168 Boston Hill Road

Andover, CT 06232

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Editor

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Glastonbury, CT 06033

To The Editor:

Longtime Rivereast letter readers will recognize the spirit of Robert Kodym's fascinating prose surviving in the form of a recent letter from Pat Schmidt. I would love to write a rebuttal here, but it's entirely unclear what the writer is talking about.

Except here: one phrase is very clear, and very frightening. "There is no definitive truth to anything these days."

That someone would say this scares the pants off me. That people actually believe it should terrify us all. It means that the Bush, Jr. administration's assault on reason has succeeded and Trump's further attack on truth itself is taking hold.

This is the stuff of despots. It's the "Only I can fix it" mentality carried to its logical end. It leads to, "I don't have to listen to your evidence; I know I'm right." It's what lets the letter-writer put scare-quotes around "statistics", because, of course, all facts must be flexible. Once again, Orwell's quote seems prescient: "[The totalitarians] told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command."

I can't tell if the letter's headline, "The Truth Will Prevail" represents the writer's own irony or is a copy-editor's version of whistling past the graveyard.

In fact, there is truth, and there are real techniques for finding it. But all of them require a first step that seems to be beyond certain people. First, you need to open your mind.

Sincerely,

Scott Sauyet,

[scott@sauyet.com](mailto:scott@sauyet.com)

(860) 742-9800 (H)

(860) 335-2869 (C)