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www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

BY JEFFREY ST. CLAIR

13.07.2024

Running on Empty



Biden searching his memory banks during his NATO speech this week.

At the Houses of Parliament

Everybody's talking about the President

We all chipped in for a bag of cement

I took my bag into a grocer's store

The price is higher than my time before

Old man asked me why is it more?

– Paul McCartney, [Junior's Farm](#)

+ MSDNC's [Chris Hayes](#): “Biden is a decent man who has done nothing wrong. He has not got caught in a scandal—he's just aging. And that reality, I think, makes him increasingly likely to lose re-election to a Republican candidate...”

+ The real scandal is that liberals don't see arming a genocide as a scandal.

+ When people say, “Joe Biden’s a decent man,” what Biden are they talking about? The man who befriended Strom Thurmond, the man who treated Anita Hill dismissively, the man who plagiarized Neil Kinnock’s speeches, the man who crafted the most punitive and racist crime laws of the 20th Century, the man who voted for the Iraq war and armed a genocide?

+ You’ll notice no stammering or stuttering in this blatantly racist [Biden rant](#) from 1996 on the floor of the Senate, defending mandatory minimum sentences and an expansion of the federal prison system:

We must take back our neighborhoods. Somewhere on the order of 70 percent of one population group in America [he’s talking about Blacks] will have children born out of wedlock. And another population group is 40 percent and the largest population group, racial group, in America it’s something like 25 percent. The reason why these folks are convicted felons ain’t because they have high IQs. They’re stupid. Most of them. They’re not only predators. They’re stupid. The real smart ones don’t get caught. We don’t know how to rehabilitate. We have no idea how to rehabilitate. A noble urging and instinct on our part, but the truth is when a criminal is rehabilitated, we don’t know whether it’s real or not to recognize it. And secondly, if we’re convinced it’s real we don’t know why he got rehabilitated. He literally, and I’m not being facetious, seen God. He may have come to religion. He may have decided that his son or daughter’s future was hanging in the balance. He may, whatever. We don’t know what happened. It may have been through the program he was in in prison. But we have no notion why. We used to have indeterminate sentences. We used to say that we would allow a parole board to decide when or when not someone was rehabilitated. So they’d march for a certain period of time before a parole board, usually good actors or actresses got parole and the ones who didn’t act so good didn’t get parole. So the law we wrote says, hey, if you got sentenced and convicted the federal judge has to give you an eleven-year sentence. He or she can’t say, I kind of like you and I understand that your background is such that your mother may not have loved you when you were seven and your father left you when you were one and by the way when you got to school you sat next to someone who was anti-social and that rubbed off on you and therefore we realize you had it tough. Can’t do that. They go to jail for eleven years. Flat. A friend said but what this is going to do Joe is fill up more prisons now that judges can’t put people on probation. He’s right. So I, along with others, sponsored a bill to spend more money to build federal prisons.

+ Even if Biden can somehow prove he's competent (he can't), what is his own campaign's rationale for his reelection? That he will continue the same policies that have left him with a 35% approval rating?

+ It's a strange victory for Biden that the key question about his presidency is over his demyelinating brain and not the 186,000 Palestinians (according to [Lancet](#)) he's helped the Israelis kill.

+ According to Biden intimate Joe Scarborough, Biden believes Obama is behind the plot to oust him. "The Biden campaign and many Democratic officials do believe that Barack Obama is quietly working behind the scenes to orchestrate this. Joe Biden is deeply resentful of his treatment under not only the Obama staff but also the way he was pushed aside for Hillary Clinton."

+ On the day Biden announced his abortive presidential campaign in 2008, he said this about Obama: "I mean, you got the first mainstream African-American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy." Maybe Biden had decided to steal lines from his old pal Strom Thurmond instead of Neil Kinnock in this campaign.

"Joe Biden is *deeply* resentful of his treatment under not only the Obama staff but also the way he was pushed aside for Hillary Clinton"



Morning Joe-Joe Biden's Resentment-2024-07-11.mp4

+ Biden's phone-in conversations on Morning Joe resemble Nixon's with Kissinger during the Final Days, where his paranoia, petty grievances, aphasia and megalomania are on full display.

+ Obama enjoyed an approval rating of 60% when he left office (unjustifiably robust to my mind). That's 25 percent higher than either Biden or Trump at the end of their terms. Blaming Obama for his misfortune is a losing game. But Biden's a loser and a sore one at

that. He owes his presidency to Obama, who cleared the field for him in the Democratic primaries in 2020.

+ Scott Fitzgerald said that a true sign of genius was the ability to hold two opposing ideas in your mind at once. I'm not sure if that's really a sign of intelligence or evidence of schizophrenia. But the Biden campaign wants you to believe that Black Democrats are firmly behind him, while at the same time blaming the plot to oust him on Obama.

+ In fact, Black Democrats aren't firmly behind Biden, according to a new poll by The Economist...

Should Biden step aside...

Black voters: Yes 49%, No 34%

Hispanic voters: Yes 56%, No 22%

Younger voters: Yes 58%, No 20%

Independents: Yes 60%, No 21%

+ Post-debate polling shows only 29% believe Biden has the mental capacity and physical stamina to serve for another four years. Even HRC is polling better than Biden. Stop the world, I want to get off...

+ After a meeting of House Democrats on Biden, Rep. Stephen Cohen was [asked by reporters](#):

Reporter: Are you all on the same page?

Cohen: No.

Reporter: What do you mean you're not on the same page?

Cohen: We're not even on the same book.

+ [Josh Barro](#): "Biden is treating us the way Trump has treated Republicans for a decade: he's pointing a gun at the head of the Democratic party and threatening to shoot if he doesn't get his way."

+ Jeet Heer: "The severity of the crisis can be measured by the fact it has forced centrist pundits (Yglesias, Chait, Barro) to write the most sensible columns of their careers."

+ When asked by George Stephanopoulos whether he'd had a recent neurological exam, Biden said, "No one said I had to ... they said I'm good," Biden replied. Later Biden grandly pronounced, "I get a cognitive test every day. Everything I do – you know, not only am I campaigning, but I'm running the world."

+ According to White House visitor logs, Dr Kevin Cannard, a Parkinson's disease expert at Walter Reed Medical Center, has visited the White House house eight times since

August 2023. In at least one of those meetings, Cannard met with Biden's personal physician, Dr Kevin O'Connor.

+At first, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre refused to confirm Cannard's visits, saying she needed to respect the privacy of those involved for security reasons. Later Jean-Pierre ludicrously suggested that Cannard's visits might be related to military officers working at the White House: "There are thousands of military personnel that come to the White House and they are under the care of the medical unit."

+ As the great baseball statistician Bill James quipped, "The cover-up is worse than the dementia."

+ Is it by design that Biden's PR staff is almost as incompetent as he is?

+ Biden's claim that the elites of the party are out to get him is laughable. Biden has been president, vice president and a senator for 40 years. He's an Ascended Master (or Grand Dragon, in his buddy Strom Thurmond's vernacular) of the Democratic Party.

+ The "elites of the party" are the only reason he became the nominee in 2020, after finishing fourth in Iowa, fifth in New Hampshire and losing to Sanders by 40% to 19% in Nevada...

+ As an early member of the pro-corporate, crime-mongering, hawkish Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), Biden was a leader of the newly ascendant right wing of the party, which was determined to replace LBJ's Great Society programs with Thatcherite neoliberalism...

+ The Nation's [John Nichols](#), an old hand in Wisconsin politics:

In 2012, after a rough debate, Obama flew to Madison and addressed 30,000 at a massive outdoor rally.

In 2024, after a much rougher debate, Biden flew to Madison and addressed around 300 party stalwarts in a middle-school gym.

The contrast is stark.

+ Rep. Adam Smith, the Democrat from Washington State, on getting Biden to drop out: "I'm not looking to be an asshole here, but if there's not a nice way to do it, then do it the not-nice way. It's just too important." Smith followed this up by saying the quiet part out loud: "Joe Biden was not picked in 2020 because he was the only person that could beat Donald Trump. He was picked because he was the only person that could beat Bernie Sanders."

+ Which begs the question, why are Sanders and the Squad, most prominently, AOC backing Biden so vocally and unequivocally?

+ [Dylan Saba](#): “I kind of get the bind AOC and Ilhan are in because they had already endorsed someone they admit is doing genocide. Once you’ve gone for 99% Hitler it would be pretty weird to abandon him because he’s old.”

+ Bernie’s affection for Biden is even stranger than Biden’s affection for Strom Thurmond.

+ A “well-connected” Democrat told the Daily Beast called Biden’s son Hunter, who is currently awaiting sentencing on federal gun charges, “the acting chief of staff. He’s the gatekeeper. He’s the one bucking up his dad.”

+ Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.) said he saw a recent poll that showed Biden losing in his Congressional district in Riverside, which Biden won with 62% of the vote in 2020.

+ [Whoopi Goldberg](#) gives one of the most graphic descriptions yet of the logic of lesser evil voting: “I don’t care if [Biden] pooped his pants. I don’t care if he can’t put a sentence together. Show me he can’t do the job, and then I’ll say, okay, maybe it’s time to go...I have a poopy day all the time. All the time.”

+ Whoopi may be all in, but George Clooney’s all out.

George Clooney: I Love Joe Biden. But We Need a New Nominee.

July 10, 2024, 10:46 a.m. ET

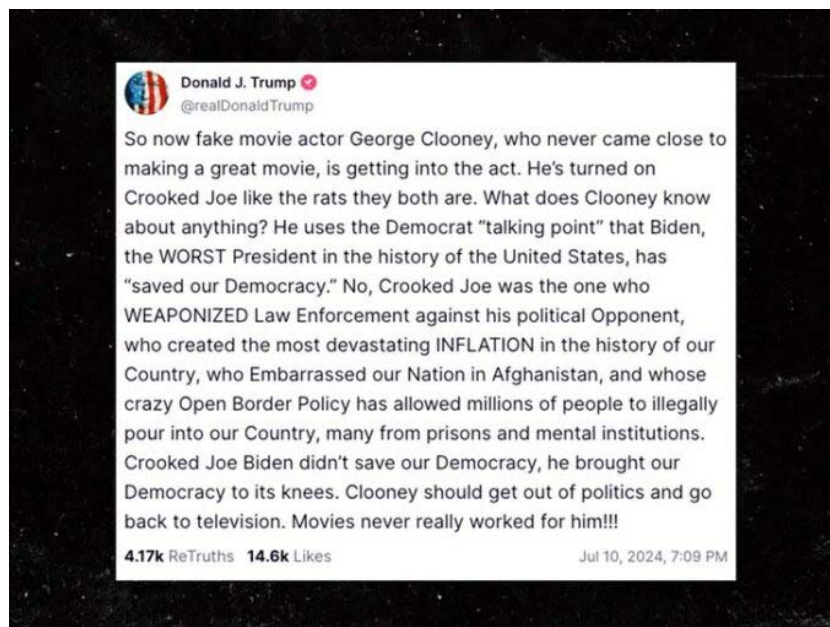


+ It looks like George exacted a measure of revenge for team Biden’s attacks on his wife Amal and the ICC...

+ Clooney had just helped raise \$30 million for Biden at a recent fundraiser, where he witnessed firsthand Biden's diminished capacity: "It's devastating to say it, but the Joe Biden I was with three weeks ago at the fund-raiser was not the Joe "big F-ing deal" Biden of 2010. He wasn't even the Joe Biden of 2020. He was the same man we all witnessed at the debate. Was he tired? Yes. A cold? Maybe. But our party leaders need to stop telling us that 51 million people didn't see what we just saw. We're all so terrified by the prospect of a second Trump term that we've opted to ignore every warning sign. The George Stephanopoulos interview only reinforced what we saw the week before. As Democrats, we collectively hold our breath or turn down the volume whenever we see the president, who we respect, walk off Air Force One or walk back to a mic to answer an unscripted question."

+ The Biden White House's response to Clooney's op-ed was that Joe Biden has more stamina than Clooney because Clooney left a fundraiser before Biden did. (Clooney likely left early because he saw what a monumental mistake he'd made by raising \$30 million for a political zombie...)

+ As for Trump, he really, *really* wants Biden to stay in the race...



+ Clooney at the box office...

Gravity: \$716 mm

Ocean's 11: \$451 mm

Ocean's 12: \$363 mm

Perfect Storm: \$329 mm

Ocean's 13: \$311 mm

Batman & Robin: \$238 mm

Tomorrowland: \$209 mm

The Descendants: \$177 mm

Up in the Air: \$167 mm

Burn After Reading: \$161 mm

Intolerable Cruelty: \$120 mm

The Peacemaker (based–loosely–on Andrew and Leslie Cockburn’s book One Point Safe):
\$110 mm

Three Kings: \$108 mm

+ Jon Stewart “Now to my mind, the debate was a shocking display of cognitive difficulty recognizable to, unfortunately, anybody who’s dealt with aging parents, and it’s a hard watch. Some people think his performance was not as noteworthy as Biden’s opponent in the debate...I will tell you the difference. The difference is Trump delivered at the debate to expectation. We expect him to be fucking crazy. But Biden’s performance and inability to articulate at times was stunning. Like, I could not believe what I was watching.” Stewart ridiculed the excuses put forward by Biden’s PR flacks: that he was tired, that he had a cold, that he was on cold medicine, that he still suffered from jet lag following a flight from Europe that landed in DC 12 days before the debate: “He’d been home for almost two weeks. He was jet-lagged? How big is that fucking jet? The point is, for a campaign based on honesty and decency, the spin about the debate appears to be blatant bulls---. And the redemption tour hasn’t gotten that much better.”

+ Not only are big Democratic Party donors like Abigail Disney and Clooney pulling their support for Biden, but small donors are sitting on their checks and Venmo accounts, too. Projections that are [grassroots fundraising](#) for the Biden campaign will drop by at least 20-25% this month.

+ Biden’s first communications director, Kate Bedingfield, is publicly pleading with the Biden campaign team to put forward a path to beating Trump: “I know firsthand better than almost anyone how smart the Biden team is about data and about ignoring the noise. They are right that the game here is to convince voters, not pundits. But when the battle over the public data is so overwhelmingly negative, it’s a good moment to put forward your theory of the case. If they have data that supports the path to victory that they see, they should put it out there now and help people who badly want to beat Trump rally around it. People want to see the path.”

+ The problem for Biden is there is no path. Not when you're stuck at 35% favorability, you've exposed yourself as suffering from dementia and you continue to double down on one unpopular dead-end war and a genocide.

+ Two weeks after Biden's debate debacle, several of his campaign officials told [NBCNews](#) the president has "zero chance" of defeating Trump. One Biden campaign official said, "He needs to drop out. He will never recover from this."

+ Biden seems to have mastered the art of continuing to fall even after he hit bottom.

+ Pelosi went on Morning Joe to talk about Biden: "It's up to the president to decide if he is going to run. We're all encouraging him to make that decision. Because time is running short."

Reporter: Do you want him to run

Pelosi: I want him to do whatever he decides to do. And that's the way it is. Whatever he decides we go with...Let's just hold off. Whatever you're thinking, either tell somebody privately, but you don't have to put that out on the table until we see how we go this week.

+ Pelosi is often as difficult to understand as Biden. But according to Politico, she has privately told at least 6 lawmakers that Biden won't win this November and should step aside.

+ A new AARP poll of Wisconsin, taken after the debate, shows an 11-point split between Biden and Tammy Baldwin...

Trump: 44 (+6pts)

Biden: 38

RFK: 9

Senate

Baldwin 50 (+5)

Hove 45

+ Support for Biden is collapsing even in New York, where Democratic Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine told Politico: "We're still acting like this is a one-party state, which for pretty much 20, 25 years it has been. I truly believe we're a battleground state now." New York hasn't been won by a Republican since Reagan's reelection in 1984.

+ Internal Democrat post-debate polling shows Biden down by double digits in suburban swing districts NY-17 (R-Lawler) and NY-19 (R-Molinaro), and down a point in NY-22 (R-Williams), all districts Biden carried in 2020. Perhaps this is why New York's lieutenant governor called for Biden to step aside...

Statement from New York Lieutenant Governor
Antonio Delgado

President Biden deserves our eternal gratitude for what he has accomplished. By defeating Donald Trump in 2020, and leading our nation's recovery out of the pandemic, he has helped to restore faith in America both at home and abroad. I have immense respect and admiration for his deep and abiding commitment to the American people and our founding democratic ideals. He can add to his legacy, showing his strength and grace, by ending his campaign and making room for a new leader.

There is no greater threat to our democracy than former President Donald Trump. He must be defeated. That is why I join with millions of Americans - including everyday New Yorkers from all walks of life - who are expressing legitimate concerns about President Biden's ability to wage a successful campaign against Trump. Sustaining our collective belief in democracy and trust in our democratic institutions requires those of us in elected office to be straight with the American people. Dismissing these voices out of hand is misguided and dangerous.

I believe we should move forward with a nominee capable of re-invigorating and re-energizing Americans who are determined to protect our democracy, and who want to do so with a candidate they believe can win.

+ Meanwhile, Axios reported that [Chuck Schumer](#) is now open to replacing Biden at the top of the ticket. When the President from MasterCard loses the Senator from Citibank...

+ Colorado Senator Michael Bennet on CNN: "Donald Trump is on track I think to win this election, and maybe win it by a landslide and take with it the Senate and the House." Colorado's other Democratic Senator John Hickenlooper said calls to his office about Biden are running 9-1 in favor of wanting him to withdraw.

+ A new ABC/Washington Post poll is even more devastating since there's nothing Biden can do to become younger...

Is Biden too old for a second term?

85% too old

13% not too old

+ Is it possible to quantify the amount of moral courage it takes for a politician to jump ship *after* it hits the iceberg?

+ Haaretz's [Amir Tabon](#): "As an Israeli journalist who writes regularly about the U.S.-Israel relationship, one thing is clear: Biden's understanding of Israeli politics belongs to the 1980s, not the current moment."

+ Biden in Harrisburg: "I'll be blunt. I ended the pandemic. And corporate profits doubled." He didn't. In fact, Biden ended pandemic relief and exposed the population to a pandemic without economic or health care support. More than 800,000 Americans have

died of COVID-19 since Biden took office and continue to die at the rate of more than 1000 per week. Corporate profits went up, as 10s of thousands were evicted from their homes and others were plunged into medical and student debt.

+ Move over Rachel Dolezal! Biden told a Philadelphia radio station that he's "proud to be the first black woman to serve with a black president."

+ Andrea Lawful-Sanders, a radio host who interviewed Biden two days ago—told CNN that the White House sent her 8 questions in advance and she picked four of the 8 White House questions to ask Biden during the interview. (Not only did the Biden camp feed reporters questions, they also asked to edit and delete some of his answers.)

+ Jill Biden is the Edith Wilson of our time, who secretly ran the White House for more than a year and covered up the severity of Woodrow's incapacitating stroke...

+ The Wall Street Journal was the first mainstream outlet to probe Biden's deteriorating mental and physical condition. According to their reporting, the Europeans were the first to raise questions about Biden's mental fitness and physical stamina. In June 2023, the Germans arranged a meeting at the Alpine resort Schloss Elmau between German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the early evening in order to accommodate Biden's fatigue at night. But Biden surprised his host by failing to show up. Instead, Secretary of State Tony Blinken came in Biden's place, explaining that Biden had gone to bed early.

+ The Journal reported that Biden's aides often step in to help the president when he seems confused. At a fundraiser in New York last fall, Biden was at a loss trying to answer questions about the Middle East from people in a photo line. An aide whispered in Biden's ear and the president then answered.

+ During a fundraiser at the Four Seasons in New York in June 2023, Biden spoke for around 10 minutes and then took a few questions. At one point, Biden couldn't remember the word for "veteran." The president asked the group to help him find the right word, saying he wanted to refer to a person who had served in the Army or Navy.

+ The Biden campaign regularly directs donors to submit their questions for the president in advance, including at an event this year in South Florida with only 8 people attending.

+ The Journal also reported that by 2020 Biden's inner circle considered him physically unable to comfortably withstand weekly cross-country trips.

+ In a September 2022 speech on food insecurity, Biden praised the work of Rep. Jackie Walorski, a Republican from Indiana: "Representative, Jackie are you here? Where's Jackie?" Walorski had been killed in a car crash a few weeks earlier, a death Biden had already issued a statement of condolence for. He'd even ordered the flags at the White

House flown at half-staff in her honor. His prepared remarks at the event noted Walorski's passing.

+ CNN reported that Biden hasn't held a full cabinet meeting since October 2, 2023, nearly before the Hamas attacks against Israel. (Traditionally, presidents meet hold full cabinet meetings once a week or once every two weeks.)



+ At the NATO summit on Thursday, Biden introduced Zelenskyy by saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, President Putin."

The crowd gasped.

Biden paused, realized his blunder, walked back to the podium, then said, "President Putin? He's gonna beat President Putin. President Zelenskyy! I'm so focused on beating Putin, we've got to worry about it. Anyway..." I guess he's going to beat Zelenskyy, er Putin, the same way he beat Medicare.

+ Biden's answer to the first question at his "Big Boy" press conference:

Reporter: What concerns do you have about Vice President Harris' ability to beat Donald Trump if she were at the top of the ticket?

Biden: Look, I wouldn't have picked Vice President Trump to be vice president did I think she was not qualified to be president.

+ Biden was right about at least one thing during his slo-motion press conference: "My numbers in Israel are better than they are here."

+ [Rachel Maddow](#)'s assessment of the Big Boy press conference: "President Biden showed a startlingly impressive command of the issues at his press conference. He is not only strong on foreign policy, he is just fundamentally right on foreign policy in the

way that he talks about it. It just shows you he is a master of the foreign policy field and has been for decades in his career.”

+ This “Master of Foreign” policy voted for the most destructive war in US history and is now supervizing a genocide in Gaza, refusing to engage in diplomatic talks to end a bloody stagnated war in eastern Europe and actively trying to antagonize China across the Pacific...

+ Biden, speaking in his typically fractured diction, at his presser: “There are at least five presidents running or incumbent presidents who had lower numbers than I have now.” True. But none of them won re-election.

+ An agitated House Democrat ratted out Biden to [NOTUS](#) this week: “At our Democratic caucus issues conference a few months ago, everything was tightly controlled and scripted — to the point of designated members reading a few preapproved questions from cue cards for POTUS instead of the unscripted Q&A we’ve always had in years past. Something has changed, and his handlers know it.”

+ On his podcast this week, [MSDNC’s Chuck Todd](#) said that Biden’s stubborn refusal to stand down has made him reevaluate Biden’s entire political biography: “I still can’t believe he ran for president in the first place, given that his family was in crisis in 2018... You look at what has happened, I can’t believe he has put his family through this. And now, looking at his behavior now, in clinging to this, I think the entire narrative on Joe Biden is gonna change, in that everything’s always been about his ambition and his ambition comes first.”

+ A new IPSOS/ABC poll taken this week shows Harris leading Trump. This doesn’t say all that much about Harris. She’s about where you’d expect any almost Democrat would be against Trump, except for Biden...

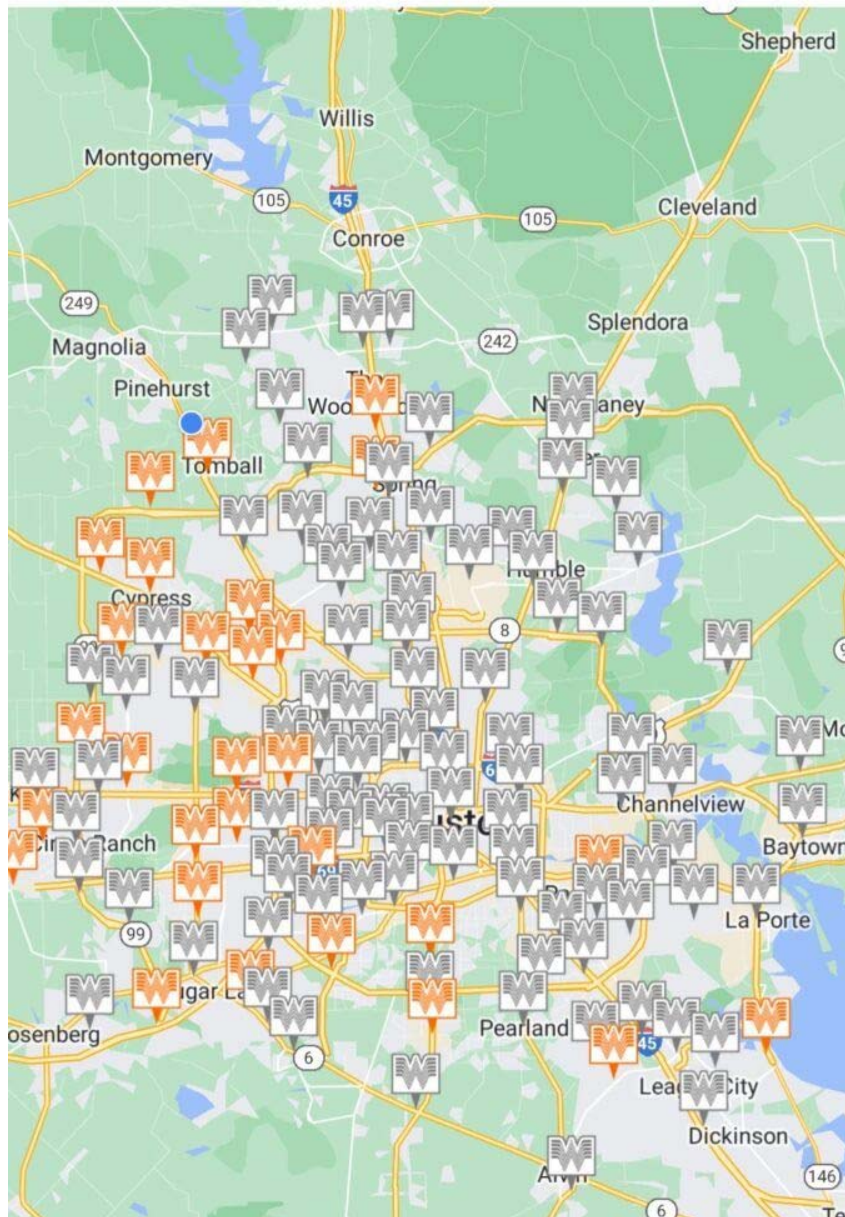
Harris 49% (+3)

Trump 46% Ipsos #B (ABC)

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In Beryl-battered Houston, where more than a million people remain without power, people have been using the Whataburger app to track power outages, since the electric utility’s website doesn’t show a map.

🔍 houston

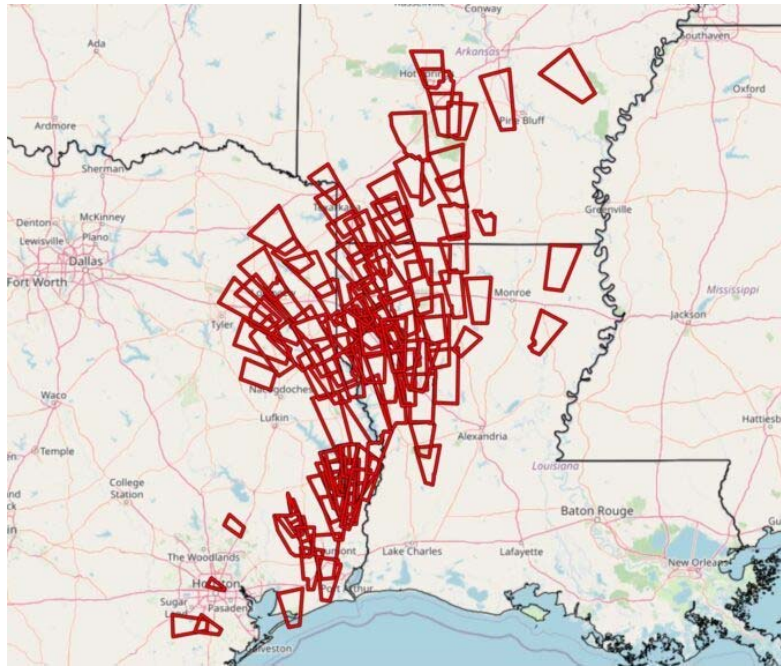


+ It took Beryl only 42 hours to strengthen from a tropical depression to a major hurricane – a feat accomplished only six other times in Atlantic hurricane history.”

+ Only 5 major (Category 3+) hurricanes have been recorded in the Atlantic before the first week of July. Beryl was the sixth and earliest this far east in the tropical Atlantic. Before Beryl, there’d never been a Cat 4 or 5 hurricane observed prior to July 8th (Dennis in 2005).

+ The research on hurricanes and hot water is pretty clear: the warmer the ocean the more powerful the hurricane. The chance that an average hurricane grows into a major (cat 3,4,5) is now two times greater than it was a few decades ago.

+ Beryl produced one of the most prolific and significant hurricane-induced tornado outbreaks in US history. 110 tornado warnings have been issued since midnight. This is the most tornado warnings issued in the US in a single July day since records began in 1986, with 43 more tornado warnings issued than the previous record (67).



+ In a three-day period this week, the rainfall exceeded 500 mm In Chongyang, Hubei, China.

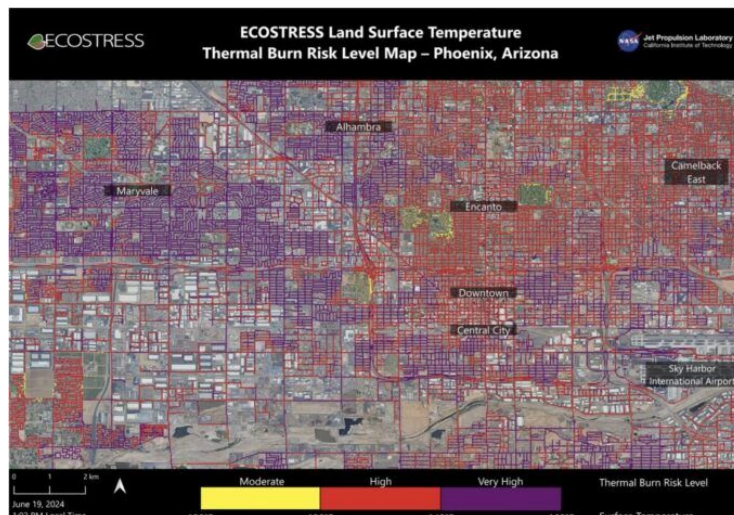
+ The fires in Brazil's Pantanal wetlands are already **breaking records**. And the fire season hasn't officially started yet. During Brazil's 'Year of Flames' (2020), almost 30% of the Pantanal biome burned, and 17 million vertebrates were killed. This year may end up being even worse. From January through June, wildfires have increased by 1,500% over the same period last year.

+ Extreme temperatures are making it harder for helicopters to rescue people on sizzling days in national parks because the air is often **too thin** for the copters to take off.

+ The only natural lake in Sicily, Pergusa near Enna, has **completely dried up** as a result of the drought gripping the island.

+ The World Meteorological Organization says there is a **one-in-two chance** the current five-year period will exceed 1.5°C.

- + Selwin Hart, Assistant Secretary-General of the UN: "The climate crisis is a crisis of political will. Climate diplomacy is taking place against a backdrop of geopolitical divisions, a leadership void, and mistrust between developed & developing countries."
- + Since 2010, the global warming rate has accelerated to 0.32°C per decade—78% faster than the 0.18°C per decade rate in 1970-2010.
- + According to an analysis released by the U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. energy production exceeded consumption by 9 quadrillion British thermal units (quads) in 2023, the widest margin in records dating back to 1949.
- + Drone surveys of Lizard Island reef after last summer's mass bleaching show that 97% of the coral are dead.
- + Heatwaves in the UK and Europe are twice as likely as they were 30 years ago. A 1.5°C World would mean an extreme heatwave every four years. A 3.0°C World would mean an extreme heatwave 9 years in every 10 years.
- + In May, temperatures in New Delhi climbed above 45°C, while the AQI exceeded 200, an exceptionally lethal combination.
- + Current climate models underestimate the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) that vegetation absorbs globally each year, but overestimate how long that carbon stays there.
- + The speed of retreat by the Juneau Ice Field has doubled in recent decades. The ice field, which is composed of 1,050 interconnected glaciers, lost 1.4 cubic miles of ice a year between 2010 and 2020, the researchers estimated.
- + More than 50 cubic kilometers of groundwater was lost in northern India during 2002-2021 and researchers at India's National Geophysical Research Institute in Hyderabad say climate change will further accelerate its depletion.
- + Google's emissions climbed nearly 50% in five years due to AI energy demand.
- + On July 7, the temperature in Death Valley hit 129, which is closer to the point at which water boils (212F) than the freezing point (32).
- + In treeless, paved Phoenix, a new NASA map shows temperatures of up to 160 degrees on Phoenix streets and sidewalks.



- + If climate change increases the outside temperature from 96F to 100F, the energy your air conditioner consumes increases by 42%.
- + From January through June 2024 the contiguous U.S.'s average annual temperature was 50.9°F, 3.4°F above average—ranking as the second warmest on record for this period.
- + Since 1990, Indonesia has lost 25% of its old-growth forest. More than 25% (7.8 million hectares) of deforested lands have been converted to palm oil plantations. But an even larger area (8.8 million hectares) simply remains vacant.
- + Air pollution can reduce the chances of a live birth after IVF treatment by 38%.
- + A study from Duke University published this week in Nature found that lithium-ion batteries are a growing source of environmental contamination from a type of “forever chemical” called “bis-FASIs,” The researchers looked at production and disposal facilities in Minnesota, Kentucky, Belgium and France.
- + Lead accounts for more premature deaths than all other toxic chemicals combined.
- + It’s not just microplastics, fiberglass has also entered the food chain. Fibreglass has been documented entering the food chain. Researchers found “extensive” fiberglass—or glass-reinforced plastic used in boat manufacture—in mussels and oysters off the south coast of England.
- + New York City is the world’s most-congested urban area for the second year in a row, costing the city an estimated \$9.1 billion in lost time, a new report shows. Motorists driving through NYC lost 101 hours last year.
- +++
- + Look who’s crying now...

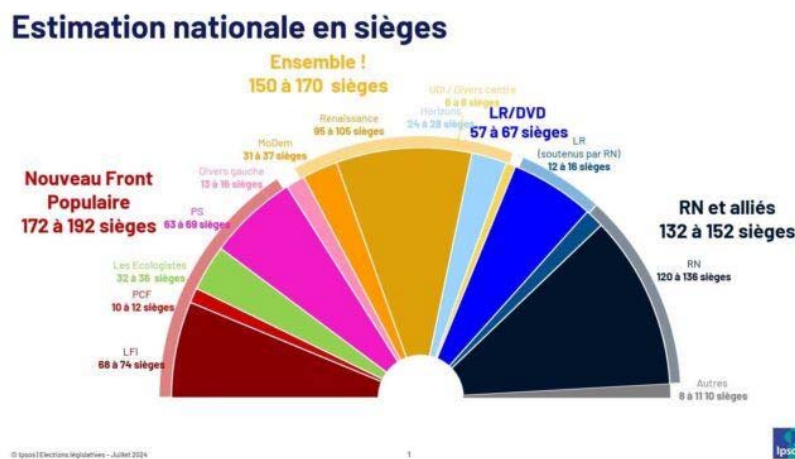


Screengrab from Europe 1.

+ It only took France a week to completely flip the script, as the left-wing NFP prevailed against the odds in the French elections, with between 170 and 220 seats; Macron’s centrist presidential alliance in second, with between 150 and 190, and the Le Pen’s far-right RN with just 130 to 160.

+ The radical pragmatism of Jean-Luc Melanchon: “I’m not saying we will create a paradise from one day to the next, but we will put an end to Hell.”

+ After the election, France’s left-wing New Popular Front (NPF) called for a 90% tax on all income above €400,000 and immediate recognition of Palestinian statehood.



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+ Senators Sheldon Whitehouse and Ron wrote this week to Attorney General Merrick Garland, demanding he appoint a special counsel to investigate Clarence Thomas for tax fraud...: “We write to request that you appoint a Special Counsel to investigate possible violations of federal ethics and tax laws by Associate Justice of the Supreme

Court Clarence Thomas. Over the past year, public reporting and Senate investigations have uncovered evidence of repeated and willful omissions of gifts and income from Justice Thomas's financial disclosure reports required by the Ethics in Government Act. The Senate is investigating these omissions as it considers improvements to ethics and tax laws."

+ For the first half of the year, murders in the US are down by 19%, violent crimes are down 7% and property crimes are down by 10 percent. If these numbers hold, the crime rate will be the lowest in more than 50 years. Even so, police keep killing people at the same rate. In the last 12 months, police have shot and killed 1,159 people in the US.

+ Alex Vitale: "Body cameras expand police surveillance without increasing accountability."

+ According to Legal Aid NYC, wages for incarcerated workers range from 10 to 65 cents per hour, and haven't been raised in over 30 years.

+ Brazil's Federal Police used Jair Bolsonaro's entire web navigation history to track each of the gold and diamond jewelry items gifted by the Saudis and stolen from the national archives that he tried to fence in US auction houses.

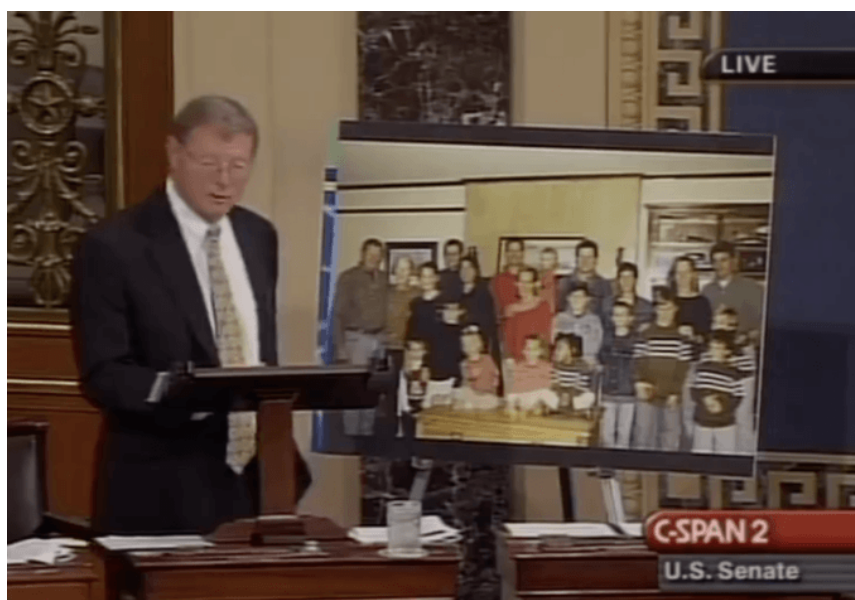
+ How Biden and his cronies in the private health insurance industry "Beat Medicare"...



- + Just four companies control nearly all of the fertilizer in America. Since 1980, prices have tripled for farmers and it's about to get worse with further consolidation in the works.
- + The Department of Labor found over 300 minors at multiple McDonald's franchises working in violation of labor laws, including 10-year-olds working at McDonald's as late as 2 a.m., often on school days, and many times without any compensation at all.
- + There are more than [27 empty homes](#) for each homeless person in the US.
- + New York City paid McKinsey \$4,000,000 to do a study on whether trash bags should be placed in trash cans...
- + [David Zaslav](#), the CEO of CNN's parent company, spoke on the elections at the Allen & Co. media conference in Sun Valley, Idaho this week, saying he didn't care which party wins as long as they do whatever business execs tell them to do: "We just need an opportunity for deregulation, so companies can consolidate and do what we need to do to be even better."

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- + Biden's old senate pal James Inhofe died this week at the age of 89. Back in 2006, Inhofe stood on the floor of the Senate in front of a photograph of his family and proclaimed (almost certainly inaccurately) that he was "really proud to say that in the recorded history of our family, we've never had any kind of homosexual relationship."



- + The lawyer for megachurch pastor and Trump spiritual advisor, Robert Morris, blamed [a 12-year-old girl](#) for initiating 'inappropriate' sexual conduct: "It was your client," wrote lawyer J. Shelby Sharpe, "who initiated inappropriate behavior by coming into my client's

bedroom and getting in bed with him, which my client should not have allowed to happen.”

+ Joshua Kindred, a federal judge in Alaska, stepped down this week, after a report that he sexually harassed his female clerks and then lied to investigators when his conduct was reported. Kindred was appointed to a lifetime seat on the federal bench by Trump, naturally. According to the investigation into Kindred’s conduct, “he discussed his past dating life, his romantic preferences, his sex life, the law clerks’ boyfriends and dating lives, his divorce, his interest in and communications with potential romantic or sexual partners, and his disparaging opinions of his colleagues. The report says Kindred “encouraged rating people on ‘fuckability,’ stating that he was not ‘hoe-ignorant,’ or telling stories about ‘giving blow jobs in a hot tub.’”

+ Judge Kindred told his law clerks, “Who gives a fuck about ethics, we need to get you paid,” joked about “punching multiple Supreme Court justices,” and said he’d bring Patrón, heroin, and “whip-its” to a chambers dinner party.’

+ Kindred told one of his female clerks, “You’re like a fucking Disney princess . . . You are special”...“You looked amazing as always,” ... “[t]hose fucking blue pants you’d wear. Always killed me.”

+ One of Kindred’s victims graphically described Kindred’s assault on her:

He started putting his hands on me. And so I remember the first time he like grabbed my boob, and I like grabbed his like forearm, and I remember thinking like he felt really strong and I tried to like pull his arm off of me...I just remember thinking like there’s nothing I can do about this, like this is about to happen...I remember him saying something about like ‘Finally,’ like—because I remember just feeling, like, yeah, finally, like you win like the game. Like I always felt like this—like this thing that he couldn’t touch and finally he felt like he could touch...He took my pants off. I’m pretty sure I was still wearing a shirt...And then he performed oral sex on me.

+ Kindred previously worked for the Alaska Oil and Gas Association and was originally appointed by Trump to serve as a solicitor in the Interior Department.

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+ Tony Blinken, if not the worst US Secretary of State at least in the running for the most risible, confirmed at the NATO summit this week that the US is sending F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine for its war against Russia, even though Putin previously said F-16 fighter jets are legitimate targets for Moscow, even on third-country airfields. Putin also warned that if NATO sends F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, it could potentially lead to a war with NATO.

+ According to an analysis in the [Economist](#), ” Russia’s losses in Ukraine since 2022 dwarf the number of casualties from all its wars since the Second World War combined.” Many of the more than 500,000 Russians killed or wounded have been conscripts.

+ Former NATO Supremo Wesley Clark, now roosting at the Atlantic Council, described at a NATO gathering why he thinks [shooting kids throwing rocks](#) can be virtuous: “When we went into Afghanistan, when we went into Bosnia. Every time you go in, at first there’s no reaction. Then there’s a kid that throws a rock. You didn’t shoot the kid. Okay, you can throw rocks. And then it goes up and up and up and they look for the hole. So there is a virtue in saying, if you come after us, it’ll be the last thing you do.” So, he’s still crazy after all these years...

+ People think Dr. Strangelove is a satire, not realizing that it’s the greatest documentary ever made about the madmen who run our military.

+ [Stephen Wertheim](#): “If the United States does not want to fight World War III over Ukraine, it should not pledge to do just that in the future.”

+ As Stephen Semler has shown, military spending under Biden has gone up and social and economic spending down. In 2022, the Pentagon budget was \$800 billion. This year it hit \$954 billion. In 2022, social and economic spending was \$700 billion, while this year it fell to \$610 billion.

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+ Sen. Josh Hawley: “Some will say now that I am calling America a Christian Nation. So I am. And some will say that I am advocating Christian Nationalism. And so I do.”

+ Trump’s ex, [Marla Maples](#), says she’s “open to whatever way that [she] can serve” the former president, including, being his Vice President.

+ Trump ranting at Doral Country Club in Miami at taking over DC: “We will take over the horribly run capital of our country in Washington DC. Right now if you leave Florida

— “Oh, let’s go, darling, let’s look at the Jefferson Memorial” ... and you end up getting shot, mugged, raped. We’re gonna take over our capital and we’re gonna run it tough and smart.” So much for DC home rule.

+ Trump claimed this week that he had no idea who was behind the Heritage Foundation-sponsored 2025, a rightwing wishlist of how to radically transform the federal government into a pro-corporate, Christian nationalist police state. But a CNN investigation found nearly 240 people with ties to both Project 2025 and to Trump, “covering nearly every aspect of his time in politics and the White House – from day-to-day foot soldiers in Washington to the highest levels of his government.”

+ In fact, in April 2022, Trump gave the keynote speech at a Heritage dinner, shortly after it had begun work on Project 2025: “This is a great group and they’re going to lay the groundwork and detail plans for exactly what our movement will do,” Trump said. “When the American people give us a colossal mandate to save America.”

+ D.L. Hughley: “Next week Donald Trump has to pick a new VP running mate because he tried to have his last one killed.”

+ A former U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency employee named Ivan Raiklin is calling himself Trump’s future “[Secretary of Retribution](#).” Raiklin has reportedly put together a “Deep State target list” of 350 people he wants to see arrested and put on trial after Trump is reelected.

+ From Gretchen Whitmer’s new book, where she compares her flaunting of social distancing rules during Covid to Gavin Newsom’s meal with big donors at The French Laundry: “So, Gavin and I had that in common — even though he was dining at a Michelin three-star restaurant and I was in a dive bar.”

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+ I always admired the Log Lady’s optimism in the face of all evidence to the contrary...



+ Dostoevsky wrote in a letter about Dickens, several years after trying to track him down in London: “Dickens told me that all the good, simple people in his novels are what he wanted to have been, and his villains were what he was (or rather, what he found in himself), his cruelty, his attacks of causeless enmity towards those who were helpless and looked to him for comfort, his shrinking from those whom he sought to love. There were two people in him, he told me: one who feels as he ought to feel and one who feels the opposite. From the one who feels the opposite I make my evil characters, from the one who feels as a man ought to feel, I try to live my life.”

+ This sounds very much like Dostoevsky finding himself in Dickens’ novels. I’d be surprised if Dickens actually spoke like that. But doubling is all over Theodore’s work...It’s the heart of it in many of his novels.

+ Thanks for the red flag, Elon. How did you know? Did you hire Martha-Ann Alito to run Twitter’s flagging project?



We’ve added a temporary label to your account which may impact its reach. [Learn more](#)

+ Beck on how the [iPhone killed rock music](#): “I have a theory: there’s a certain point where we crossed the digital threshold, which means the thing that kids will remember the strongest—the way we remember radios and television with eight channels—is the iPhone. And the iPhone, it’s very sleek and minimalist. They see the world through that prism, so I think music evolved to sound like something that should be coming out of that object. And rock music doesn’t sound great coming through those little speakers. But pop and electronic music sound great. It’s like how music in the 60s sounded like what should be coming out of a transistor radio.”

+ RIP Shelley Duvall, who was at her improvising best working with Robert Altman in McCabe and Mrs. Miller, Nashville and especially as Millie in 3 Women. One of her biggest fans was Pauline Kael who wrote of her: “Shelley Duvall melts indifference. You’re unable to repress your response; you go right to her in delight, saying ‘I’m yours.’” (1976) And later: “There are no forebears or influences that would help to explain Shelley Duvall’s acting; she doesn’t seem to owe anything to anyone. She’s an original who has her own limpid way of doing things—a simplicity that isn’t marred by conventional acting technique.” (1980)

We’re Still Standing No Matter What You May Hear

Booked Up

What I'm reading this week...

[Balzac in Paris: the City as Human Comedy](#)

Eric Hazan

(Verso)

[Counting Feminicide: Data Feminism in Action](#)

Catherine D'Ignazio

(MIT Press)

[The Language of Climate Politics: Fossil-Fuel Propaganda and How to Fight Back](#)

Genevieve Guenther

(Oxford)

Sound Grammar

What I'm reading this week...

[Love Heart Cheat Code](#)

Hiatus Kaiyote

(Brainfeeder)

[Songwriter](#)

Johnny Cash

(American Recordings / EMI Records)

[Texicali](#)

Dave Alvin & Jimmy Dale Gilmore with the Guilty Ones

(Yep Roc)

Me We're Talking of Me Without End

“all I hear leave out more leave out all hear no more lie there in my arms the ancient without end me we're talking of me without end that buries all mankind to the last cunt they'd be good moments in the dark the mud hearing nothing saying nothing capable of nothing nothing”

— Samuel Beckett, *How It Is*

Jeffrey St. Clair is editor of *CounterPunch*. His most recent book is [An Orgy of Thieves: Neoliberalism and Its Discontents](#) (with Alexander Cockburn). He can be reached at: sitka@comcast.net or on Twitter [@JeffreyStClair3](https://twitter.com/JeffreyStClair3).

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