

# Grasping Reality with Both Hands

The weblog of Brad DeLong. Comments (mostly) welcome, or email me at [delong@hey.com](mailto:delong@hey.com) with "delong-weblog" as the subject.  
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## Foreshadowing from Gaius Sallustius Crispus: Liveblogging the Fall of the Roman Republic



A strongly unconventional high politician facing the expiration of his term of office. He knows that there is a very high probability that, because of his actions in office, his adversaries will try and convict him of crimes after he lays down his power.

Let us start with some foreshadowing from Gaius Sallustius Crispus:

**Gaius Sallustius Crispus:** *Cataline's Conspiracy* <https://github.com/braddelong/public-files/blob/master/readings/book-sallust-cataline.pdf>: **Gaius Julius Caesar** Pleads Against Norm-Breaking (-63): "I can recount many examples, conscripted fathers, of bad decisions made by kings and peoples under the influence of anger or pity...

...When Sulla ordered the strangulation of Damasippus and others like him... who did not praise his actions? People were saying they deserved it.... But this action was the beginning of a great slaughter. For whenever someone coveted another man's home or villa, or eventually even his dishes or clothes, he would try to get the man proscribed. And soon after those who were delighted at the death of Damasippus were themselves being dragged away and there was no end of carnage until Sulla had glutted all his followers with riches. Now, I don't fear these consequences from M. Tullius nor do I fear them at this time, but in a great city there are many different temperaments.

It is possible that at some other time, when another man is consul and also has an army at his disposal, a lie will be taken for the truth. When this precedent allows the consul by the decree of the Senate to draw his sword, who will stop or restrain him?...

.#history #livebloggingthefalloftheromanrepublic #politics #2020-07-21

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