-rich sea salt. Low-fat or high-fat? High-protein or vegan? If you don't trust what your body tells you, remember that food science is ever evolving. Case in point: The seven foods below are ancient. But they've gone from being considered healthy (long ago) to unhealthy (within the last generation or two) to healthy again, even essential. ...

... Old Wisdom: Coffee equals caffeine equals bad for you.

New Wisdom: Coffee is loaded with antioxidants and other nutrients that improve your health. Plus, a little caffeine makes the world go round.

Why? Actually, most of the world never bought into the whole caffeine/coffee scare that made so many Americans start to swear off coffee, or heaven help us, switch to decaf. But these days, the U.S., chock full of Starbucks, has come around. Several prominent studies conducted over the last few years unearthed a bounty of benefits in the average cup of joe. As everyone knows, caffeine boosts energy. Based on controlled human trials, it has also been proven to fire up the neurons and make you sharper, with improved memory, reaction time, mood, vigilance and general cognitive function. It can also boost your metabolism, lower your risk of Type II diabetes, protect you from Alzheimer's disease and dementia, and lower the risk of Parkinson's. Whew.

3) Whole Milk

Old wisdom: High-fat milk lead to obesity. Exposing children to lower-fat options keeps them leaner and healthier and instills the low-fat habit.

New Wisdom: Ha

National Review

Ukraine, Changed Forever on Live TV

A journalist exposes the complicity of the media in covering up the regime's crimes.

by John Fund

Every revolution has moments where the hinge of history seems to swing wide and everything is different and the old regime is delegitimized. In Ukraine's revolution, the moment that's likely to be immortalized is when protestors charged police barricades in Kiev's Independence Square ("Maidan") last Thursday, reportedly capturing a number of police troops, only to have dozens of protesters then gunned down by snipers. Even a face-saving compromise brokered the next day by Western diplomats couldn't save President Viktor Yanukovich. His security forces withdrew their support, leaving him unguarded. At 2 a.m. last Saturday, helicopters ferried him and his stooges away from his Michael Jackson-style presidential palace to the Russophone eastern sector of Ukraine. He remains in hiding.

But for many Ukrainians, there was another moment when they realized the ground was shifting beneath them. It came last Friday evening, during one of the most popular talk shows on Inter, the most-watched Ukrainian network. Lidia Pankiv, a 24-year-old television journalist, was invited on by host Andriy Danylych to discuss the need for reconciliation following the agreement signed by Yanukovich and dissidents earlier that day. While reporting on the Maidan protests, Pankiv had helped persuade the Berkut riot police not to use further violence against the activists, and she had disclosed that one of the Berkut officers was now her fiancé. But reconciliation was not what Pankiv wished to discuss. As relayed by journalist Halya Coynash, Pankiv had a different message:

You probably want to hear a story from me about how with my bare hands I restrained a whole Berkut unit, and how one of the Berkut officers fell in love with me and I fell in love with him. But I'm going to tell you another story. About how with my bare hands I dragged the bodies of those killed the day before yesterday. And about how two of my friends died yesterday. . . . I hate Zakharchenko, Klyuev, Lukash, Medvedchuk, Azarov. I hate Yanukovich and all those who carry out their criminal orders. I came here today only because I found out that this is a live broadcast. I want to say that I also despise Inter because for three months it deceived viewers and spread enmity among citizens of this country. And now you are calling for peace and unity. Yes, you have the right to try to clear your conscience, but I think you should run this program on your knees. I've brought these photos here for you, so that you see my dead friends in your dreams and understand that you also took part in that. And now, I'm sorry, I don't have time. I'm going to Maidan. Glory to Ukraine.

Danylych immediately tried to return to the night's topic of reconciliation. But he was stopped by guest Konstantin Reutsky, a human-rights activist from Luhansk. Reutsky agreed with Pankiv, saying that Inter journalists had "lied and distorted information about Maidan over the last three months." Danylych tried to interrupt Reutsky, who went on to say that the protestors had tried for months to avoid bloodshed. "But what happened yesterday is a point of no return," Reutsky continued. "After that you can no longer say, 'Sorry, we got carried away, let's turn the page and start afresh without offense.' What happened yesterday is impossible to forget." Danylych, after shouting down Reutsky's further attempt to discuss the crimes committed by the government, changed the topic. But a chief media mouthpiece of the regime, owned by the president's oligarch backers, had been exposed. Hours later, the president fled his palace.

After the broadcast, several Inter journalists approached Reutsky and thanked him for speaking out. Earlier that day, 16 journalists at the network had issued an open letter disagreeing with Inter's coverage of the protests.

Reporter Halya Coynash points to the Yanukovich regime's record of media control and censorship: "It proved unnervingly easy within a matter of months of Yanukovich's [2010] election to remove most critical analysis, negative reports about those in power, and inconvenient information from television." Whatever new government is formed, that sorry record must not be repeated in a new Ukraine.

As someone who reported from Eastern Europe during the fall of Communist regimes there, I recognized a recurring pattern in the collapse a quarter century later of the regime in Kiev. Regimes can stay in power in an age of mass media only if they have enough murderers willing to gun down people in the street. Snipers were willing to kill their fellow countrymen in the streets around the Maidan last Thursday, but their superiors reached a breaking point when the shots didn't achieve the desired level of fear. "The shooting stopped when the security chiefs realized the game was over — not because they didn't have enough Kalashnikovs, but because they proved ineffective: For one person killed, many more came out on the Maidan," Maria Semykoz, a Ukrainian economist from Lvov, told me by e-mail.

Now that the regime is gone, Ukraine will face wrenching change. Even if Russia doesn't attempt to stir up separatist sentiment in Ukraine's Russophone regions, it has in the past shown it can play economic hardball. In recent years, it has limited imports from Ukraine, creating huge lines at customs posts on the border. At times during winter, Russia has cut off critical natural-gas shipments to Ukraine. The sway Russia holds is probably the main reason Yanukovich abandoned a trade treaty with the European Union last November in favor of a deal signed in December with Vladimir Putin. The financial assistance Putin promised in that deal would no doubt be withheld if the government in Kiev turned decidedly toward Europe and the West.

Ukraine's immediate problem is that it is on the edge of economic collapse. To become a normal nation anchored in the global trading system, Ukraine will have to endure decisive and deep economic reforms, including state spending cuts, privatization, and the implementation of a tax system that is simpler and less loophole-ridden.

"The problem is, the people will likely hate the politicians brave and honest enough to implement those reforms," Semykoz tells me. "We need now a generation of political kamikazes, who, like the protestors on the Maidan are ready to risk their future by doing the right thing today." It's not clear whether any such leaders are ready to step forward in Ukraine.

But, for now, there is cause to celebrate. The ghosts of Ukraine's Soviet past have not been banished, but they are fading. It's not a coincidence that Ukrainians are now tearing down dozens of Lenin monuments, though the statues remained standing at the time of Ukrainian independence in 1991 and even during the Orange Revolution of 2004. For the first time since independence, Ukrainians seem to be getting serious about putting individual rights and freedoms at the center of their political system. Here's hoping that the U.S. and Europe, both of which have largely avoided engagement with Ukraine in recent months, will now step forward to help the Ukrainian people succeed in their aspirations.

Roger L. Simon

After Ukraine, We Need an American Spring

We are not in the situation of the Ukraine, however that turns out, but the events in that Eastern European country should remind us all of the sad condition of our nation, how much we now need an American Spring in the USA.

Not a Spring like the Arab Spring, of course, which was and is a nightmare beyond anyone's wishes, but something more like the original Prague Spring that remade the Czech Republic into the vibrant country and society it is today.

The Obama administration has been the culmination of the advancement of state intrusion into our lives that began roughly a hundred years ago and has reached such a point that the originality and the intentions of our country are barely recognizable. The results of this have been disastrous both economically and socially, most of all in terms of the personal freedom and liberty of our citizens. We have gone backwards in many ways, not the least of which is that race relations have deteriorated during the administration of the first African-American president, largely due to state meddling. We are divided as we have never been since the Civil War, and for really no good reason.

The people aren't the problem. It's the state.

And in a still-growing country of over 300 million the state gets bigger and bigger and bigger just by entropy, until we are all engulfed.

We need some government, obviously, but at this point in American history, in order to save our nation, we need to get the state as much as possible out of our lives, to cut its functions with a meat cleaver to release our better impulses, to have the renewal of Spring. Deep down even some modern liberals realize this. (Bill Clinton famously said the era of big government is over before running the other way as if in fear of his own honesty.)

In this coming crucial year, those of us who feel the overweening state is the problem must reach out our hands to our fellow citizens as never before. My sense is that many of them are ready to hear our message. (The fiasco of Obamacare has been a gift in that regard.) And if we don't reach out our hands, there will be no American Spring. Things will only get worse. (The horrific attempt of the FCC to monitor newsrooms is a harbinger of totalitarian things to come.)

I am one of those eternal optimists who think we are on the brink of this American Spring.

Another, whether he knows it or not, is ironically Joe Trippi, once the campaign manager for Howard Dean, a statist of the first order. (See [Trippi's interview with Reason magazine](#) in which he foresees a libertarian-oriented president in the near future.) Possible allies can be found in more quarters than we know.

But in order to achieve this American Spring, those who favor a diminished state must exercise discipline and kindness as never before. They should avoid internal rectification campaigns (shooting their own, looking for ideological perfection that doesn't exist). We are not communists. That's what they do.

Those already convinced of our cause — small-government conservatives, Tea Partiers, libertarians — should put aside their squabbles for now, join together and seek to be as inclusive as possible. Ideological purity, indeed ideological terminology itself, is inherently exclusionary and often obfuscating. Gloating of any sort is also counter-productive, possibly terminally. Instead, we must patiently explain, even to our most intractable adversaries, why our proposals for limited government are for their benefit as well as our own. We must do this in the face of a troglodytic and reactionary media and entrenched bureaucracies and interest groups from over a century of statism. We cannot stop or give up.

And we must always point out that what people were and are fighting for on the streets of the Ukraine and Venezuela is human freedom. They are not fighting for more government programs. It's even farcical to think so.

Washington Post

[The myth of 'settled science'](#)

by Charles Krauthammer

I repeat: I'm not a global warming believer. I'm not a global warming denier. I've long believed that it cannot be good for humanity to be spewing tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. I also believe that those scientists who pretend to know exactly what this will cause in 20, 30 or 50 years are white-coated propagandists.

"The debate is settled," asserted propagandist in chief Barack Obama in his latest State of the Union address. "Climate change is a fact." Really? There is nothing more anti-scientific than the very idea that science is settled, static, impervious to challenge. Take a non-climate example. It was long assumed that mammograms help reduce breast cancer deaths. This fact was so settled that Obamacare requires every insurance plan to offer mammograms (for free, no less) or be subject to termination.

Now we learn from a massive randomized study — 90,000 women followed for 25 years — that mammograms may have no effect on breast cancer deaths. Indeed, one out of five of those diagnosed by mammogram receives unnecessary radiation, chemo or surgery.

So much for settledness. And climate is less well understood than breast cancer. If climate science is settled, why do its predictions keep changing? And how is it that the great physicist Freeman Dyson, who did some climate research in the late 1970s, thinks today's climate-change Cassandras are hopelessly mistaken?

They deal with the fluid dynamics of the atmosphere and oceans, argues Dyson, ignoring the effect of biology, i.e., vegetation and topsoil. Further, their predictions rest on models they fall in love with: "You sit in front of a computer screen for 10 years and you start to think of your model as being real." Not surprisingly, these models have been "consistently and spectacularly wrong" in their predictions, write atmospheric scientists Richard McNider and John Christy — and always, amazingly, in the same direction.

Settled? Even Britain's national weather service concedes there's been no change — delicately called a "pause" — in global temperature in 15 years. If even the raw data is recalcitrant, let alone the assumptions and underlying models, how settled is the science?

But even worse than the pretense of settledness is the cynical attribution of any politically convenient natural disaster to climate change, a clever term that allows you to attribute anything — warming and cooling, drought and flood — to man’s sinful carbon burning.

Accordingly, Obama ostentatiously visited drought-stricken California last Friday. Surprise! He blamed climate change. Here even the New York Times gagged, pointing out that far from being supported by the evidence, “the most recent computer projections suggest that as the world warms, California should get wetter, not drier, in the winter.”

How inconvenient. But we’ve been here before. Hurricane Sandy was made the poster child for the alleged increased frequency and strength of “extreme weather events” like hurricanes.

Nonsense. Sandy wasn’t even a hurricane when it hit the United States. Indeed, in all of 2012, only a single hurricane made U.S. landfall. And 2013 saw the fewest Atlantic hurricanes in 30 years. In fact, in the last half-century, one-third fewer major hurricanes have hit the United States than in the previous half-century.

Similarly tornadoes. Every time one hits, the climate-change commentary begins. Yet last year saw the fewest in a quarter-century. And the last 30 years — of presumed global warming — has seen a 30 percent decrease in extreme tornado activity (F3 and above) versus the previous 30 years.

None of this is dispositive. It doesn’t settle the issue. But that’s the point. It mocks the very notion of settled science, which is nothing but a crude attempt to silence critics and delegitimize debate. As does the term “denier” — an echo of Holocaust denial, contemptibly suggesting the malevolent rejection of an established historical truth.

Climate-change proponents have made their cause a matter of fealty and faith. For folks who pretend to be brave carriers of the scientific ethic, there’s more than a tinge of religion in their jeremiads. If you whore after other gods, the Bible tells us, “the Lord’s wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit” (Deuteronomy 11).

Sounds like California. Except that today there’s a new god, the Earth Mother. And a new set of sins — burning coal and driving a fully equipped F-150.

But whoring is whoring, and the gods must be appeased. So if California burns, you send your high priest (in carbon -belching Air Force One, but never mind) to the bone-dry land to offer up, on behalf of the repentant congregation, a \$1 billion burnt offering called a “climate resilience fund.”

Ah, settled science in action.

FOX News

[Heating up: Climate change advocates try to silence Krauthammer](#)

by Howard Kurtz

Charles Krauthammer says it right up front in his Washington Post column: “I’m not a global warming believer. I’m not a global warming denier.”

He does, however, challenge the notion that the science on climate change is settled and says those who insist otherwise are engaged in “a crude attempt to silence critics and delegitimize debate.”

How ironic, then, that some environmental activists launched a petition urging the Post not to publish Krauthammer’s column on Friday.

Their response to opinions they disagree with is to suppress the speech.

Brad Johnson (@ClimateBrad), the editor of HillHeat.com and a former Think Progress staffer, boasted on Twitter that 110,000 people had urged the newspaper “to stop publishing climate lies” like the Krauthammer piece.

I understand that many people are passionate about global warming and consider skeptics to be flat-earthers. Those who don’t like the arguments by Krauthammer, a Fox News contributor, should by all means criticize, dispute, denounce and otherwise go at him. That’s how debate takes place in a country with a vibrant media culture.

Instead, these folks believe that censorship is preferable. Why engage Krauthammer when they might just be able to employ pressure tactics to silence him? And what’s the difference between this and shouting down a speaker at a town hall?

Krauthammer told me the petition-signers “showed up just in time to make precisely the point I made in the column.”

When it comes to free speech, he says, “they don’t even hide it anymore. Now they proudly want certain arguments banished from discourse. The next step is book burning. So the question of the day is: Can you light a Kindle?”

“Is there anything more anti-scientific than scientific truths being determined by petition and demonstration?”

Maybe this reflects a broader trend in which people want to wall themselves off from contrary information — and wall off others as well. Debating a complicated subject like climate change — and, equally important, what to do about it — is difficult. Attempting to silence the other side is the easy way out.

Of course, most climate-change proponents are perfectly willing to argue their case on the merits. Unfortunately, that doesn’t apply to everyone.

Power Line

[Mark Steyn Strikes Back Against the Empire](#)

by John Hinderaker

As all the world knows, climate buffoon Michael Mann is suing Mark Steyn, National Review and others for disagreeing with him about global warming—not just disagreeing, but doing so in colorful language. As happens so often on the Left, Mann found himself losing the debate on a public issue

of great importance. Rather than admit that he was wrong about the hockey stick—one of the most notorious errors, or frauds, in the history of science—he is trying to shut his opponents up through litigation.

Steyn was unhappy with how the lawsuit was going, so he dismissed the lawyers that were representing him and National Review and is now *pro se*. Rather than engage in further procedural maneuvering, Mark wants to fight out what he sees as the central issue—free speech—in the court of public opinion. So yesterday another shoe dropped: Mark served an answer and counterclaim against Mann in which he requested damages from the discredited scientist. You can read the pleading [here](#). It is entertaining; it should be, Mark wrote it himself.

Are the causes of action in Steyn's counterclaim valid? I won't express a legal opinion here, but I do think that in the broader picture, Mark is on to something. There is zero chance that Mann's lawsuit will ever result in a verdict in his favor. He can't possibly satisfy the actual malice standard, even if you assume that the statements Steyn and others have made about Mann's role in the global warming scam are potentially actionable. But that was never Mann's purpose: his lawsuit was a political act, intended to suppress political debate. Steyn's counterclaim, and his future conduct of his own defense, will join the battle where it counts.

That said, I still wish Mark would hire a lawyer.

Salon

[7 foods that were supposed to be incredibly unhealthy — but are actually anything but](#)

We were warned by experts to avoid these edibles at all costs. Turns out the experts were wrong

by Evelyn Nieves



In the future, when we're zipping around the biosphere on our jetpacks and eating our nutritionally complete food pellets, we won't have to worry about what foods will kill us or which will make us live forever.

Until then, we're left to figure out which of the food headlines we should take to heart, and which should be taken with a grain of unrefined, mineral-rich sea salt. Low-fat or high-fat? High-protein or vegan? If you don't trust what your body tells you, remember that food science is ever evolving. Case in point: The seven foods below are ancient. But they've gone from being considered healthy (long ago) to unhealthy (within the last generation or two) to healthy again, even essential.

1) Coconut Oil

Old wisdom: Coconut oil is a saturated-fat body bomb that should be avoided.

New wisdom: Coconut oil can cure what ails you.

Talk about an about-face. Anyone who grew up eating such nutritious fare as SpaghettiOs, Nestle Quik and Bisquick—actually, anyone old enough to vote in the United States—probably doesn't remember a jar of coconut oil in the cupboard, or anywhere in the family diet.

Why? Coconut oil was stigmatized after flawed studies decades ago tested partially hydrogenated coconut oil for its ill effects. Now, of course, we know that the chemical process of hydrogenation is what does a body ill. That's true whether the oil consumed is coconut, corn, canola, soy or any other.

It turns out that unrefined coconut oil offers terrific health benefits. Yes, it is a saturated fat. But the scientific consensus on whether saturated fats are bad for us is changing. Now researchers are stressing that saturated fats like coconut oil actually lower bad cholesterol in our bodies. Studies of people in countries that consume high amounts of coconut oil have found fewer instances of heart disease than in nations, such as the United States, where coconut oil has not been a staple. Coconut oil is rich in lauric acid, which is known for its antiviral, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial properties. Coconut oil, the new wisdom says, is good for our bodies inside and out. Studies and anecdotal evidence across the blogosphere tout coconut oil as a wondrous beauty aid, which can and should be used as a moisturizer to reduce lines and wrinkles, a moisturizer for dry hair, a soap and mouthwash.

2) Coffee

Old Wisdom: Coffee equals caffeine equals bad for you.

New Wisdom: Coffee is loaded with antioxidants and other nutrients that improve your health. Plus, a little caffeine makes the world go round.

Why? Actually, most of the world never bought into the whole caffeine/coffee scare that made so many Americans start to swear off coffee, or heaven help us, switch to decaf. But these days, the U.S., chock full of Starbucks, has come around. Several prominent studies conducted over the last few years unearthed a bounty of benefits in the average cup of joe. As everyone knows, caffeine boosts energy. Based on controlled human trials, it has also been proven to fire up the neurons and make you sharper, with improved memory, reaction time, mood, vigilance and general

cognitive function. It can also boost your metabolism, lower your risk of Type II diabetes, protect you from Alzheimer's disease and dementia, and lower the risk of Parkinson's. Whew.

3) Whole Milk

Old wisdom: High-fat milk lead to obesity. Exposing children to lower-fat options keeps them leaner and healthier and instills the low-fat habit.

New Wisdom: Ha!

A study at Harvard University found that despite recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics that children drink skim or low-fat milk after age two, doing so did not make for leaner or healthier children. In fact, the study found the opposite. Kids who consumed skim milk were likely to be fatter than those who drank it whole. Turns out that skim drinkers were more likely to indulge in junk food, which spiked their blood sugar levels, leading to more cravings for junk. And so on and so on.

4) Salt

Old Wisdom: Salt kills. It raises blood pressures, causes hypertension and increases the risk of premature death.

New Wisdom: Salt is essential to health. Too little salt can actually lead to premature death.

The new wisdom is actually older than the old wisdom. Long before it became the number-one evildoer in the Department of Agriculture's hit list, worse than fats, sugar and booze, salt was considered so valuable to body and soul that it was literally used as currency. Homer called it a "divine substance." Plato described it as dear to the Gods. The Romans considered it the spice of life; a man in love was *salax*—in a salted state. Only fairly recently, in that oh-so-wise 20th century, did salt become the bad guy at the dinner table.

It turns out that high-sodium processed "food" is the real villain in our diets. Unrefined salt, such as Himalayan salt or raw sea salts, contain 60 or more valuable trace minerals. It supports thyroid function and a faster metabolism and speeds the elimination of cortisol, the stress hormone that causes weight gain. Did you know salt is also a natural antihistamine (a pinch on the tongue may stem an allergic reaction). Finally, unrefined salt is needed for good digestion.

5) Chocolate

Old Wisdom: Chocolate gives you pimples, makes you fat and creates heartburn.

New Wisdom: Dark chocolate is loaded with antioxidants.

Chocoholics of the world rejoiced when the food scientists started doing an about-face on chocolate. After a few decades on the vilified list, in 2001, scientists began doing a double take, with the New York Times reporting that the science on chocolate was up in the air. Ten years later, chocolate had moved squarely into the good-for-you column. A 2011 Cambridge University study concluded that chocolate "probably" lowers stroke rates, coronary heart disease and high blood

pressure. A more recent study has found that regular chocolate consumers are often thinner than non-chocolate eaters.

No one is advising you to grab a Snickers bar for lunch, though. Eating chemically laden, sugar-bombed milk chocolate is still a no-no...for now, anyway.

6) Popcorn

Old Wisdom: Popcorn is junk food.

New Wisdom: Popcorn is a whole grain, loaded with nutrients.

Like most of the foods on this list, this one has caveats. If you consider popcorn something to douse with “butter-flavored topping” and shovel in your mouth at the multiplex, then keep it on the “bad” list. A study by the Center for Science in the Public Interest has concluded that movie theater popcorn—a medium tub, mind you—has 1,200 calories and 60 grams of the worst kind of saturated fat. And that’s before you add whatever it is that is supposed to taste like butter. That calorie count is the equivalent of three McDonald’s Quarter Pounders.

Microwave popcorn, laden with chemicals, is also bad. But homemade, air-popped (let’s add organic, for good measure) or made with good oil popcorn, well, that’s a snack of a different color. Last year, researchers at the University of Scranton revealed that homemade popcorn has more antioxidants—known as polyphenols—than fruits and vegetables. Polyphenols have been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and cancers.

If that isn’t enough to make popcorn addicts rejoice, popcorn is a great source of fiber (it’s a whole grain) and is low in calories. Air-popped popcorn is the healthiest of all, with only 30 calories per cup.

7) Eggs

Old Wisdom: Eggs clog your arteries and increase your risk of heart attack, stroke, diabetes and early death.

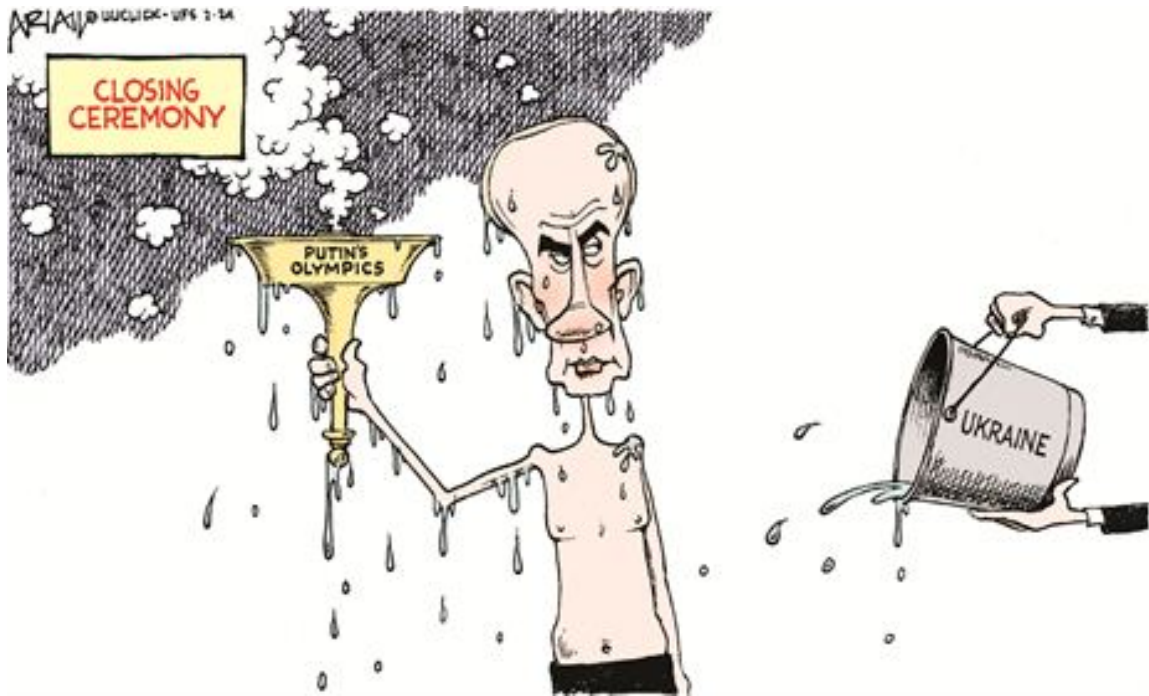
New Wisdom: Nonsense! Eggs are very nearly the perfect food.

How did this one happen? A century ago, when our grandparents gathered their eggs from the backyard hens, there was no controversy. Then cholesterol became the big bugaboo, and all of a sudden, we were being lectured to limit our consumption of eggs to four a week, if any.

Last year, scientists decided to settle the matter once and for all. A meta-analysis of 17 studies on egg consumption and health discovered that eggs did not contribute—at all—to heart disease or stroke in healthy individuals. On the contrary, eggs raise our good (HDL) cholesterol numbers and change the bad (LDL) cholesterol from small and dense to large and benign. Eggs are also high in iron and protein and two antioxidants, lutein and zeaxanthine, which protect against age-related eye disorders like macular degeneration and cataracts.

The key is to eat eggs from free-range, happy and healthy chickens, just like in the old days, and avoid eggs that come from sickly, antibiotic-soaked, factory farm hens.

Evelyn Nieves, former staff writer and columnist for the New York Times, is working on a book.



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