

July 1, 2014

Andrew Malcolm posts on the Clintons' hard choices.

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One of the more humorous evergreen characteristics of Democrats in politics is their genetic need to claim humble beginnings and to apologize for being rich beyond the wildest dreams of the little people they claim to so devotedly defend. ...

Hillary Clinton's defense of a child rapist in 1975 gets the **Continetti** treatment. And you can listen to **newly unearthed tapes** with Hillary laughing about her defense strategy. *The facts are these. In 1975, before she married Bill Clinton, Hillary Rodham defended a child rapist in Arkansas court. She was not a public defender. No one ordered her to take the case. An ambitious young lawyer, she was asked by a friend if she would represent the accused, and she agreed. And her defense was successful. Attacking the credibility of the 12-year-old victim on the one hand, and questioning the chain of evidence on another, Clinton got a plea-bargain for her client. He served ten months in prison, and died in 1992. The victim, now 52, has had her life irrevocably altered—for the worse.*

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Jennifer Rubin says Hillary was part and parcel of the administration's Iraq policy. *As I have written, the Obama/Hillary Clinton cover story that Iraq wouldn't let troops stay behind (or even more outlandishly that the George W. Bush administration put Bush's successor in a position where the United States "had" to get out) is at odds with reality.*

A reader points out the Obama/Clinton cover story was recently blown up by Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.). Graham, along with Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.), had gone to Iraq on behalf of the administration trying to secure a stay-behind force. Take three minutes to listen to Graham's blow-by-blow account. Three things are clear:

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Peggy Noonan writes on Hillary and her book.

... Mrs. Clinton seems to have a peculiar and unattractive relationship with money. She wants it and she doesn't want you to know. She also appears to think she's entitled to it, as a public servant who operated at high levels. But public servants now are less like servants than bosses.

When an interviewer compared her to Mitt Romney in terms of wealth, she got a stony look. That is a "false equivalency," she said. You could see she feels she should not be compared to a wealthy Republican because she's liberal and therefore stands for the little guy. So she can be rich and should not be criticized, while rich people who have the wrong policies—that would be Republicans—are "the rich" and can be scorned and shamed. This is seen by some as hypocrisy but is more like smugness. ...

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It is written in the style of the current Ladies' Home Journal in that it patronizes even as it panders. It is an extended attempt to speak "their language," the language of a huge imagined audience of women. There are silver linings of defeat. She brims with ideas, advocates, gets to yes, chooses her own team. There are clear-eyed assessments and daunting challenges. The State Department neighborhood is known as "Foggy Bottom." She proudly quotes a speech she gave in 2008. "You will always find me on the front lines of democracy—fighting for the future."

Ladies and gentleman, that is the authentic sound of 2016. Shoot me now.

Why do Democratic politicians talk like this about themselves, putting themselves and their drama at the ego-filled center, instead of policy ideas, larger meanings, the actual state of the country? In this she is just like Barack Obama.

Free Beacon reports UNLV students incensed over Hillary Clinton's speaker's fee. *The University of Nevada-Las Vegas is set to host Hillary Clinton on October 13 as their speaker for their UNLV Annual Foundation Dinner. Clinton will be paid \$225,000 to address attendees at the fundraiser. Her sky-high speaking fee has raised eyebrows and caused a stir on the UNLV campus.*

UNLV student government leaders expressed their outrage at the university's decision to pay the former Secretary of State such a hefty fee. "We really appreciate anybody who would come to raise money for the university, but anybody who is being paid \$225,000 to come speak- we think that's a little bit outrageous. And we would like Secretary Clinton, respectfully, to gracefully return the money back to the university or to the foundation," Daniel Waqar, Public Relations Director for the UNLV Student Government, told Jon Ralston on Ralston Reports.

UNLV Student Body President Elias Benjelloun agreed and weighed in on Clinton's controversial speaking fee. "We're excited that Hillary Clinton would come to the university to fundraise on behalf of our university. We're excited anyone wants to come to UNLV and fundraise on our behalf. When we heard \$225,000, we weren't so thrilled... We'd hope that Hillary Clinton... returns part or whole of the amount she receives for speaking," he said.

Carl Cannon posts on the 15 most annoying political phrases.

... 2. "AT THE END OF THE DAY" When Bill and Hillary Clinton arrived on the national scene, they brought pizzazz to politics. They also popularized this unfortunate phrase. "At the end of the day" is simultaneously addictive and grating. Its first usage can be traced to 1826, although it really caught on in the 1990s. In Britain, it so offended BBC host Vanessa Feltz that she issued a fatwa against the phrase, which she rescinded when no guest was able to speak aloud without using it. In this country, it quickly spread beyond the Clinton circle. Everyone says it now: Democrats, Republicans, liberals, conservatives, baseball players, football coaches, prosecutors, bartenders, movie stars. In 2004, an organization called The Plain English Campaign surveyed its members in 70 countries and pronounced it "the most irritating phrase in the English language."

1. "FOLKS" U.S. presidents love this word, which they find, well, folksy. It's been invoked by our chief executives some 4,400 times since Herbert Hoover occupied the Oval Office. Bill Clinton loved "folks" so much he used it publicly eight times during his last month in office. But it's proliferating. George W. Bush used it 21 times in his first month as president. Then he started misusing it. His most discordant example was his reference to "al-Qaeda, the very same folks that attacked us on September the 11th." There must be something in the White House water supply because Obama matched Bush's January-February 2001 record by saying "folks" 21 times in only two debates with Mitt Romney. The first time he used it in the Oct. 22, 2012, debate was the most jarring. Discussing military intervention in Syria, Obama said he wanted to make sure "we're not putting arms in the hands of folks who eventually could turn them against us or allies in the region." At least he didn't say, "Look, frankly, at the end of the day—as Ronald Reagan knew—Syria is a no-brainer."

IBD

Bill and Hillary Clinton go to the grocery just like us

by Andrew Malcolm



The couple struggled to make ends meet.

Bill Clinton and his wife are just regular folks, you should know. He says they talk to towns people near both of their mansions. They go to the grocery store on weekends and perhaps squeeze the fruit, as careful shoppers would watching their dollars in this stagnant Obamaconomy.

Never mind the burly guys in cool shades nearby with curly wires running into their ears and machine guns under the jackets. Or their specially-trained defensive driver. Or [the friends' private jets](#) that whisk them to another \$200K speech.

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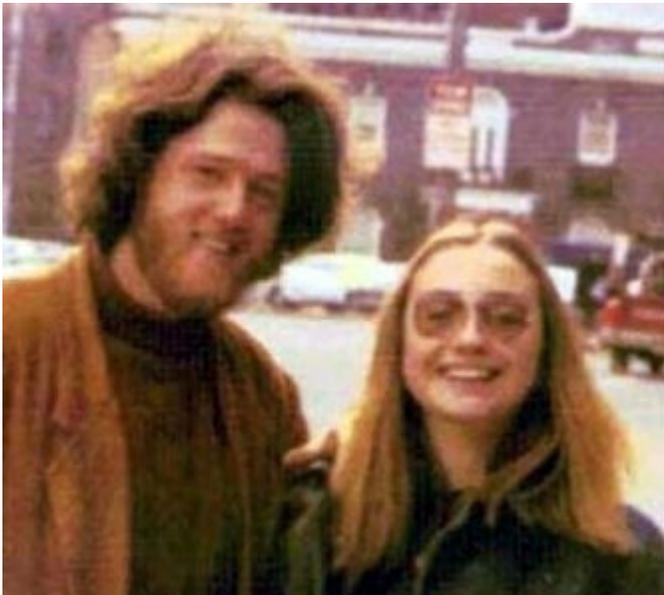
One of the more humorous evergreen characteristics of Democrats in politics is their genetic need to claim humble beginnings and to apologize for being rich beyond the wildest dreams of the little people they claim to so devotedly defend.

Somehow, however, the poor remain stuck in poverty despite giving their votes automatically to the latest Democrat year after year. That's terribly unfair, their pols note, but if they'll only vote for them one more time, things will change.

Or as Obama's minions did in 2012, to sully Mitt Romney for having turned down an inheritance and earned his own mini-fortune. If you can imagine such a thing in America.

Obama, it's worth noting, has somehow become a millionaire making \$172,000 as a senator briefly and \$400,000 a year as president for way too long. Of course, it doesn't hurt to have a free 747.

Joe Biden isn't hurting either. Until last year he was Scrooge McDuck on charitable giving. And he even charges the Secret Service rent for agents using a nearby cottage to protect Biden at home in Delaware.



When haircuts were too expensive

Wealth, of course, is bipartisan in America. Many Republicans are rich too. But they're like, Yeh, so what? Go make your own money.

Speaking in a Tuesday interview with David Gregory in Denver, [Bill Clinton defended](#) his wife's poverty statements as accurate, but couldn't resist pulling up the old 'America is unfair' meme.

"I don't think most Americans resent somebody else doing well," Bill said. "They resent that they're not getting a fair deal."

Hillary is scaring the bejesus out of many Democrats with her book tour's unforced errors. Last weekend she was quoted in the Guardian saying the couple's earnings in excess of \$100 million came "through the dint of hard work" and that the pair pays ordinary income tax "unlike the truly well off."

Part of the party's 2016 fear comes from its thin bench. If Hillary crashes again, does anyone seriously believe that after the Obama inexperience, America is eager to elect another freshman legislator like, say, Elizabeth Warren -- even if she really was Native American?

The challenge right now, however, is Bill Clinton's. He's a masterful politician. He really is. He appears genuine, thoughtful. He seems to enjoy people, not put up with them as props. He doesn't read remarks robotically through a teleprompter. In the late 1990's Clinton tried to convince Americans that oral sex really isn't sex. Mixed success there.

Now, his new challenge is to not talk about Benghazi. And to convince America that his wife, who hasn't driven an automobile since 1996, is not really out of touch with average people.

Washington Free Beacon

[Hillary's People](#)

The tapes they don't want you to hear

by Matthew Continetti

The facts are these. In 1975, before she married Bill Clinton, Hillary Rodham defended a child rapist in Arkansas court. She was not a public defender. No one ordered her to take the case. An ambitious young lawyer, she was asked by a friend if she would represent the accused, and she agreed. And her defense was successful. Attacking the credibility of the 12-year-old victim on the one hand, and questioning the chain of evidence on another, Clinton got a plea-bargain for her client. He served ten months in prison, and died in 1992. The victim, now 52, has had her life irrevocably altered—for the worse.

Sometime in the mid-1980s, for an *Esquire* profile of rising political stars, Hillary Clinton and her husband agreed to a series of interviews with the Arkansas journalist Roy Reed. Reed and Hillary Clinton discussed at some length her defense of the child rapist, and in the course of that discussion she bragged and laughed about the case, implied she had known her client was guilty, and said her "faith in polygraphs" was forever destroyed when she saw that her client had taken one and passed. Reed's article was never published. His tapes of the interviews were later donated to the University of Arkansas. Where they remained, gathering dust.

Contrary to what you may have heard over the past week, Clinton's successful defense of the rapist Thomas Alfred Taylor is not "old news." On the contrary: For a CV that has been scrutinized so closely, references to the rape case in the public record have been rather thin. One of those references came from Clinton herself. In 2003, when she was a senator from New York, and published her first memoir, *Living History*, Clinton included a brief mention of the case, mainly as a way to take credit for Arkansas' first rape crisis hotline. And in 2008, Glenn Thrush—then at *Newsday*—wrote a lengthy article on the subject.

Don't remember it? There's a reason. "My then-editor appended a meaningless intro to the story, delayed and buried it because, in his words, 'It might have an impact,'" Thrush said [in a June 15 tweet](#). Well, the editor got his way. It didn't have an impact.

The occasion for Thrush's tweet was "[The Hillary Tapes](#)" by the *Washington Free Beacon*'s Alana Goodman, who obtained [the Reed interview](#) and made it public for the first time. Goodman is careful to quote a source saying that, once an attorney takes on a client, he is required to provide that client with the strongest possible defense. Yet the same source also noted that Hillary Clinton's subsequent narrative of the case—specifically, her implication to Reed that her client had been guilty all along—raised serious questions regarding attorney-client privilege. And Goodman also notes the casual and complacent manner in which Clinton treats such a morally fraught episode, as well as the "parallels between the tactics Clinton employed to defend Taylor and the tactics she, her husband, and their allies have used to defend themselves against accusations of wrongdoing over the course of their three decades in public life." Pretty newsworthy, it seems to me.

And yet, looking over the treatment of Goodman's scoop over the past week, I can't help thinking that the reaction to "[The Hillary Tapes](#)" is just as newsworthy as the tapes themselves. That reaction has been decidedly mixed. Not long ago, in 2012, the *Washington Post* ran an extensive investigation into the "[troubling incidents](#)" of Mitt Romney's prep-school days, whereupon the media devoted hour after hour to the all-important discussion of whether Willard M. Romney had been something of a child bully. Here, though, we have a newly unearthed recording of Hillary Clinton laughing out loud over her defense of a child rapist—and plenty of outlets have ignored the story altogether. The difference? As the *Newsday* editor said: It might have an impact.

No matter your view of Hillary Clinton, no matter your position on legal ethics, the recording of the Reed interview is news. It tells us something we did not already know. It tells us that, when her guard was down, Clinton found the whole disturbing incident a trifling and joking matter. And the fact that so many supposedly sophisticated and *au courant* journalists and writers have dismissed the story as nothing more than an attorney "doing her job" is, I think, equally disturbing. [Dana Bash to the contrary notwithstanding](#), Hillary Clinton was not forced to take on Taylor as a client. It was her choice—and not, for her, a hard one. Certainly that complicates our understanding of the former first lady as an unrelenting defender and advocate of women and girls.

Let's even concede that Clinton was just doing her job. What makes that job exempt from inquiry and skepticism and criticism? Yes, Mumia, Bill Ayers, and child rapists have the right to legal representation. But that does not give the lawyers who represent them the right—the entitlement—to public office. If it is fair to attack a candidate because he used to travel with the family dog on the roof of his car, because he may have forcibly subjected a fellow student to a haircut, then it is entirely fair, it is more than fair, to attack a candidate for defending the rapist of a 12-year-old girl, and for laughing about it a decade later.

Lawyers I can handle. Librarians? They're trouble. I did not expect, when I arrived at the office Wednesday, to find a letter from a dean of the University of Arkansas sitting on my desk, informing me that the *Free Beacon*'s research privileges had been suspended because we failed to fill out a permission slip, that we were in violation of the University of Arkansas' "intellectual property rights," and demanding that we remove [the audio of the Hillary tapes](#) from our website. (Both the letter from Dean Allen and the response of the *Free Beacon*'s lawyers can be read below.)

Now, we obtained these materials without having to fill out any forms and without being provided a copy of any university "policy." The university has yet to prove that it owns the copyright to the Reed audio. Nor has it explained how, exactly, that audio does not fall under fair use. And

remember, too, that the institution protesting our story is *a library*—which ostensibly exists for the sole purpose of spreading knowledge and literacy and information and print and audio and visual media. That is what libraries are for, isn't it?

Puzzling. Less puzzling, though, when I discovered that the author of the letter, Dean Carolyn Henderson Allen, [was a donor to Hillary Clinton's 2008 campaign](#), and that the University of Arkansas Chancellor, David Gearhart, is a former student of the Clintons, and that his brother, Van Gearhart, worked at the same legal aid clinic as Clinton at the time of the Taylor case.

One would expect the media to rally behind potential violations of a publication's First Amendment rights—but, [with the exception of this Politico story](#), the University of Arkansas' attempt to suppress the Hillary tapes has yet to be the subject of extensive coverage.

I wonder why.

“Defending even a child rapist as vigorously as possible might be a plus if she were running to lead the American Bar Association,” wrote Melinda Henneberger, [in one of the few stories about the Hillary tapes to appear in the mainstream media](#). “But wouldn't her apparent willingness to attack a sixth-grader compromise a presidential run?”

Indeed, I think it would. Which is why the reaction to Alana Goodman's scoop has been so muted and unusual. And why Hillary's people must be wondering: What's next?

Right Turn

[The big lie about Iraq](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

As I have [written](#), the Obama/Hillary Clinton cover story that Iraq wouldn't let troops stay behind (or even more outlandishly that the George W. Bush administration put Bush's successor in a position where the United States “had” to get out) is at odds with reality.

A reader points out the Obama/Clinton cover story was recently blown up by Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.). Graham, along with Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.), had gone to Iraq on behalf of the administration trying to secure a stay-behind force. Take three minutes [to listen](#) to Graham's blow-by-blow account. Three things are clear:

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Obama then insisted he had to go to parliament and without its approval (which wasn't forthcoming) it was impossible to leave troops – any number — behind. In all of this, Graham points out that the administration “got the answer they wanted.” Remember this was a campaign promise — to get *all the troops out*. Obama was to run for reelection as the guy who ended wars and had decimated al-Qaeda. (Recently Obama decided — with his policy in shambles — that parliament didn't need to vote on an immunity deal for our 300 advisers.)

If conservatives are certain – with much justification – that the administration seized on an anti-Muslim video in connection with the Benghazi, Libya, attack to avoid upsetting their pre-election line that al-Qaeda was “dead” (and G.M. was alive), consider how much more important it is for them now to concoct and stick with a cover story for the collapse of Iraq and the exact disaster administration critics predicted.

The problem isn't so much that the Obama-Clinton crowd lies (although that is deplorable). It is that they are forced to lie because their entire national security approach has been a disaster and has endangered Americans. “The Iraqis did it” or “Bush did it” in connection with the troop withdrawal from Iraq is the equivalent of “the video did it” in the context of Benghazi.

The next interviewer who gets Clinton would be wise to push her on this topic. Our current security dilemma directly flows from this set of events. The woman at the center of this foreign policy debacle is now, by all accounts, misrepresenting the facts to hide her own and her boss's incompetence. They let ideology and domestic politics run the show. A national security disaster ensued. Now it's time to hold them accountable.

WSJ

[Hillary Clinton, for Richer or Poorer](#)

Her book tour exposes forgotten vulnerabilities and weaknesses.

by Peggy Noonan

News is surprise. The news out of [Hillary Clinton](#)'s book tour is that it hasn't gone well. It was supposed to establish her iconic position in American political life while solidifying her inevitability. Instead it exposed vulnerabilities. The media was neither at her feet nor at her throat but largely distanced, which was interesting. Her claim that the Clintons were “dead broke” when they left the White House inspired widespread derision. Her exchanges on Benghazi didn't bury the issue but kept it alive.

The scripted answers were tiring. The old trick of answering the question you wish you'd been asked instead of the one you were is weary to the point of antique. So is her tendency to filibuster. On Thursday she almost committed candor in an interview with PBS's Gwen Ifill. Ms. Ifill was teasing her out on the presidency. Hillary, with a look of good humor, said that frankly, “you have to be a little bit crazy to run for president . . . so totally immersed, and so convinced that you can bring something to that office”—and then she caught herself, mid-honesty, and lapsed into a long, fatuous aria about how she sees the people and they tell her of their struggles.

It was sad. She was almost interesting! Her tendency to check herself comes across more as a tic she can't control than an attempt to maintain discretion.

The book was almost uniformly panned. Sales were disappointing, falling a reported 44% in the second week, which means word-of-mouth wasn't good. To top it off, The Wall Street Journal and NBC released a poll taken at the height of the tour that said while 55% of Americans find her knowledgeable and experienced enough to be president, less than half consider her honest and straightforward.

But the tour yielded three positives. Mrs. Clinton put away the issue, if it was an issue, of age. She has sufficient energy, brightness and hustle to banter and party with interviewers and audiences in

a lengthy major national tour. There is nothing wrong with her brain. In fact, she changed the way you see her when you think about her. Twenty-two years ago, when she first arrived on the national scene, she was the brittle harridan in the headband, the high-ticket attorney who wasn't gonna be bakin' no cookies. That image has changed over the years, but during the tour the change became definitive. Now she's Mom—mature, settled, with a throaty laugh and a thickening middle. Or grandma. After six years of presidential leadership from a lithe, supple, snotty older brother, Mom will seem an improvement.

Mrs. Clinton also re-established the fact of her experience, eight years a U.S. senator and four as secretary of state. She wanted to remind us, and did, that her professional résumé is superior to that of the incumbent and his predecessor. And she was interesting and believable when she said women in politics have it tougher than men, that they come under stranger scrutiny, are subjected to greater demands and more outrageous insults. This is true, and there isn't a Republican congresswoman who wouldn't give you an earful on it.

As to the vulnerabilities made more obvious by the tour, the talk of Mrs. Clinton's wealth, which followed her protestations of near-destitution when she left the White House, reminded people of the Bonnie-and-Clyde factor. The Clintons now hold a place of high respect and stature. But before they were Eleanor and Franklin they were viewed by their critics, and not only their critics, as Bonnie and Clyde. Most of their scandals were about money—from luckily timed cattle-future investments to Whitewater to campaign-financing lapses to last-minute pardons for donors to "renting out" the Lincoln bedroom, and more.

Mrs. Clinton seems to have a peculiar and unattractive relationship with money. She wants it and she doesn't want you to know. She also appears to think she's entitled to it, as a public servant who operated at high levels. But public servants now are less like servants than bosses.

When an interviewer compared her to [Mitt Romney](#) in terms of wealth, she got a stony look. That is a "false equivalency," she said. You could see she feels she should not be compared to a wealthy Republican because she's liberal and therefore stands for the little guy. So she can be rich and should not be criticized, while rich people who have the wrong policies—that would be Republicans—are "the rich" and can be scorned and shamed. This is seen by some as hypocrisy but is more like smugness.

It is Mrs. Clinton's habit to fake identification with people who've had real struggles by claiming she's had them too. All humans have struggles, but hers were not material. She came from a solidly suburban upper-middle-class home, glided into elite schools, became a lawyer, married a politician who quickly rose, enjoyed all the many perks of a governor's mansion and then the White House, and then all the perks of a senator, secretary of state and former first lady. She's been driven in limousines and official cars almost all her adult life. For more than a quarter-century she has seen America through tinted windows.

Newly out of the Ivy League, she asked for political power instead of financial power. Many of her generation of liberal activists, with similar bona fides, chose the latter. She married and became a politician and accrued great power and fame.

But she still wanted the money. Through speeches, appearances, books and investments, she got it. Bill seems happy with it. She sees a disjunction between her acquisitive streak and her party's demonization of acquisitive streaks, and so she claims she was broke, at the mercy of forces, an orphan in the storm, instead of an operator of considerable hunger and skill.

All this has made her look silly and phony. One wonders what she thinks of the base of her party that she can't knock it off.

As for the book, it is actually the first I have encountered that was written so a politician could say, "I wrote about this at length in my book." It exists to offer a template for various narratives and allow her to suggest she's already well covered the issue at hand, which the interviewer would know if he were better informed.

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Free Beacon

[UNLV Students Slam Hillary's 'Outrageous' Speaking Fee](#)

Student Gov Leaders: Clinton Should Return The Money

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Real Clear Politics

15 Most Annoying Expressions in Politics

by Carl M. Cannon

Irritating phrases and words are not confined to political circles, or solely to Washington, although here in the nation's capital they burrow in and proliferate like obsolete, but entrenched, government programs. This is a call to arms to fight them—but only metaphorically.

15. “WAR ON [FILL IN THE BLANK]” Syria's civil war has produced 2.5 million refugees and a death toll of 160,000, a tragedy that has galvanized neither major political party into action. So next time a Democrat brays about the so-called Republican “war on women” or a Republican trumpets the Obama administration's “war on coal,” tell them you've seen what real war looks like—and ask what the U.S. can do to stop it.

14. “TAX HIKE” It's not a “hike.” What are you going to do, put it in a knapsack and take it for a walk? It's a tax *increase*. This usage was coined by headline writers because it's shorter. Speaker of the House John Boehner, who often employs this phrase, has no such excuse.

13. “RIGHT-WING” This term is bandied about carelessly, usually as a pejorative. In “The Devil's Dictionary,” Ambrose Bierce defined “conservative.” Here is the entry, in its entirety: “CONSERVATIVE, *n.* a statesman who is enamored of existing evils, as distinguished from the Liberal, who wishes to replace them with others.” The converse of “right-wing,” a label freely applied to Fox News and countless Republican elected officials, is not “liberal,” it's “left wing.”

12. “FRANKLY” Rhett Butler made this word famous, but when politicians preface their remarks with “frankly” (or “candidly”), they don't give a damn about being frank or candid. Usually, it means they're about to tell a whopper—or recite a talking point. Listen for this usage from now on. It's a self-administered lie detector.

11. “TALKING POINTS” Pols who recite self-serving spin written by others while answering basic questions about their jobs are essentially reading the stage directions. It suggests they are too lazy to invent their own fibs or excuses—or that they work for control freaks who don't trust them to know their own subject matter. This is a discordant trait in a high-ranking official, such as U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice or anyone who attended top-notch schools, which also fits Rice. She was a history major at Stanford and a Rhodes scholar with a master's degree and a doctorate from Oxford.

10. “DOCTOR” In the White House compound and certain media precincts, the wife of Vice President Joe Biden is referred to as “Dr. Biden,” usually in reverential tones. This is understandable—who wants to be called “the second lady”? But, like Susan Rice, Jill Biden has a PhD, not a medical degree. It was also a secret password in the Bush administration to affix “Dr.” in front of another foreign policy official surnamed Rice. Susan Rice, Condoleezza Rice, and Jill Biden are accomplished people, but the old-time newsroom rule is best: If someone isn't licensed to take your tonsils out, you don't have to call 'em “Doc.”

9. “LOOK...” Almost as soon as he arrived in Washington, Barack Obama adopted the off-putting Sunday talk show habit—used promiscuously by Karl Rove—of starting sentences with the word “Look.” Two months after his inauguration, things got so bad that Jimmy Fallon sought to discourage its proliferation by producing a montage, set to music, of Obama saying “Look...” 26 times in an hour-long news conference. To a layman, it sounds like Obama is really saying, “Look here, moron...” But two UCLA professors [told](#) Anya Sostek of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette that this

preamble isn't as patronizing as it sounds. Manny Schegloff says Obama is signaling that he's about to provide background information as part of his answer that informs his policy position. His colleague Steven Clayman adds that Ronald Reagan often began answers to questions with the word, "Well"—as a way of preparing listeners for a different answer than they might expect. Or so say Dr. Clayman and Dr. Schegloff.

8. "PARTY OF REAGAN" Nothing unites Republicans more than their professed love of the Gipper. But do they really get him? When Sarah Palin invokes Reagan's name while railing against immigrants, or hawkish GOP senators agitate for another U.S. military intervention, or state Sen. Chris McDaniel chides Thad Cochran for urging Democrats to cross party lines and vote in a GOP primary in Mississippi, they're not channeling the Gipper. They are displaying amnesia. The operative phrase, Sen. McDaniel, was "Reagan Democrats."

7. "WITH ALL DUE RESPECT" One hears this during congressional debates and cable TV slugfests, usually signifying the exact opposite. "My opponent is an extremist, or possibly an idiot," is what they really mean. "He's offering these dangerous ideas either because he's been bribed—or threatened—by the corrupt special interest groups who control his sorry excuse for a political party. So opposing his proposal is a no brainer..."

6. "NO-BRAINER" It's not rocket science or thinking outside the box to note that overused clichés are meant to stifle communication rather than facilitate it. But "no-brainer" holds a special place in semantic hell because it often, and inadvertently, undermines the utterer's own point, as in, "Invading Iraq was a no-brainer."

5. "SETTLED SCIENCE" "Politics is not an exact science," German statesman Otto von Bismarck told the Prussian legislature. True enough, but the same can be said of science itself. To the genuinely intellectually curious, "settled science" is an oxymoron. "There is something fascinating about science," Mark Twain wrote 20 years after Bismarck's speech. "One gets such wholesale returns of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact."

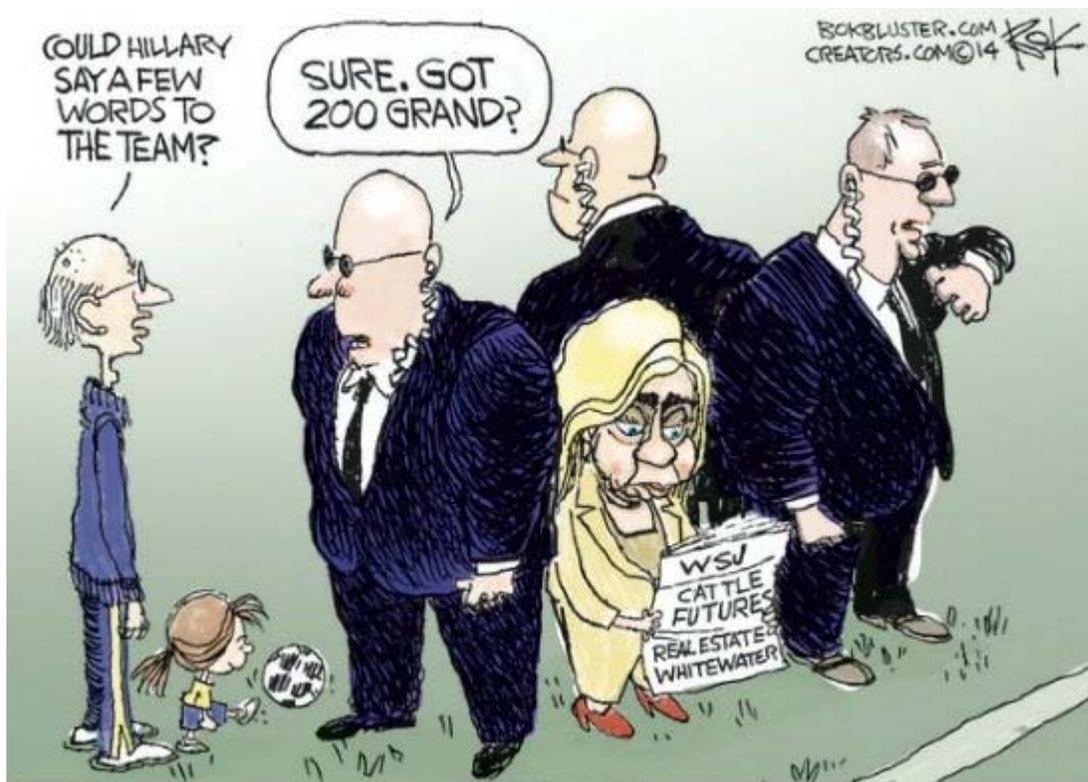
4. "DENIER" This slur is used to shame or silence global-warming skeptics and other heretics who question conventional wisdom. It has an ugly provenance, too, coming from "Holocaust denier," a description applied to those best described as neo-Nazis or lunatics (or both). But skepticism is not a sin. The famed Chicago City News Bureau popularized a journalistic bromide: "If your mother says she loves you, check it out." It means get a second source, be careful, and don't just repeat what you hear. Words to live by. (By the way, my Twain reference comes from "Life on the Mississippi," Chapter 6.)

3. "JUST SAYIN'" For five straight years, the Marist College poll has queried Americans on the expressions they find most obnoxious. Each year, the winner is the dismissive "Whatever." Another entry has been gaining ground in recent years. This is the phrase "Just saying" (or Just sayin'). This expression is so ubiquitous, not to mention devoid of actual meaning, that it's used by President Obama and Sarah Palin (in her case, to mock Obamacare). It translates roughly as, "I just said something snarky." As if we didn't know.

2. "AT THE END OF THE DAY" When Bill and Hillary Clinton arrived on the national scene, they brought pizzazz to politics. They also popularized this unfortunate phrase. "At the end of the day" is simultaneously addictive and grating. Its first usage can be traced to 1826, although it really caught on in the 1990s. In Britain, it so offended BBC host Vanessa Feltz that she issued a *fatwa* against the phrase, which she rescinded when no guest was able to speak aloud without using it. In this country, it quickly spread beyond the Clinton circle. Everyone says it now: Democrats, Republicans, liberals, conservatives, baseball players, football coaches, prosecutors, bartenders,

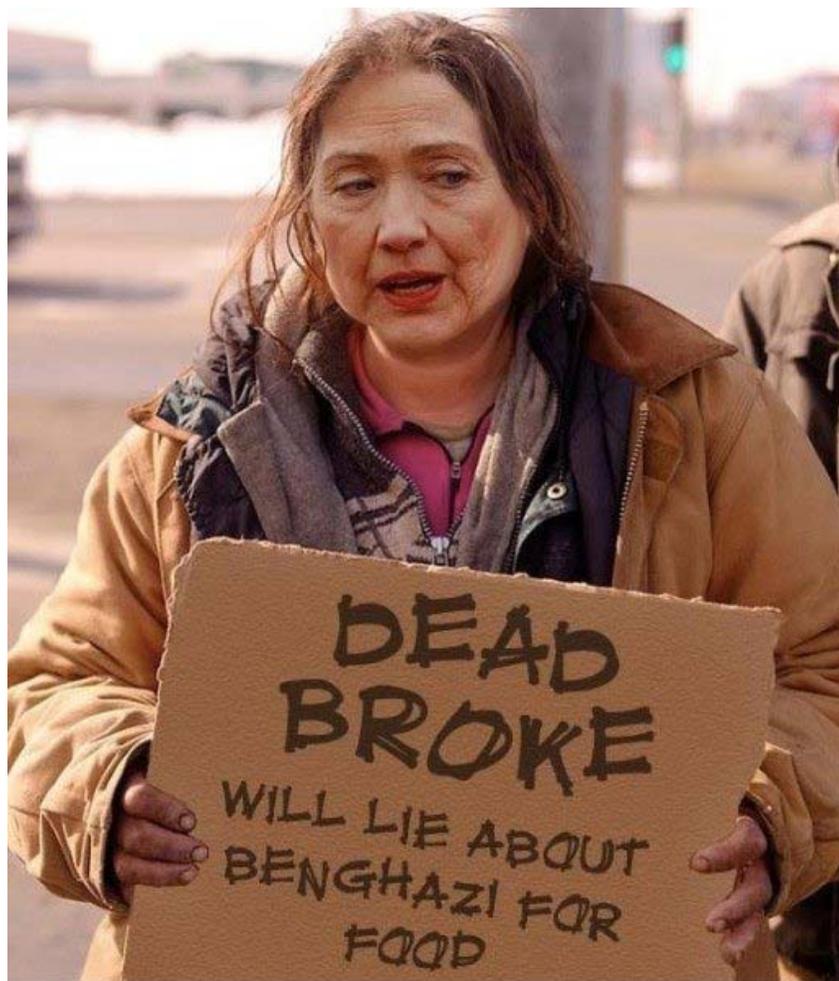
movie stars. In 2004, an organization called The Plain English Campaign surveyed its members in 70 countries and pronounced it “the most irritating phrase in the English language.”

1. “FOLKS” U.S. presidents love this word, which they find, well, folksy. It’s been invoked by our chief executives some 4,400 times since Herbert Hoover occupied the Oval Office. Bill Clinton loved “folks” so much he used it publicly eight times during his last month in office. But it’s proliferating. George W. Bush used it 21 times in his first month as president. Then he started *misusing* it. His most discordant example was his reference to “al-Qaeda, the very same folks that attacked us on September the 11th.” There must be something in the White House water supply because Obama matched Bush’s January-February 2001 record by saying “folks” 21 times in only two debates with Mitt Romney. The first time he used it in the Oct. 22, 2012, debate was the most jarring. Discussing military intervention in Syria, Obama said he wanted to make sure “we’re not putting arms in the hands of folks who eventually could turn them against us or allies in the region.” At least he didn’t say, “Look, frankly, at the end of the day—as Ronald Reagan knew—Syria is a no-brainer.”



JUST ANOTHER DEAD-BROKE SOCCER MOM IN A PANTSUIT

Q: Is your family truly well off?

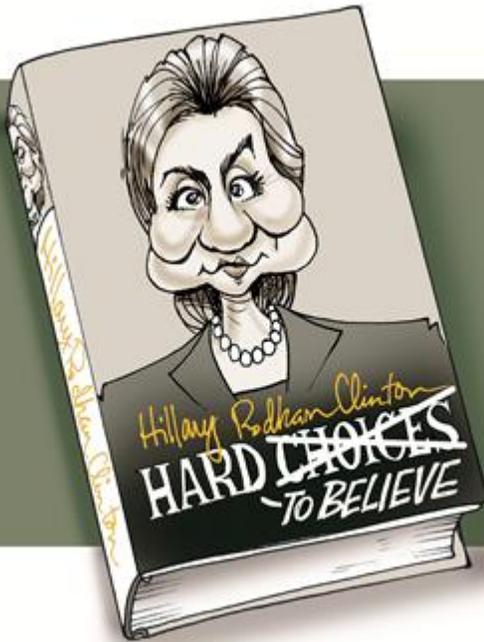


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