

July 8, 2014

John Fund writes on the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act.

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Roger Simon posts on the crossroads faced by the country.

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*intensely annoying example of this comes from my alma mater, the University of Texas, which is proud to employ the physicist Steven Weinberg, who was awarded the Nobel prize in 1979. Professor Weinberg is not short of opinions — evangelizing for causes ranging from atheism to Zionism — and is unsurprisingly interested in the question of government funding for scientific research, a subject he explores in his compact essay “The Crisis in Big Science,” recently republished in *The Best American Science and Nature Writing of 2013*. (Yes, I am a little behind on my reading; I also have 54,000 unread e-mails.) Professor Weinberg’s essay is remarkably simple-minded, though it is admirably modest: Offering a potted history of the Standard Model, he mentions the unification of the weak and electromagnetic forces but not the fact that he is one of the men who did that.*

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**The Financial Times** writes on the antibiotic problem.

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*Dame Sally Davies must feel like a modern-day Miss Triggs. More than a year ago the chief medical officer for England warned that antibiotic resistance should be ranked alongside terrorism as a national threat. Failing to keep up the medicinal arms race against superbugs, she said, would fling us back to the dark days of the 19th century when a cut finger could lead to a festering death.*

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Ann Coulter has a second part to her soccer slam. Part Deux she calls it.

*PARIS — Soccer fans have decided to prove me wrong about soccer being a fruity sport by spending the last week throwing hissy fits. This, in defense of a “sport” where the losing players cry on camera.*

*The massive and hysterical response to my jovial sports piece proves how right I was. Nothing explains the uniform, Borg-like caterwauling, but that soccer is a game for beret-wearers. Most of the articles attacking me are verbless strings of obscenities, their subject matter identified only in the title*

*Consequently, I’ve decided to emulate The New York Times, which runs the exact same column, year after year, “Soccer Catches On, Take 27,” by re-running mine on how excruciatingly boring soccer is.*

*This past week has allowed me to add several new items to my list of grievances.*

*Further proof that soccer is a game for girls: Since my column came out, a guy from the Paraguay team (Uruguay? Who cares?) was caught biting an opponent in a match. Not punching. Not a cross-body block. BITING! How long can it be until we see hair-pulling in soccer? ...*

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## National Review

### Color over Character

***On this Fourth of July, 50 years after the Civil Rights Act, we are still bitterly divided over race.***

by John Fund

This week marked the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibited discrimination in employment, public accommodations, and federally funded programs. We all should celebrate how, a century after the Civil War, moral leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. persuaded Congress that it was wrong to treat people differently based on their skin color. “No more powerful expression of a commitment to equal opportunity can be found in the annals of modern legislation anywhere in the world,” professor Edward Erlor of California State university has noted.

And yet, sadly, the country has lost sight of much of the reason the Civil Rights Act was supported by overwhelming bipartisan majorities in Congress (more than 80 percent of Republicans and two-thirds of Democrats). People all across the political spectrum believed the promise of the new law, which was to replace segregation with a color-blind society, or something as close to it as we could get. In King’s famous words, people would “not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Opponents of the Civil Rights Act warned that it might serve as a vehicle for racial quotas and reverse discrimination. Senator Hubert Humphrey, the bill’s principal sponsor and later the 1968 Democratic nominee for president, flatly disputed any such suggestions. He famously promised to eat the bill if it led to racial preferences. Responding to one of his colleagues in debate on the bill, Humphrey said: “If the Senator can find in Title VII . . . any language which provides that an

employer will have to hire on the basis of percentage or quota related to color, race, religion, or national origin, I will start eating the pages one after another, because it is not in there.”

Clint Bolick, a noted constitutional lawyer, captured this debate in his book [Changing Course: Civil Rights at the Crossroads](#):

The great liberal Justice William O. Douglas viewed the racial preferences applied by the state as any veteran of the civil-rights movement should — he considered them invalid on their face. Douglas looked for support to Justice Thurgood Marshall, the former civil-rights lawyer who had forcefully proclaimed in his argument in *Brown v. Board of Education* 20 years before that “the Constitution is color blind in our dedicated belief.” In a response that tragically symbolized the wholesale abandonment of traditional principles by the former champions of civil rights, Justice Marshall glibly replied to Douglas: “You guys have been practicing discrimination for years. Now it is our turn.

In the years since then, many civil-rights advocates have continued to shift their goals away from the ideal of a color-blind society. In 2003, on the 40th anniversary of King’s famous 1963 speech on the Washington Mall, Hillary Clinton boldly asserted: “If we don’t take race as part of our character, then we are kidding ourselves.”

The new problem is that race is increasingly trumping character when it come to federal law. Federal laws written in the aftermath of the Civil Rights Act required the demonstration of intentional discrimination in matters such as hiring, housing, contracting, and admission policies before action was warranted. Now the Obama Administration claims that enforcement of civil-rights law can be based on statistical evidence that supposedly shows a “disparate impact” on certain minority groups.

The Department of Justice, for instance, has issued policies [warning](#) that “racial discrimination in school disciplines is a real problem today.” They cite studies showing that African Americans made up 15 percent of the student population but accounted for more than 35 percent of suspensions. The warning is clear: Teachers and principals may have to answer for suspensions of black students if those suspension are not in direct proportion to their numbers. But there might be another explanation: Black students might misbehave in disproportionate numbers; and also, as Gail Heriot, a member of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, [notes](#), black students might also be disproportionately victimized by disorderly classrooms.” One solution to the problem of unequal schools might be to make sure that families have more of the kind of school choice that the Obama Justice Department so bitterly opposes.

Yale historian Geoffrey Kabaservice lays much of the blame for the racial polarization of our politics on Republicans, who have, he alleges, alienated minority voters in areas such as immigration, voting rights, and the minimum wage. At the same time, he acknowledges that Democrats have adopted a program of color-conscious solutions that focus on affirmative action and wealth redistribution. “Republicans have never gotten on board with that last piece,” Kabaservice [told Politico](#), “and so Democrats now almost have to define Republicans as anti-civil rights.” As Politico notes: “Democrats have seized that viewpoint, sharpening their civil-rights rhetoric against Republicans to the point where bipartisanship on the issue has all but disappeared.”

The country has never fully accepted the racial-entitlement revisionism that leftists have imposed on civil-rights issues. Americans support equal opportunity and outreach but still hold up the goal of a color-blind society. Last year, a Gallup poll found that three-quarters of whites believe that college applicants should be admitted solely based on merit, even if that results in few minorities

being admitted. More interestingly, in the same poll, 59 percent of Hispanics said that applicants should be judged only on merit, while blacks were divided in their views, with 48 percent supporting the use of race as a factor in admissions and 44 percent opposing it.

There are sound reasons that so many Americans resist a regime of racial entitlements. Schools now put a race-conscious fist on the admissions scale rather than a thumb and clearly admit students based on race. They aren't doing these students a favor. Affirmative-action students are 50 to 75 percent more likely to drop out of a science program than are regular admits. At law schools, they are two or three times more likely to fail the bar exam. But students who attend a school where their entering credentials are similar to those of their fellow students are more likely to finish and fulfill their work and life ambitions. We almost certainly now have fewer black doctors, lawyers, and business chiefs than we would have had under race-neutral admissions policies.

In [\*Wounds That Will not Heal: Affirmative Action and Our Continuing Racial Divide\*](#), Princeton professor Russell Nieli wrote: "It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that racial-preference policies have lulled substantial segments of the black middle class into complacency and half-hearted performance in our increasingly education-focused world." That isn't the outcome that supporters of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 hoped for or promised. It's time to return to the original vision of civil rights that principled liberals such as Hubert Humphrey and William O. Douglas supported.

## **Roger L. Simon** **[America at the Crossroads on the Fourth of July](#)**

America is at a crossroads — we always seem to be, but this time we really are.

We are living under the administration of a president that is now the least popular since World War II. A full one-third of those polled by [Quinnipiac](#) rate Barack Obama the worst president since 1945. (Reagan is rated the best.)

What accounts for this? There are dozens of reasons that have been detailed on these pages and many others. The man has lied to us multiple times — and to himself as well, no doubt — and many people now apparently sense this. But I think the deepest reason, the motivating cause, stems from a time Barack Obama actually *didn't* lie, but told an important truth.

Back on July 27, 2004, a then obscure Illinois senator made himself famous by standing in front of the Democratic National Convention and speaking these words: "There is not a liberal America and a conservative America. There is a United States of America. There is not a black America and a white America, a Latino America, an Asian America — there's the United States of America."

Did he believe those words? Maybe. Once upon a time. But evidently not very deeply. The fact is he betrayed them completely and almost everything he has done wrong has stemmed from that betrayal. He has acted in the most partisan and deceitful manner, surrounding himself with a tiny group of yes-women and yes-men, making a mockery of his self-proclaimed transparency, shamelessly exploiting interest groups in a way that could only divide our society while diminishing America's place in the world, and allowing evil forces to grow across the globe.

All of this while being convinced he is always doing the right thing. The rest of us are wrong. He is not the commander-in-chief. He is the moral narcissist in chief. It's not "I think, therefore I am." It's "I believe — therefore it is."

But most of the country seems to realize that now. And his poll numbers reflect it. Sometimes it seems as if his only real supporters are government employees, food stamp recipients, and the editorial board of the *New York Times*. Whatever the case, that 2004 speech to the DNC is so far in the rear view mirror we might as well be on Battlestar Galactica.

So what do we do? How do we become — on this Fourth of July — the United States of America again?

First of all, we should get over ourselves. Our country may be great, but we're nothing special just because we realize a few political or economic points. Moral narcissism is the psychological illness of our times. It infects all of us. Liberals and progressives aren't the only ones who adhere to "I believe — therefore it is" and make a hash of things. Plenty of conservatives and libertarians do too.

I will admit that we do not suffer from MN as badly, but we still suffer from it. The destructive manner in which Tea Party Republicans and mainstream Republicans treat each other, even in those cases when they believe nearly the same things and differ mainly on strategy, attests to moral narcissism. They should calm down and concentrate on the larger objectives.

The situation we are in this July 4th calls for humility of talk coupled with firmness of action. It does not call for circular firing squads. With thirty-three percent of the country acknowledging Obama as the worst president since the Second World War, people on the other side and in the middle are clearly beginning to listen. Ears are opening. This is, as they saying goes, a golden opportunity.

This Fourth of July, take it. Talk to your liberal and independent friends, family and neighbors, but don't gloat. Don't point to the polls and brag "I told you so!" Commiserate with them instead. You and they are Americans, after all, as Barack Obama once said and then forgot or ignored, and it is our great country that has come to this pass. And, as we all know, as America goes, so goes the world.

This is serious business. Just being right doesn't mean much. Getting things fixed does. We are at that tipping point where it could get fixed. It's up to us. If not us, who?

## National Review

### [The Problem with Science - Is scientists.](#)

by Kevin D. Williamson

To repurpose Willi Schlamm\*, the problem with science is scientists. In the current issue of National Review, Charles C. W. Cooke has a pitiless essay on the cult of Neil deGrasse Tyson and "America's nerd problem," and in the prior issue I touched on a similar subject, the meme-ification of science for political purposes, in "Nobody @\$%&! Loves Science." The common theme is *prestige*: Science enjoys enormous public esteem, which it has earned for itself, and it is inevitable that political types seek to bask in that prestige themselves, or to dress their policy preferences in white lab coats. Thus the MSNBC humble-braggadocio about being "nerds" — Neil deGrasse Tyson and Chris Hayes being fellow nerds in the same sense that Buzz Aldrin and those monkeys were fellow astronauts.

The problem is that scientific prestige accompanies scientists well outside their fields of expertise. That's true when they wander into other scientific fields — as I noted in my essay, Carl Sagan authored scientific illiteracies based on long-discredited ideas in the course of arguing for abortion

— but the problem is most acute when it comes to the matter of politics. A relatively recent and intensely annoying example of this comes from my alma mater, the University of Texas, which is proud to employ the physicist Steven Weinberg, who was awarded the Nobel prize in 1979. Professor Weinberg is not short of opinions — evangelizing for causes ranging from atheism to Zionism — and is unsurprisingly interested in the question of government funding for scientific research, a subject he explores in his compact essay “The Crisis in Big Science,” recently republished in *The Best American Science and Nature Writing* of 2013. (Yes, I am a little behind on my reading; I also have 54,000 unread e-mails.) Professor Weinberg’s essay is remarkably simple-minded, though it is admirably modest: Offering a potted history of the Standard Model, he mentions the unification of the weak and electromagnetic forces but not the fact that he is one of the men who did that.

I do not get the impression that Professor Weinberg is the grasping sort, but it is worth noting that the man arguing that we need to spend more money not only on science but on most everything government does — he endorses a general increase in tax rates and an equally general expansion of the state — is a 1 percenter among public dependents. More than that: He was, as of 2012, the ninth most highly paid professor (\$536,000) in these United States, annually taking home the equivalent of Berkshire Hathaway CEO Warren Buffett’s salary plus Morningstar CEO Joe Mansueto’s salary. His wife is paid an additional quarter-million a year as a tenured professor at the University of Texas law school (the reputation of which is in dramatic decline of late). Some years ago, an administrator at the University of Texas described Professor Weinberg’s professional responsibilities to me in approximately these words: “He has a Nobel prize; he does what he wants.” The Weinberg household is a very significant net recipient of tax dollars. That being written, he seems to be a very productive man, and UT has spent a great deal more money on much less admirable investments: Mack Brown, who led the Longhorns to mediocrity on the gridiron, was paid approximately ten times what Professor Weinberg is.

Before I go on, I should note that my objection to Professor Weinberg’s essay is the stupidity and crudeness of its argument; I largely agree with his position about funding ambitious science. In fact, it is because I agree with his position on Big Science that the rest of his essay vexes me. His good point is wrapped in a wrongheaded and poisonous generality; it’s like serving an ice-cream sundae in a bowl shaped like Andrew Cuomo’s face.

Just as Austin spends on far less worthy endeavors than physicists, Washington spends on far less worthy projects than the fundamental infrastructure necessary to their work, such as particle accelerators and space-based telescopes. These are large projects, fiscally and physically — Switzerland’s Large Hadron Collider at CERN spills over into France — sometimes beyond the carrying capacity of anything short of a national government or a consortium of them. It was in fact the frustrating fight over the Superconducting Super Collider (SSC) that first brought me into contact with Professor Weinberg; he was an energetic advocate for the project, and I was writing about it for my college newspaper. The SSC was a project dear to UT’s heart, as it was under the direction of a member of its physics department, Roy Schwitters, and was to be built in Texas. Professor Weinberg relates a very Washingtonian story about the debacle, in which he is advised that before the site selection, the SSC had 100 supporters in the Senate, but after the site selection it could expect to have two. That is approximately what happened. The project, begun under Republican governor Bill Clements and President Ronald Reagan, was torpedoed by Ann Richards and House Democrats, with a largely uninterested Bill Clinton attempting to intervene on the project’s behalf at the last minute, and then signing its death warrant a few months later. The site in Waxahachie, with its 15 miles of tunnel, is a monument to how politics works.

Professor Weinberg understands the defects of the political system when it comes to the management of substantial scientific projects, but he proposing expanding the scope of that

defective system — not only in regard to politics, but categorically. He offers us no reason to believe that we should expect different results from doing precisely the same thing — the very definition of insanity misattributed to Albert Einstein. (The actual source seems to have been a Narcotics Anonymous book, but scientists enjoy more prestige than do recovering drug addicts, which is why Steven Weinberg's public-policy thoughts get published and those of your equally well-informed Uncle Roscoe do not.) As he notes, one of the reasons that projects such as the SSC end up exceeding their cost estimates is that Congress slow-walks appropriations to them, dragging out the process and adding to time-related expenses, which in construction can be substantial. Rather than a general increase in that kind of activity, what is called for in the matter of science funding is precisely the opposite: Ambitious projects should be funded, if they are to be funded, fully, with a one-time vote, parking the money with the National Science Foundation or another institution rather than drip-dropping them through annual appropriations. These are big projects, but not particularly big projects by Washington standards: The Large Hadron Collider cost less than \$7 billion to build, and the SSC was budgeted for around \$2 billion, compared to nearly \$800 billion a year for Social Security. We spend \$30 billion a year on farm subsidies, and Big Science is a better investment than Big Elmer — Archer Daniels Midland can pay its own bills.

Funding these projects is a responsibility that must fall to the United States, Professor Weinberg argues, because “Europe has worse financial problems than the United States, and the European Union Commission is now considering the removal of large science projects from the EU budget.” But he never considers the fact that Europe's economic woes are in part a product of the very policies — higher taxes, bigger government — he demands. Europe is just a little ahead of the curve. In the closing of this same essay, he demands “restoring higher and more progressive tax rates, especially on investment income,” not in the service of more “special pleading for one or another particular public good,” but for a larger public sector across the board: SEC enforcers, police, firemen — and somebody inform the UTPCPD that he used the horribly gender-specific “firemen” rather than “firefighters” — higher pay for teachers, the works. He never gives any reason for expecting that to produce better results. The problem with the SEC, for example, is not manpower or regulatory empowerment; it's that the SEC is the safety school of financial careers, and it is staffed by people who are not as smart or as driven as the people who are working to subvert them, or at least to get around them.

On the subject of teachers, he writes that we ought to spend more in order to “make becoming a teacher an attractive career choice for our best college graduates.” But in fact, study after study after study has shown that public-sector workers in general — and teachers specifically — are paid far above market wages. Considering total compensation — wages, benefits, pension, etc. — public-school teachers earn a premium of 52 percent over similarly skilled workers in the private sector. And though I doubt that Professor Weinberg makes it over to the Sanchez Building very often, if he did he might notice that it is full of dimwits: Colleges of education are consistently filled with students having the worst SAT or ACT scores of any department — including journalism, for Pete's sake.

He's also a bit of a rogue in the lying-with-numbers department, writing: “In the past decade, the National Science Foundation has seen the fraction of grant proposals that it can fund drop from 33 percent to 23 percent.” But the NSF budget in 2014 is about 35 percent more than it was in 2004 — so what happened over the past decade? There are many possible explanations for Professor Weinberg's figure: The number of applications may have gone up, the size of grants may have gone up, etc. But what did not happen was a reduction in the NSF's budget, and it is intellectually dishonest to imply otherwise.

And more generally: Why should we judge the NSF's value by the number of projects it funds? Perhaps it would be better if it funded fewer but better projects — the agency's \$7.6 billion budget

could build a Large Hadron Collider every year. Considering what the NSF does spend money on — e.g., ridiculous “citizen technology forums” in which scientifically illiterate Americans are gathered so that their views on subjects they know nothing about can be properly assessed — fewer but better might be the right model. Spotlight-loving congressmen like to point out ridiculous-sounding NSF studies such as “Sexual Conflict, Social Behavior and the Evolution of Waterfowl Genitalia,” and everybody loves a good goose-penis joke, but the real point is that that kind of small-ball work is precisely the sort of thing that you don’t need the nation-state corporately involved in. Even a modest university can afford its own waterfowl-genital research, and if you want to know what ignorant people think about science, you can stroll down to the local college of education, where you can find people who are ignorant about any subject you might care to identify.

But in Professor Weinberg’s world, this doesn’t matter: We can afford categorical expansion of the public sector because “dollar for dollar, government spending stimulates the economy more than tax cuts.” I should note that he does preface that with “I am not an economist.” In fact, it’s not known that “government spending” categorically stimulates the economy *at all*; it seems to matter rather a lot what government spends the money on, what sorts of institutions it acts through, economic conditions exogenous to policy, etc. Likewise, he argues that astronomy, like physics, “faces tasks beyond the resources of individuals,” but at the same time argues that the only valuable science associated with the International Space Station could have been done more easily and less expensively with an unmanned satellite — precisely the sort of thing that private firms now do. Most Big Science projects do not have obvious or immediate commercial applications, but then those applications are not always predictable: The World Wide Web was invented at CERN to help its scientists communicate with their colleagues around the world. (And it turned out that that technology was great for porn, gambling, and cat pictures, too.) A bigger public sector — especially one funded by higher taxes on investment — bleeds resources out of potentially productive sources of commercial funding for scientific research. There are a great many examples of the fruitful interaction of public and commercial development. Unless you have an ideological aversion to profit-oriented research, then you want to fire both barrels.

Alternatives to the historical model are of no obvious interest to Professor Weinberg. Reform of the NSF and other institutions? Not on his radar: Just turn on the money hose, because it also apparently has never occurred to him to reconsider entrusting the very institutions that made the wrong choices with the Super Collider and the International Space Station and so much more with more resources to make more decisions based on the same flawed decision-making processes and subject to the same perverse political incentives.

How smart do you have to be to argue for something that dumb?

It is striking that a mind that has helped to unveil both the largest and tiniest phenomena is capable of producing this catalogue of simpleminded banalities on the relatively trivial subject of public policy. Professor Weinberg’s limited point about Big Science is a good one; his generalizing it into a brief for a categorically larger welfare state and public sector is the sort of thing that should embarrass an intellectual of his standing. And that this appeared in *The Best American Science and Nature Writing* should embarrass us all, if this is the best we can do.

*\*Schlamm is remembered for having coined the saying, "The trouble with socialism is socialism. The trouble with capitalism is capitalists."*

## Financial Times

### A malfunction that spawns Frankenstein bugs

*Overused drugs do not work, but unused drugs do not pay*

by Anjana Ahuja



There is a mischievous Punch cartoon that depicts a woman and five men sitting round a conference table. The caption reads: “That’s an excellent suggestion, Miss Triggs. Perhaps one of the men here would like to make it.”

Dame Sally Davies must feel like a modern-day Miss Triggs. More than a year ago the chief medical officer for England warned that [antibiotic resistance should be ranked alongside terrorism](#) as a national threat. Failing to keep up the medicinal arms race against superbugs, she said, would fling us back to the dark days of the 19th century when a cut finger could lead to a festering death.

Her apocalyptic vision was not much reported – unlike [David Cameron’s strikingly similar pronouncement](#) this week that we are entering a post-antibiotics era which will see us “cast back into the dark ages of medicine where treatable infections and injuries will kill once again”. The prime minister has ordered a review by economist Jim O’Neill, co-funded by the Wellcome Trust, the UK’s biggest medical research foundation, into why industry has failed to deliver any new antibiotics for decades.

The battalions of bacteria have meanwhile marched on, relentlessly replicating and evolving and spewing out new generations of randomly mutated daughters. Some of these will have genetic mutations that allow them to survive medicinal onslaught, and replicate in ever greater numbers.

The common skin infection bacterium *Staphylococcus aureus*, or staph, for example, takes about 30 minutes to divide. If a bacterium entered your body this morning via a cut on your hand it would have spawned a colony of more than 1m bacteria, collectively containing about 300 mutations, by the time you go to bed. Your immune system will probably fight it off. But if it does not, within days you might need an antibiotic, such as methicillin, a modified form of penicillin.

If you really drew the short straw, the bacterium was not simple staph but its dangerous, methicillin-resistant cousin, or MRSA. Again, many healthy people can overcome it but some,

especially the elderly or those with organ damage, cannot. Several strains have even outwitted vancomycin, a so-called treatment of last resort. Each year, 25,000 people across Europe die from drug-resistant bacterial infections.

The virtual halt in antibiotic development since the 1980s is a conspicuous market failure – but a dimly predictable one. If it takes a pharmaceutical company \$1bn – as the industry often claims – to coax a new drug through the development pipeline, the last thing it wants is for its elixir to be used on as few people as possible, for the shortest possible time, as is absolutely necessary with antibiotics.

Even healthy pharmaceutical companies struggle to make the business case for developing them. AstraZeneca recently scaled back research into some promising antibiotics to focus on chronic conditions such as heart disease and respiratory disorders, which provide a steady supply of long-term consumers. Roche is one of the few to stick with antibiotics – but it has warned against linking commercial rewards to prescription rates.

Commercial stagnation has led to clinical desperation: doctors are once again reaching for colistin, a ferocious anti-bacterial first licensed in the 1960s and largely abandoned soon after because of its toxicity. When newer drugs stop working, doctors go back to the old ones.

The dispiriting truth is that antibiotics are socially and institutionally undervalued. Brad Spellberg, an infectious diseases specialist at the University of California, Los Angeles, [pointed out](#) in 2012 that US healthcare providers would willingly fork out \$50,000 for chemotherapy to prolong a cancer patient's life by three months, but balked at paying any more than \$100 for a lifesaving course of antibiotics. He concluded that drug pricing "is based on public perception and fear. People are terrified of cancer but not of infections." The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry greeted Mr Cameron's warnings in a similar vein, noting the "price [of antibiotics] has not always reflected their value to society".

President Barack Obama put down a marker when he signed the Generating Antibiotics Incentives Now Act into law two years ago. It speeds up the approval process and gives drug developers five years of market exclusivity, on top of any existing patent protection.

Similar incentives, together with an acknowledgment that antibiotics constitute a global public good requiring careful stewardship, are likely to feature in Mr O'Neill's report, due out next spring. But it is hard to see how the stalemate can be cracked without government money too, possibly in the form of state licensing or patent buyouts.

Pharmaceutical companies also need to assume some responsibility. By throwing influence, infrastructure and money behind antibiotic development, they can disfigure their public image as secretive, corrupt, manipulative profiteers. As things stand, the World Health Organisation warns the bacteria are closing in: "This serious threat [of resistance] is no longer a prediction for the future; it is happening right now in every region of the world and has the potential to affect anyone, of any age, in any country."

The more antibiotics leach into the environment, the tougher our bacterial foes become. Some developing countries offer antibiotics without prescriptions, leading to overuse and misuse; nascent healthcare systems contain hospitals that flush antibiotic-laden sewage into the water supply.

In other states, up to 80 per cent of antibiotic use is in animal husbandry. China's pig farms, where antibiotics are used mainly as growth promoters, have become crucibles for new, drug-resistant bacterial strains.

Until we restock the medicine cabinet, individual survival will become a macabre lottery. I am reminded of the thoughts of John Bartlett, who chaired a task force on this issue for the Infectious Diseases Society of America. "Policy makers must act now, because it can take 10 or more years to bring a new antibiotic to market, and drug-resistant bacteria are evolving fast." He said that 10 years ago.

*The writer was named best science commentator at the 2013 Comment Awards*

## Human Events

### Soccer: Part Deux

by Ann Coulter



PARIS — Soccer fans have decided to prove me wrong about soccer being a fruity sport by spending the last week throwing hissy fits. This, in defense of a "sport" where the losing players cry on camera.

The massive and hysterical response to my jovial sports piece proves how right I was. Nothing explains the uniform, Borg-like caterwauling, but that soccer is a game for beret-wearers. Most of the articles attacking me are verbless strings of obscenities, their subject matter identified only in the title

Consequently, I've decided to emulate The New York Times, which runs the exact same column, year after year, "Soccer Catches On, Take 27," by re-running mine on how excruciatingly boring soccer is.

This past week has allowed me to add several new items to my list of grievances.

Further proof that soccer is a game for girls: Since my column came out, a guy from the Paraguay team (Uruguay? Who cares?) was caught *biting* an opponent in a match. Not punching. Not a cross-body block. BITING! How long can it be until we see hair-pulling in soccer?

I was in Paris the night Algeria played Russia, prompting hordes of drunken Algerians to riot on the Champs Elysees, hanging out of cars, yelling and honking all night. V-Day was not celebrated with as much enthusiasm.

This was for a game that ended in a tie. Yes, a TIE — an exhilarating 1-1 final score. I don't speak Arabic, but I assume they were shouting something like, "WE TIED! WE TIED! WE TIED!"

So in a 100-minute game, something happened two times and nothing happened 98 times.

As with Algeria's glorious 1-1 tie game against Russia, Team USA tied Portugal and lost to Germany — and then advanced. How did the U.S. fail to win in two straight games, but *advance* in this apparently interminable tournament? I believe we are witnessing the implementation of that favorite rule of soccer moms: "Everybody's a winner!!!"

The reason there are so many fights among spectators at soccer games is to compensate for the tedium. Fans feel like they're watching a sport, so there ought to be excitement someplace. Even the players would rather watch the action in the stands than what's happening on the field.

Being in France does expose me to a way of life that illustrates why foreigners like soccer so much. The BBC News network proves that Europeans are incapable of being bored.

You can never tell how much time is left in soccer, which only adds to the agony. The refs keep extending the game like snippy hall monitors with their little red cards and yellow cards.

Another crucial role of the refs is to stop the games for a "heat rest." Tell that to NFL players in New Orleans or Miami, where regular-season games have reached temperatures of over 100 degrees. Two Super Bowls hit temperatures above 80 degrees — and football players are wearing about 100 pounds of gear, not the airy frocks of soccer players.

NFL players have died of heat stroke. The only risk of death in a soccer game is when some Third World peasant goes on a murderous rampage after a bad call.

Among the least obscenity-laced attacks on my soccer column was one written by two twits who work for the Huffington Post, Nick Wing and Paige Lavender. They denounce me for my ignorance of soccer, after scouring Wikipedia for several amazing facts about the game.

I say that soccer is mind-numbing because all they do is run up and down the field? Why, Wing and Lavender are just chock-full of little statistics: Did you know that all players on a team run an average of 62 miles per game?

Now that really makes soccer interesting! Watching people run 62 miles by circumnavigating a big field all day with no scoring!

Catherine Thompson sniped in Talking Points Memo: “It’s worth noting that aside from the Olympics, the World Cup is really the only occasion when an American audience gets a chance to cheer on a national — rather than a regional — sports team. But apparently that doesn’t jibe with Coulter’s vision of patriotism.”

Aside from the Olympics? Yes, and aside from ABBA, Fiendens musik is the biggest Swedish rock band. Aside from that gigantic “aside from,” it’s still not true. Has Thompson ever heard of the Ryder Cup, the Davis Cup or the America’s Cup? Apparently, those competitions don’t jibe with Thompson’s vision of patriotism.

Unless they’re trying to impress a boy, most girls don’t especially like football. Vice versa for men and ballet. I’ve never known either sex to care at all — much less obsessively browbeat the opposite sex about it. Why must soccer fans get in such a snit about people who hate soccer?

Another denunciation of me came from The Washington Post’s sports reporter, Mike Wise. To fully appreciate his critique of my soccer column, you must look up his photo right now.

Done? OK, in addition to calling soccer “futbol,” Wise writes, “I like to think we are now deeper, more internationally sophisticated” — which he demonstrates by squealing at me, “Get off my pitch, lady.” Why, precisely, is it so vitally important that we join “an international sports community”? Doesn’t this guy have something better to do than make-believe he likes soccer? Like practice his hair-pulling?





