

## ‡2 Rawlins' Scrawlins

### A Germs

- A1 The more widely trusted an institution, the less trustworthy it is.  
 A2 The Middle Class: the one not on welfare.  
 A3 Gov'ts tend to permit free speech only if it's ineffectual.

### B Guess Whether I Read the 2<sup>nd</sup> Half

- B1 History instructor Ludlow Baldwin<sup>1</sup> (Gilman School), who 1<sup>st</sup> instilled in me a love for ancient history, was the most memorable teacher I encountered at any educational level.  
 B2 An incident of my senior year will illustrate why. In American History at Gilman, students were required to read a certain number of supplemental related books of their choice. I proposed to Ludlow that *Gone with the Wind* would be apt — but was so long that it ought to count as 2 books. He said: you're right, so just read the first half of *GWTW*, and that'll count as 1 book.

### C Doubletakes

- C1 The light side of heavy maternalism: "My [Irish] mother won't let me marry an Italian. She says Italians are too dominating."<sup>2</sup>  
 C2 Entertainment-world superplug-implosion: "He's a wonderful actor. And there's no pretense about him."<sup>3</sup> (Hey, didn't Reagan already pull that one on us for 8 years?)

### D How to Soak the Rich & Have Them Like It

- D1 There is a peaceful means for lowering interclass hatreds and simultaneously redistributing wealth, a means so simple and so inexpensive (as regards taxes) that its very mention is banned from all US media (right or left wing).  
 D2 This radical approach is: simply do whatever it takes<sup>4</sup> to ensure that middle and especially upper income groups have more kids, while the poor have fewer. This approach (inverting the usual trend) would also ensure that, statistically,<sup>5</sup> more children than not would grow up surrounded by affection, toys, books, computers, optimism, intellectual stimulation, and gentility. Less frequent foetal-alcohol-syndrome infants, and premature cocaine-snowbabies.<sup>6</sup> More homes with two parents. And no rats. Little things like that.

<sup>1</sup> Ludlow is one of the oldest & dearest friends of my wise stepfather, John Williams Avirett 2nd, and of myself. All 3 of us are fortunate to have married extraordinarily kind, bright, and cultured women.

<sup>2</sup> Conversation-fragment witnessed by Monika Mathews & DR, Loyola College (DS 215) 1990/3/9.

<sup>3</sup> Stated verbatim by C.Bernsen, of friend T.Berenger: *Entertainment Tonight* 1990/5/11.

<sup>4</sup> If this sounds drastic or unfeeling, then ask: is a temporarily-impolite but effective & relatively rapid solution more brutal than perpetual degradation? (Were Margaret Sanger or Bertrand Russell alive, there's little doubt: [a] they'd urge intercepting this cycle with aggressive population control, and [b] network TV would ignore their very existence.)

<sup>5</sup> This probabilistic argument should not be construed as ignoring or belittling the remarkable, hard-earned exceptions that occur among numerous poor families. On the other hand, such exceptions are too often mis-addeduced in order to suggest that no foresighted demographic policies are required, to lower the high statistical incidence of poverty breeding poverty.

<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, Marie "Snowbaby" Peary & DR were never friends. But I am glad for her that she did not live to see the desecration of her lovely nickname, which now refers to children (of cocaine-addict mothers) who are pre-addicted to cocaine at birth. (Another cycle. See fn before last.)

**D3** Also, by this means, concentrations of wealth would become diluted naturally & relatively painlessly, instead of by the current gov't policy of (forceably) taxing provident couples (who thus can afford fewer well-cared-for children themselves) in order to pay (inadequately) to feed the overnumerous children of someone else (usually improvident and single) — children whose depressing home-lives virtually kill their future-chances from the outset, so that the same gov't that encourages such a mess then taxes the middle class all over again, for eternally-ineffective band-aid "head-start" & "JOBS"-style programs.<sup>7</sup>

**D4** Why not simply give our *entire society* a headstart, beginning right now (instead of collecting "data" interminably): ensuring that the children of the next US generation are born predominantly into caring, decent homes — rather than our going on inertially accepting (as *faits accompli*) birth after birth to poor, semi-literate, and-or addict parents living in hopeless slums, so that we must forever be trying to patch up (belatedly) the inevitable resulting disaster: illiteracy, crime, drugs, and the whole by-now-dreadily-familiar show? (What would we think of the Dutch people's smarts, if they'd never built dikes but instead just tried bailing the sea out of Holland forever?)

**D5** Such selfevident social ideas (or something like them) have been around for decades. Yet one now never hears them at all in the media, which is [see *DIO 2* ‡1 fn 38 & ‡6 fn 23] run by parties who (while themselves religiously avoiding going anywhere near slums) proscribe such approaches as "elitist" and thus intolerably offensive to the poor's "dignity" & "ethnic pride" (and other similarly patronizing pseudo-sensitive word-stroking). Politeness is, after all, much more important than alleviating generation after generation of mass misery and despair.

### E You Are Getting Verrrry Sleepy . . .

**E1** US "news" outlets (especially TV, which forms most voters opinions: see §A1) ever-increasingly act as propagandists for our Rulers and for the ever-shrinking spectrum of Conventional tenets they tolerate.

**E2** The result is a spectacle which I recommend henceforth labelling: 'SNEWS. This because: [a] TV 'newsprograms are boring & repetitive. [b] So are the ads (overt & covert) which clutter them up. [c] The network trinity 'newscasters, through incessant repetitions, lullaby the public into accepting explicit or implicit viewpoints useful to the gov't, and dissenters are given virtually no space. [d] As the nation sleepwalks into decline, the public is pacified-hypnotized into accepting that this is occurring despite the media's best efforts to reverse the trend. [e] Each network 'newsdepartment is *owned* (thus the conspicuous apostrophe). It is owned and controlled by a power-dealing, ad-catering organization — whose interests are not your interests (borrowing a Vidalism from a slightly different context).

<sup>7</sup> E.g., see "Breaking the Welfare Cycle That Destroys Our Children" (which starts deceiving us right in the title: the next-last word), signed by Senator Moynihan (D, NY) (*Wash Post Nat. Weekly Ed.* 1990/12/3 p.23). The article (to which I add occasional astonished emphases) states that, after Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) began in 1935, surprisingly: "we experienced a vast, *still little understood* social change involving a huge increase in the number and proportion of children born out of wedlock. . . . among children born in the years 1967-69, the first cohort . . . tracked. . . . 72.3 percent of black children and 15.7 percent of nonblack children were supported by AFDC at one point or another during childhood. . . . Congress [in 1988 established] extensive provisions for the evaluation of the impact of the programs, especially the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills training program (JOBS). . . . that *will tell us over time* the extent to which child dependency is increasing or decreasing — and what if anything, government programs are doing to affect that dependency. . . . high rates of births to young, single women *may be with us for a long time*. We need to . . . collect the right data. . . . We will not even begin to know whether [Congress' 1988 bill] is having any effect until the year 2000 at the earliest, perhaps the year 2010. (To those who may wish to protest that is too long, I would answer that *they* should have thought of that a quarter century ago when we first spotted this social change.") Comments: [a] No wonder politicians drink. [b] When's the next one-way flight to Japan or Europe? [c] *Animal House* rulership's reproach to Flounder: Face it, you screwed up; you trusted us. (Parapsychologists, UFOlogists, & Ptolemiss also prefer unending data-collection, thereby avoiding confronting the shame of having pursued & promoted a false path for decades.)

## F The Roundest Possible Number

Barring horrible (and, of course, inevitable) intervening consequences, natural world population growth will just roll along at around 2%/annum. A round number I've never seen computed in print: at this well-established growth rate, how long will it take before the entire population of the world is crowded shoulder-to-shoulder? (We'll know when the day approaches, because gov't-TV 'snews will be advertising the benefits of sleeping erect and of the wondrous new physical closeness of the brotherhood of man.) The land area of the Earth is around  $10^{14}$  meters<sup>2</sup>, and a standing human occupies roughly 1/10 m<sup>2</sup>. So  $10^{15}$  persons will literally cover the Earth's land with a solid 2 m-thick layer of human protoplasm. The current world population is about 1/2 of  $10^{10}$  persons, thus growth by a factor of around 200000 will do the trick. Since the above 2% figure corresponds to a growth-factor of 1.02 every year, we simply divide the log of 200000 by the log of 1.02 to get the answer: roughly 600 years<sup>8</sup> hence — or, about 2600 AD. That is, in less time than merely the span of history that has passed since the Crusades or Dante, our planet is scheduled to turn into a round human-sardine-can.

## G Shorts

**G1** Though most great academics are religiously unorthodox, dedicated scholars are akin to a priesthood: eschewing crude hedonism for a higher calling. And partaking of an elite priestly succession: preserving, purifying, and hopefully augmenting a precious and beloved heritage, even while passing it on down to those who come after.

**G2** The Solar System has 2 pairs of twin planets (near-identical mass): Venus-Earth and Uranus-Neptune. A peculiarity (evidently hitherto unremarked) that may provide a clue to the system's origin: both pairs involve contiguous planets (in order of mean distance from the Sun). Also: V-E is the closest pair of terrestrial planets, while U-N is the closest Jovian pair.<sup>9</sup> Finally: the only retrograde-rotating known planets in the Solar System are the inner members of these 2 planet-pairs: Venus and Uranus.

**G3** In the post-World-War-2 period, race-integration became the prime US goal for achieving social justice and equality. Meanwhile, it's been all downhill in the US for populism, the New Deal tradition, socialism, unions, and the intellectual left.

**G4** While wincing at the shams in what popularly passes for democracy, I am at least cautious about desiring instant pure democracy here, upon considering what the US public would do to the Bill of Rights if it could. (Polls indicate it would be more than 2/3 dismantled if put to popular vote.) Certainly, I would like a fuller slate than the pair we get to choose from in our Plunkittesque US Presidential "elections". And I regard no election as valid that does not have a none-of-the-above lever. But then I realize what sort would win here in a *truly* open contest. President Elvis? Lucky he's alive to accept.

**G5** When a criminal is to be tried (especially for murder), advocates have been known to protest that [a] the perpetrator was at the mercy of impulse & without internal self-governance, and [b] his punishment will not deter other criminals since they're just as irrational. But, when it's Oscar-time before the parole board, one instead hears: this is a sane person, who won't-do-it-again — because he's in control of his actions . . .

**G6** Refereeing is the key to equity & progress in the modern academic community. I am happy to say that (in my experience) the majority<sup>10</sup> of referee reports in US scientific

<sup>8</sup> For those who can't handle logs: multiply 1.02 times itself 616 times to see that the product is about 200000. [Note added 2008. Factor 1.02 is presently too high, so  $1000^9$  may be nearer the (hypothetical anyway) mark.]

<sup>9</sup> Speculation: if Me is an escaped satellite of V, while P is an escaped satellite of N, then each pair may bound the true planets of the Solar System. (Note: in §G2, "closest" refers to distance-ratio, not absolute distance.)

<sup>10</sup> R.Newton and I have estimated similar proportions: about 3/4. I must add that other scientists whom I respect report less fortunate experiences. But there is no question that the fraction of creditable referee reports in US science is substantial.

journals are both well-intentioned & competent. Given the state of fairness & expertise in numerous other realms, this record is something — and something important — to feel good about.

**G7** The fine print of FBI statistics show (*World Almanac 1991* p.848) that in 1989 there were 120 times as many murders *per capita* in the District of Columbia as in North Dakota. Not 120 more murders. Not 120% more murders. No, *one hundred and twenty TIMES more murders*. (For context: the D.C./N.Dakota ratio for all types of crimes is "merely" 4-to-1.) Are there perhaps sharp, relevant demographic differences between D.C. and N.Dakota, from which we might learn something regarding how to start lowering murder rates? TV 'snews isn't even slightly interested in this issue, so I guess the answer is: No.

**G8** Pragmatic cynics are clever enough to realize the usefulness of if-you-can't-say-something-nice-don't-say-anything sentiments, while genuine idealists (aghast at the resultant hypocrisy in the passing societal scene) are driven to overtly cynical observations. Superficial public perception thus easily reverses the two types.

## H Some Neglected Modern Saints: the Angelmaker Paradox

**H1** Those who condemn abortion fail to understand that abortion is, ethically speaking, the purest of deeds. A traditional French nickname for abortioners is "angelmakers". For, what the abortioneer accomplishes is a grievous sin on his own celestial scorecard: he goes to hell for murder. But he catches the foetus at a perfect moment: an utterly sinless soul. Every abortion-murder the angelmaker commits sends another pure soul to heaven. What could possibly be more selfless? How can the ideal of ethical sacrifice have a purer expression than: the *eternal*-hellfire-pain destruction of one's own soul, in exchange for the *eternal*-paradise salvation of thousands of one's fellow souls? Not even the Battle of Britain offers a better example of so many owing so much to so few. When technology produces test-tube foetus-farms and so finally realizes the progressive ethicist's awesome futuristic dream of mechanized mass-foetus-murder, heaven will be stormed by such an unprecedented wave of sinless souls that the deity's cup — and abode — may finally run over . . .

**H2** The pious life has traditionally been formed with the primary aim of the salvation of one's own eternal soul. In the context of our angelmakers, how embarrassingly self-centered this now seems. According to the purity & volume of those Saved, even the holiest long-ago saint's accomplishments pale by comparison to the esteemed work of these modern paragons of self-effacement. Until I see the Beatitudes and Dante revised, to atone for the neglect and misunderstanding abortioners have endured for centuries — until I see canonization proceedings initiated — I will know that the world still languishes in a primeval Limbo of pre-angelmaking ethics.

## I The Immortal 535

**I1** Cokey Roberts (ABC-TV 1990/9/16 David Brinkley 'snews-hour): why, Congressmen aren't re-elected automatically, as has been commonly stated of late; indeed, 93% of those who sat in the House when Speaker T.Foley first entered it are gone!

**I2** Ms.Roberts' misrepresentation is a classic instance of an increasingly omnipresent problem: journalism-as-lobbying. Take a close look at the data: Foley won his seat in 1964, 12 congressional races before her statement. Ms.Roberts emphasizes that only 7% of his colleagues are left — but the advocate in her omits the relevant math: the 12<sup>th</sup> root of 7% is 80%; so 4/5 of Congressmen have survived each election, on average. And the mean annual 20% casualty-rate includes deaths & retirements for other causes. Thus, the actual 24 year-average re-election rate is likely nearer 90%. Ms.Roberts' most obvious qualification as one of ABC 'snewspersons is that her father was the late Congressman Hale Boggs (who died in the congressional saddle). (ABC's promotion of such as Roberts tells us just how trustworthy it is.)

**I3** Whatever its reason,<sup>11</sup> *Time*'s 1990/11/19 cover stated the truth: even at a time of outrage at congressmen, 96% of incumbents got re-elected in 1990.

## J Practicals

**J1** How does one find an up-to-date roadmap? Most don't bear dates anymore. (Penny-counting publishers want to sell a mass-printing indefinitely.) This is an example of an abuse theoretically best handled by legislation, but which will probably not end until consumer journals start listing ratings & warnings.

**J2** With some exceptions, tape-decks display a digital "counter" which usually indicates revolutions  $n$  of one of the deck's reels;  $n$  is aggravatingly unproportional to time  $t$ , so it may be useful to provide the general relation of  $t$  to  $n$ , which is:  $t = A \cdot n + B \cdot n^2$ . For the now-ubiquitous Video Cassette Recorder,  $n$  records the takeup-reel's revolutions. At the customary 6-hour speed, with the US standard VHS tape, taking  $t$  in timeminutes, we have (to an accuracy of a few timemin)<sup>12</sup>  $t = 0.0309 \cdot n + 0.0000057 \cdot n^2$ .

## K Blinders

**K1** There is a wellknown legend that certain 17<sup>th</sup> century churchmen adamantly refused to look at the sunspots revealed in Galileo's telescope, allegedly because they could not believe there were blemishes on the solar disk.

**K2** However, was the churchmen's actual concern simply: possible eye-damage? Incidentally, Galileo later went blind.

**K3** Galileo at least took some precautions to dim the sunlight he observed; but many ordinary citizens today staunchly ignore warnings and stare right at the Sun during solar eclipses' partial phases. Result: every solar eclipse produces lots of retinal-damage cases. Lesson: never stare at the Sun; all you'll see is a doctor.

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<sup>11</sup> Boggs was Dem (majority party). *Time* is traditionally GOP (minority party). Which party wants numerical status quo? Which doesn't?

<sup>12</sup> The constant  $A$  depends upon the takeup reel's inner radius (pretty standard). The constant  $B$  is a function of tape-thickness, and will vary by a few percent. Note that an absolute difference in  $\Delta n$  does not correspond to a time difference  $\Delta t$  unless one knows what the mean  $n$  is; thus, it is useful to find the rate  $dt/dn$  as a function of  $n$ :  $dt/dn = 0.0309 + 0.0000114 \cdot n$ . Near the end of the reel, this rate is close to 1 min/per 10 revolutions. (The tape usually runs about 6h10m and ends with  $n$  about 5800.)