Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

No. 148   September 9, 2016

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State of the Nation

28% of Americans say the country is headed in the right direction while 59% say it is on the wrong track. (USA/Suffolk, 8/29)

In her September 1st column, Amy Walter of the Cook Political Report makes the point that "the right direction/wrong track number has been terrible for years." "…not everyone interprets 'wrong direction' in the same way. For some, it means….a deep frustration in the way government and corporations have failed America. For others, it is dislike of the polarization and partisanship that has enveloped our political and social dialogue….there is no one reason why people are upset. They are also likely to be frustrated by their choice for president."

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Let's take a look at the "official" unemployment numbers.

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for August 2016 is 4.9%, the same as last month.

If one takes into account the total number of unemployed + those marginally attached to the labor force + those working part-time who want full-time work, the current rate is 9.7%. [BLS data is based on those 16 years of age and older.]

In the first week of July, Gallup found an unadjusted unemployment rate of 5.4%. It also found an under-employment rate of 13.1% (unemployed + those working part-time but wanting full-time). [Based on those 18 years of age and older.]

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"One of the most disappointing numbers from the recovery has been the growth rate of wages. In the first 5 years of the recovery (2007-2012), hourly wages edged up just 2 percent a year. After factoring in the effect of consumer price inflation, this translates into a gain of exactly 0 percent."

"….estimates show that between 2009 and 2015, recipients in the top 1 percent enjoyed real income gains of 24 percent. Among Americans in the bottom nine-tenths of the income distribution, average market incomes climbed only 4 percent." [Brookings 7/22/16]

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On the other hand, the National Association of Homebuilders estimates that there are approximately 200,000 unfilled construction jobs in the United States. According to the Department of Labor, the ratio of construction job openings to hiring is at its highest level since 2007. As a result, labor costs are rising. [Reuters, 9/6]

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A record 60.6 million Americans live in multigenerational households. [Pew Research Center, 8/11]

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The following represents the average GDP growth during each expansion at an annualized rate. [WSJ, 7/31]

1949-53	7.6%
1954-57	4.0%
1958-60	5.6%
1961-69	4.9%
1970-73	5.1%
1975-80	4.3%
1980-81	4.4%
1982-90	4.3%
1991- 01	3.6%
2001-07	2.8%
2009-16	2.1%
2nd Q 2016	1.2%

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The average American will consume 27.4 gallons of bottled water this year. That is about a gallon more than the projection for the amount of soda that will be consumed. [FiveThirtyEight, August 3, 2016]

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U.S. swimmer Michael Phelps won his 12th individual Olympic gold medal, tying a record set 2,168 years ago by Leonidas of Rhodes. [Deadspin]

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30% of college and post-graduate students have done video job interviews from the bathroom or conference room at their current job. [USAToday, 8/14]

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Nine million Asian Americans will be eligible to vote in 2016. This is an increase of 16% from four years ago. The following shows the percentage of Asian Americans in the electorate of a hand full of states:

California 14.9%; Nevada 9.0%; New Jersey 7.0%; New York 6.3%; Virginia 5.0%; Minnesota 3.1%; Arizona 3.0%; Pennsylvania 2.1%; Michigan 1.8%; North Carolina 1.8%; Ohio 1.3%. [WSJ, 8/23]

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"Student debt has now topped $1.3 trillion." [The Progress Report, 8/23/16]

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Notwithstanding all of the electronic devices that can be used to read books, the vast majority of people still read books printed on paper.

The number of people reading books in any format took a large drop between 2011 and 2012 from 79% to 74%. Since then the number of folks reading books in any format has fluctuated. In 2014, the number was 76% and this year it is 73%.

The number of people who have read books on paper has dropped from 71% in 2011 to 65% in 2016. Those who have read e-books or listened to an audio book has grown from 28% in 2011to 42% in 2016. In the last 12 months, 6% of Americans have read only digital books, 38% read only print books and 26% read no books in any format.

77% of women have read a book in any format in the last year while only 68% of men make that claim. [Pew Research Center, 9/1/16]

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A 63% majority of women say obstacles continue to make it harder for women than men today, compared with 34% who say obstacles are largely gone. Among men, 41% think women still face obstacles that make it harder to get ahead, while 56% say those challenges have mostly been eliminated. (For more on women in society, see the Center's report.) [Pew Research Center, 8/16/16]

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"…. Today is the day (August 23, 2016) a hypothetical black woman finally makes the same as a white man made in 2015. It takes black women 8 additional months to reach pay parity because, on average, full-time, year-round working black women earn 60 cents for every $1 made by a white man…. A massive pay gap still exists despite the fact that black women are the **most educated group** in the United States. And in 2014, they participated in the labor force at a **higher rate** than other women." [The Progress Report, 8/23/16]

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In the 2016 Olympics there were 169 events for men and 137 events for women. In the only event that pits individual men against individual women – equestrian – women have won 25 of the 45 individual medals issued since 1996. [WSJ, 8/7]

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As you may have noticed, after changing his political designation from Independent to Democrat in order to run in the Democratic presidential primary, Bernie Sanders has now returned to describing himself as an Independent. Sanders has argued that Independents ought to be able to participate in either major party's primaries.

19 states already do what Sanders suggests. In some other states, one party's primary is open and the other is closed. In two states, Washington and California, all candidates of any party are listed together on the ballot rendering, party affiliation being irrelevant, during primaries. Nebraska allows for open primaries for state legislative office but not federal offices. There are a variety of other permutations.

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This and That: Did You Know?

In the time it takes you to say LOL you could have laughed.

I love the way you make me laugh…at you.

Sometimes when I can't hear what someone says I just laugh and hope it wasn't a question.

May you be happier than a bird with a French fry.

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President Obama

The public's grading of President Obama's job approval, as found by Gallup on 9/4/16, is 52% approval/44% disapproval. Obama's approval rating at the time of his first inauguration was 67% approval/14% disapproval. A year ago it was 47% approval/47% disapproval. Six months ago it was 49% approval /46% disapproval. [Gallup]

The following are other approval/disapproval scores going back 3+ years.

Date	NBC/WSJ	WP/ABC	CNN/ORC	NYT/CBS	FOX
Aug. 2016	52/44%	53/45%	xxx	xxx	52/45%
July 2016	51/46%	52/46%	50/47%	53/41%	xxx
June 2016	51/45%	54/43%	52/45%	43/37%(CBS)	42/39%
May 2016	51/46%	47/51%	51/46%	50/43%	48/49%
Apr. 2016	49%/48%	xxx	xxx	46/45%(CBS)	49/47%
Mar. 2016	49/46%	51/43%	51/46%	48/44%	48/46%
Jan. 2016	47/49%	50/46%	47/49%	46/47%	42/53%
Jan. 2015	46/48%	47/48%	xxx	xxx	45/51%
Jan. 2014	43/51%	45/52%	45/51%	46/47(CBS)	42/53%
Jan. 2013	52/44%	55/41%	55/43%	51/41%	

	Approval	Disapproval	(in final year in office)
Clinton	62	35	(9/3/00)
Reagan	53	37	(8/22/88)
Eisenhower	61	28	(8/30/60)
Obama	52	44	(8/31/16)
G W Bush	29	66	(8/23/08)

Obama has an approval/disapproval rating on the economy of 47% to 45% and an approval/disapproval rating on foreign policy of 43% to 46%. [Economist/YouGov, 8/16]

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2016 Election

Only 10% of Americans approve of the way in which Congress is handling its job. [Econ/YouGov, 8/29]

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If ever there was evidence of the dysfunction and irresponsibility of the Congress, it is the way it dealt/didn't deal with the potential spread of the Zika virus before leaving for summer recess.[WW]

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The following are excerpts from an article by Doug Usher of Purple Strategies.

"The conventions are over, and the politically obsessed across the spectrum are turning to the polls to find out who won this round, who's ahead, and who is best positioned to win in November. With dozens of polls slated to be released in the coming weeks …here are five things you need to know to understand what they mean, and to be the smartest pollster in the room.

1. **Watch national polling over the next couple of weeks: it's likely to predict the outcome.**

….. Pay close attention to the polls in the next couple of weeks (especially our "Purple Slice" polling with Bloomberg Politics) to see exactly how much things change…. in the last three election cycles, the eventual winner had the polling lead in the weeks after the conventions, and never relinquished it.

2. **Purple States will determine the election, but it's buyer beware on state polling.**
Campaigns are focused on the Purple States, as they are (and should be) every year. These swing states (including anywhere from 8 to 14 states, depending who you ask) will determine the election. But that doesn't mean you should focus too heavily on polling in individual states. Polling there has higher margins of error and a wider range of polling quality…. Until the last few weeks of the cycle, these polls are fool's gold. Use the national polling as a baseline before buying into the latest outlier poll that has Clinton winning in Texas or Trump tied in New York.

3. **If you see dramatic poll swings in August and September before the debates, take a breath.**
There will be round-the-clock political coverage in August and September. And there will be polls — lots of them! But the likelihood of a major change in the campaign's dynamics before the debate is very low. Since the conventions happened early this year, voters will likely enter "election hibernation" mode and enjoy their summer. But they'll tune in for the debates — the next truly attention-grabbing campaign events.

4. **Treat polling like your stock portfolio: daily attention does not yield insight.**
…. Try to think of each poll as an individual "stock" in your election portfolio. Sure — look at the blaring headlines and Drudge sirens as new polls come in — and then try to look away. No individual poll will make or break this election…. Take the long view!

5. **The biggest surprise in 2016? Polling makes a comeback!**

   A nearly indicted Democratic frontrunner? Check. Potential Russian interference on behalf of the Republican nominee? Check. An ousted Democratic chair the day before the convention? Check. A candidate sharing white supremacist tweets and insulting Gold Star families? Check.

   But perhaps one thing has been most surprising: the polls did a very good job predicting the primaries. Trump's rise may have surprised some in the GOP, but the polls saw it coming months in advance. Sanders' rise was swift, but also clear from polling — as was his eventual ceiling. While conventional wisdom has been successfully challenged this cycle, it may be a year of vindication for the oft-maligned — and surprisingly adaptable — polling industry.

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Republican and Democratic Convention TV Audiences
[Nielsen ratings]

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The Republican convention had the single largest one night audience on the fourth night of their convention. The Democrats led the ratings on nights 1, 2 and 3.

DNC
Day 1 — 28.4 million
Day 2 — 28 million
Day 3 — 27 million
Day 4 — 33.3 million
Average: 29.175 million

RNC
Day 1 — 23 million
Day 2 — 23 million
Day 3 — 19.8 million
Day 4 — 34.9 million
Average: 25.175 million

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Impact of the Presidential on Down Ballot Races
[The Winston Group – David Winston and Myra Miller]

Year	Presidential Margin (based on total vote)	Net Party Gains in House	Net Party Gains in Senate
1980	9.7%R	34R	12R
1984	18.2%R	14R	2D
1988	7.8%R	2D	0
1992	5.6%D	10R	0
1996	8.5%D	3D	2R
2000	0.5%D	2D	4D
2004	2.4%R	3R	4R
2008	7.2%D	21D	8D
2012	3.9%D	8D	2D

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The House

Currently, the Democrats are likely to increase their numbers in the House. However, that increase will not be enough to approach retaking control of that body.
[The WW relies on the Cook Political Report for the House data below.]

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Democrats	186
Republicans	247
Vacancies	2

	Democrats	Republicans
Safe in 2016	177	202
Likely	6	13
Lean	7	11
Tossup		
	3	16

The Senate

The prospects for the Democrats to take over the Senate are not as obvious as some would suggest. The data below is based on combining the current projections of Cook, Rothenberg/Gonzales and Sabato with a little bit of liberty on the part of WW.

<u>THE U.S. SENATE</u>

Republicans	54
Democrats	44
Independents	2

	Democrats	Republicans
Seats not up in 2016	36	30
Safe in 2016	9	11
Leaning in 2016	3	8
	Kirk	Blunt
	Indiana	Rubio
	Johnson	Burr
		Grassley
		Isakson
		McCain
		Murkowski
		Portman
Total:	48	49

<u>Toss Up</u>

Nevada	Ayotte
	Toomey

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The Contest for President

As you look at the materials that follow, keep in mind something I often forget. It was advice from Peter Hart about how to look at this race…"Stay with the dynamics; it is not about the numbers today."

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Those who believe that woman face more significant obstacles to get ahead than men, support Hillary Clinton by 70-29%. Those who believe that these obstacles are largely gone, support Donald Trump by 67-27%. [Pew Research, 8/16/16]

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41% have a net favorable view of Hillary Clinton. This is a slight decline from May 31, 2015 when Clinton had a 45% favorable rating. Those who have an unfavorable view of Clinton have grown from 49% on May 31, 2015 to 56% today.

Donald Trump has a current net favorable rating of 35%, up from 16% in May 2015. His unfavorable rating has also grown in that same time period from 49% to 56% [WP/ABC, 8/28/2016]

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In the August NBC/WSJ survey, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton are compared to each other on a number of issues.

	Trump Better	Clinton Better	Neither Good
Changing business as usual in Washington	46%	26%	20
Dealing with the economy	46	42	8
Dealing with crime	44	36	13
Terrorism and homeland security	43	44	10
Standing up for America	41	39	9
Dealing with immigration	39	49	10
Changing the country for the better	36	42	17
Being a good Commander-in-Chief	35	46	15
Improving America's standing in the world	33	47	16
Having the ability to handle a crisis	33	51	10
Caring about people like me	29	45	20
Handling foreign policy	29	56	12
Dealing with the racial problems between police and African Americans	28	48	19
Having the ability to unite the country	26	43	27

Presidential Elections 1992-2012: Polling Data from around Labor Day before the Election

2016 Election:
    CNN/ORC 9/1-4

Trump	49
Clinton	48
Spread	Trump +1

2012 Election:
    CBS 9/8-2012

Romney	42%
Obama	48%
Spread	Obama +6

2008 Election:
    CBS News, 9/5-9/7/2008

McCain	43%
Obama	48%
Spread	Obama +5

2004 Election:
    CBS News, 9/6-9/8/2004

Bush	50%
Kerry	42%
Spread	Bush +8

2000 Election:
    CBS News, 9/9-9/11/2000

Bush	43%
Gore	46%
Spread	Gore +3

1996 Election:
    CBS News/NYT, 9/2-9/4/1996

Dole	35%
Clinton	51%
Perot	5%
Spread	Clinton +16

1992 Election:
    CBS News/NYT, 9/9-9/13/1992

Bush	34%
Clinton	42%
Perot	14%
Spread	Clinton +8

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The following are excerpts from a report by Peter Hart and Corrie Hunt based on a focus group conducted on August 25, 2016 in the Milwaukee suburbs for the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

"If you look at the latest surveys and listen to David Plouffe, who thinks the presidential race is "likely to be a landslide" you might think this race is settled. …My warning is to not be enamored with today's numbers and to look much closer at the voices and thinking of voters….What's interesting is that what we heard in suburban Milwaukee last week is not all that different from what we heard in Aurora, Colorado, in January 2015. Voters remain anxious and angry. These people told us they are not voting for someone they want to be president but against someone they do not want to be president."

"When asked what scent or smell comes to mind when they think of the 2016 election, they offered a plethora of sickening scents. Four participants gave us 'garbage' and three said 'skunk.' The remaining voters gave us similarly offensive smells: 'sulfur,' 'rotten eggs,' 'dead fish,' and 'manure.'"

"They have strong views, but they are not high-information voters."

"These swing voters' opinions are based on the candidates' personalities, the anger they feel toward Washington, and the fact that they are facing difficult challenges in their own lives."

"Lack of trust is an important element."

"The big picture is that Hillary Clinton is ahead among these voters because she is perceived as 'the safer choice,' but they just do not trust her….their lack of trust stems from a perception of her lack of openness and transparency. Several swing voters explained that when these issues arise, she comes across as defensive and dismissive…This is important because she will not get the benefit of anyone's doubt if something takes a wrong turn."

"Behind this election are the questions of who is going to improve the economy, take on the powerful elite, and change the culture of Washington."

"Eight of these voters gave her a high rating on competence; only four say the same about Trump. Still, the 2016 presidential contest remains a 'change' election."

"The Clinton campaign has been deft in rebutting Mr. Trump and spotlighting his shortcomings. But it has yet to make the case for Hillary Clinton as a candidate who will take on the establishment and be a transparent leader."

<u>"Donald Trump is unacceptable to most voters in the focus group and throughout the country."</u>

"He remains a 'risk candidate.' While they might not trust Hillary Clinton to be completely forthcoming or tell them the truth, they do not trust Donald Trump to have the self-control or demeanor required of a president."

"In some ways, Trump is holding a better hand than Clinton. All he has to do is keep himself in check, heed his advisors' input, and reform from making bombastic and offensive statements. For traditional politicians, this would be an easy hand to play. But as this campaign has demonstrated, Trump is anything but a traditional politician."

<u>"Voters imagining the candidates as zoo animals reveals the defining character traits they see in the candidates."</u>

"In this group, we asked swing voters to imagine each candidate as if they were an animal at the zoo. In these swing voters' minds, Trump is foolish (and potentially dangerous) and strong (and potentially dangerous). Clinton, by contrast, brought to mind animals they viewed with suspicion, although some of her supporters envisioned an animal with strength that perseveres through tough times."

"Hillary Clinton: Hippo, Gazelle, Giraffe, Tiger"
"Donald Trump: Baboon, Rhino, Lion, Hyena"

<u>"The election reminds me very much of 1980."</u>

"In 1980, people knew that they did not want to vote for Jimmy Carter. Polls showed a close election, but those findings masked a pivotal belief among voters who only need to be reassured that Ronald Reagan would be a 'safe' choice. It was not until the single debate with President Carter that voters were convinced that Reagan could be a safe choice. This year, a lot of voters know they do not want

Donald Trump as president but they need to know that they can 'live with' Hillary Clinton for the next four years. For now, the hurdle they face is to find reassurance that they can trust her and that she will identify with them and their day-to-day challenges."

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NBC Battleground Map, 9/6
shows the following:

Real Clear Politics, 9/1
shows the following:

Hillary Clinton 272 EV
Donald Trump 174 EV
Toss Ups   92 EV

Hillary Clinton   262 EV
Tossups   154 EV
Donald Trump   154 EV

Sabato's Crystal Ball, 9/1
shows the following:

Safe Clinton	190 EV	Safe Trump	121 EV
Likely Clinton	83 EV	Likely Trump	42 EV
Lean Clinton	75 EV	Lean Trump	27EV
	348 EV		190 EV

Tossups   0

Washington Post/Survey Monkey, 9/7
shows the following:

Solid for Clinton	187	Solid for Trump	108
Lean Clinton	57	Lean Trump	18
	244		126

Toss Ups   168

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Selected polls, August-September 2016

The list below includes a series of surveys in the presidential race. It includes both Clinton vs Trump and Clinton vs Trump vs the Libertarian and Green Party candidates. The numbers for the latter two are treated as one for the purposes of this chart.

		Clinton	Trump	3rd Party	Clinton Spread
9/4	CNN/ORC	48	49	--	-1
	CNN/ORC	43	45	9	-2
9/4	NBC News/SurMon	48	42	--	6
	NBC News/SurMon	41	37	16	4
8/30	Fox News	48	42	--	6
	Fox News	41	39	13	2
8/29	USA/Suffolk	48	41	---	7
	USA/Suffolk	42	35	13	7
8/28	Monmouth	49	42	--	7
	Monmouth	46	39	9	7
8/24	Quinnipiac	51	41	--	10
	Quinnipiac	45	38	14	7
8/16	Pew Research	41	37	14	4
8/16	Economist/YouGov	47	41	--	6
	Economist/YouGov	41	35	10	6
8/8	Bloomberg	50	44	--	6
	Bloomberg	44	40	13	4
8/7	Monmouth	50	37	9	13
8/4	ABC/WP	50	42	--	8
	ABC/WSJ	45	37	12	8
8/3	NBC/WSJ	47	38	--	9
	NBC/WSJ	43	34	15	9

The Money Game – How much was raised?

The Clinton and Trump campaigns as of July 31, 2016

	Hillary Clinton	Donald Trump
Total receipts	$326,829,994	$127,980,237
Cash on hand	58.471,932	38,442,646
Debts	501,263	000 *
Party and joint fundraising cmte.	221,800,000	207,800,000
Super PACs	119,700,000	12,900,000

*As promised, Trump forgave the $47.5 million in loans he made to his campaign during the primaries. He has put a total of $50 million of his own money into the race. [Bloomberg Politics]

2016 General Election Debates

In order to be invited to participate in the debates being sponsored by the Commission on Presidential Debates a candidate must achieve a minimum threshold of 15% in an average of the following polls by the middle of September: ABC/WP, CBS/NYT, CNN/ORC, Fox News and NBC/WSJ.

Clinton and Trump will obviously meet the threshold; the question is whether Gary Johnson, the Libertarian candidate, and Jill Stein, the Green Party candidate, will cross the threshold. If either of them crosses the threshold for the first debate their running mates will be invited to participate in the vice-presidential debate.

The candidates must also demonstrate that they are on enough state ballots to have a mathematical chance of winning 270 electoral votes.

Johnson and Stein must achieve the same threshold before the 2nd and 3rd debates.

As of today, it does not appear that either of them will qualify.

Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump have both agreed to participate.

First Presidential Debate:
Monday, September 26, 2016
Hofstra University
Long Island, Hempstead, NY
Moderator: Lester Holt – NBC

Vice Presidential Debate:
Tuesday, October 4, 2016
Longwood University, Farmville, VA
Moderator: Elaine Quijano – CBS

Second Presidential Debate:
Sunday, October 9, 2016
Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO
Moderator: Anderson Cooper – CNN & Martha Raddatz – ABC

Third Presidential Debate:
Wednesday, October 19, 2016
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV
Moderator: Chris Wallace – Fox News

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The Washington Watch relies on the following sources of political data: Cook Political Report, Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report, Sabato's Crystal Ball, Ballotpedia, Real Clear Politics.com; The Green Papers.com; Huffpost – Pollster.com and Polling Report.com.

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Women Will Get It Done

Going forward, the Washington Watch will be including short sections from a project that I have been working on called, "Women Will Get it Done."

This project is a compilation of data on women in America: in politics, business, the military, education, and at home. It explores some of the specific challenges women face in advancing in these fields. It looks at everything from the dramatic, such as domestic violence, to the more hidden, such as pervasive institutional biases.

A general theme throughout all of the study is that biases exist and keep doors closed for many women, even though they have proven their ability to achieve success in every field. If American society could see women as equally capable members of society, we would all be better for it.

The question now is how these challenges can be overcome? How can women play a greater role in U.S. politics, business and culture? And, most of all, how can the [institutional] gender biases that hold so many women back become a thing of the past?

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<u>Women in Science</u>

In 2014, journalist Touriq Moosa wrote: "That the disparity between men and women's representation in science and math arises from culture rather than genetics seems beyond dispute." In the United States, the numbers of women going into STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) fields lags significantly behind that of men but it is not because women are inherently inferior intellectually, but rather that they are not socialized to consider them as viable careers.

The statistics are clear:
- In a 2012 study, only 5.7% of female respondents had computer and mathematical occupations and just 4.3% had architecture and engineering occupations.
- In 2011, women earned only 17.6% of Computer and Information Sciences Bachelor's Degrees and 18.7% of Engineering Bachelor's Degrees.
- In 2013, only 20% of the students who took the high school computer science Advanced Placement test were female.
- In the tech industry just 20% of software developers are women, and they make 49 cents to the male dollar and among women who do join the tech field, 52% leave by midcareer.

The reasons for these statistics are also clear:
- Gender-based socialization and messaging that science isn't for girls are incredibly pervasive in American culture.
- For women who have engineering degrees but don't work in the field, the things that pushed them out were uncivil workplace climates, inflexible work schedules, and little opportunity to advance.
- In a 2014 survey of scientists engaged in field research, 64% said they had personally experienced sexual harassment while at a field site. The vast majority of victims were women.
- According to a survey of women in tech, barriers for women include: facing stereotypes based on gender, being excluded from important networks of key decision-makers, not having a mentor and lacking role models who are similar to themselves.

While inroads are being made, the overall problem continues: women and girls are not being told that science is for them.

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Women Are Losing to Men in IT jobs

The percentage of women working in the information technology field has always been relatively low, but it didn't used to be as lost as it is now.

It peaked at 31 percent in 1990, then declined by about 6 percent over the past decade, even as the percentage of women in other occupations has steadily risen…

…most IT workers tend to be young, male and often foreign born…

…IT jobs have grown from 450,000 in 1970 to 4.6 million in 2014…

…in the 70s, men were paid a median wage of $74,180, which jumped to $80,895 in 2014...

…in 1970, the median wage for women working in IT jobs was $57,315, and in 2014 it jumped to $70,385.

….more than half of all IT workers are between the ages of 25 and 44 and that 24 percent are foreign-born.

….EPI's own analysis has estimated that about two-thirds of all hires each year are employed under guest-worker visas.

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About Books

WW has not heretofore recommended particular books and will rarely do so in the future. However, two quite different books have drawn my attention.

The first is the latest book by James Carville entitled, "We're Still Right/ They're Still Wrong." It is an interesting combination of facts, philosophy and James's unique linguistic style.

The second book is a collection of poems by Meghan Torpey, a friend of Will Cowan at Casa de Amma, a community of young adults living with disabilities. I found Meghan's poetry quite special.

The collection is called, "A Challenged Flower" and the following is my favorite from the collection. It is called, "A Challenged Flower."

Most of us are like flowers
Some of us grow short or tall
Some of us bloom earlier than others.

With support from our parents and
Friends and special teachers
We all blossom into individuals
With colorful personalities
We all have feelings and challenges,
Some more than others.

When I first found out I had a disability
I got scared
There were times when challenges,
Teachers and bullies made me upset
They labeled me.

But at age six, I watched a show
That changed my life.
If a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle
Can make it, I can make it!
You are you!
With a lot of hugs and some tears
I managed to accept myself
as the flower that I am.

But a flower is not simple
I am a poet, a writer, an artist
a gamer, a reader and above all
A good friend.

Both books are available on Amazon.com.

RESTAURANTS

Marx Brother's Café
627 West 3rd Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
Open 5:30 – 10 p.m.
Tel - 907-278-2133
Reservations can be made on the Café's website.

Debbie, William and I were staying overnight in Anchorage prior to taking a ship from Anchorage to Vancouver, British Columbia.

The bell captain at the hotel recommended a relatively new restaurant called the 49th Street Brewing Company which was within walking distance. When we got there we found it would be at least a 30 minute wait and looking around it was quite possible that the seating that would be available was not convenient.

We left and while walking back toward the hotel we found what appeared to be a little house with an awning that said Marx Brother's Café. We decided to give it a try. We soon decided it was a lucky choice.

The main floor is broken up into several rooms like the house it was. There are two tops and four tops scattered around. The back wall is basically glass. It is a pleasant place.

There is seating for 40+ people and the restaurant serves about 60 people a night.

As a starter Will ordered the Garden Salad, Baby greens tossed in hazelnut vinaigrette with roasted tomatoes, toasted Hazelnuts and crumbled Rogue blue cheese.

Debbie and I selected Van's Caesar Salad, described as their version of the Tijuana classic. The salad was prepared tableside and since it requires a minimum of two people, the salad was prepared from scratch by a preparer who knew his Caesar salads.

For her main course, Debbie chose one of the appetizers, the Neapolitan Seafood Mousse, layers of Maine lobster, smoked salmon and smoked halibut served with toast points, red onion gremolata and American caviar.

For his main course, Will selected the Filet Mignon Seared with port demi-glace, topped with truffle butter and celery root puree.

I ordered the Grilled Kodiak Scallops with Alaska seafood lasagna and coconut-saffron sauce.

We passed on the desserts which were quite enticing, ranging from Chocolate Mousse to Warm Berry Crisp to a Chocolate Coated Walnut Caramel Tart.

Reservations make sense but it is worth taking a chance at the last minute even without a reservation.

* * * * *

East Ender
Restaurant and Bar
47 Middle St.
Portland, Maine 04101
Info@EasstEnderPortland.com
207-879-7669
Monday- Saturday 11:30 a.m. – 10 p.m.
Sunday 11a.m. – 3 p.m.& 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Debbie and I went with Tim and James to the East Ender for lunch.

As you enter the relatively small restaurant, straight ahead is a bar with five high stools. In addition to the bar there are 18 seats at 2tops and 4 tops. There is an upstairs room that has a bar with ten stools and additional seating for forty-six people.

Debbie started with the Local Chicken Liver Pate & Mushroom Crostini. I ordered the Smoked Hake Chowder which may well be the best I have ever eaten. We then shared the Maine Lobster Melt with Bacon Jam, Tomato & Peppadew Relish.

James selected the Grilled Escarole & Treviso with Poached Egg, Bottarga, Crouton, & Parmesan.

Tim went for the Smokestack Lightning Burger with Monterey Jack, Shishitos & Steak Fries.

The restaurant is the final destination of a very popular food truck that operated in Portland.

There are two gender neutral restrooms. I assume they are identical. There is a square white ceramic washbasin with an oval shaped mirror above it. There is a shelf next to the washbasin with dried flowers. In the corner is a white ceramic commode. The floor is covered with wooden slats and the walls are a dark blue color. It is what you would call a very serviceable if not fancy facility.

[If you would like more information about this restaurant, please see James Schwartz's excellent review in the June 28, 2015 edition of the Portland Press Herald.]

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CASOLARE
Ristorante – Bar
Glover Park Hotel
2505 Wisconsin Avenue NW
Washington, DC
202-625-5400

The Savoy Suites and a non-descript eatery has become the Casolare Ristorante & Bar.

Opening less than six weeks ago, the Casolare has added a new dimension and then some to the eating opportunities in Glover Park.

As you enter the restaurant, straight ahead is a reception desk. To the right is a long bar with about a dozen high stools. There are also some tables in this area.

The principal dining room is to the left. To the far left is a series of four-person booths.

There are banquettes with tables to the far right and mid-way into the room. In the main dining area there are two tops, four tops and six tops. The tables are square, oblong and round. There is considerable wood paneling on the posts, walls

and ceiling and interesting lighting. There are a series of paintings on the walls that are apparently the work of the spouse of the owner of the restaurant.

The restaurant can hold up to 154 people.

Debbie and I went to Casolare with Ann and Len. Ann and Len had been there before and were particularly positive.

Ann ordered Mama Zecca's Eggplant with Parmigiano and Polpette "A La Pugliese" with Spicy Tomato Sauce & Pine nuts (meatballs). She shared the meatballs with Debbie who also ordered a pasta, Maltagliati with Local Crab, Chiles and Green Onion.

Len started with a Classic Caesar Salad with Shaved Grana & Lace Croutons followed by Spicy Chicken "Alla Diavola".

I opted to begin with the Grilled Octopus with Potatoes, Scallion and Lemon followed by Giant Chicken Parm.

I was the only one who ordered dessert, an excellent Praline Gelato.

Everyone was pleased with their choices. Both Debbie's pasta and my chicken were of sufficient size that they made a second dinner.

Our server, as well as other personnel who interacted with us, were friendly, very well informed and quite accommodating. As the evening wore on our server was a little less attentive but that minor distraction will not discourage us from going to the restaurant in the future.

Currently, the restaurant is only open for dinner but effective September 15th it will open for lunch.

There is valet parking. When you leave the restaurant you have to go into the hotel lobby in order to pay for parking ($12.00, with taxes). The person behind the hotel desk calls the valet to have your car brought around.

We will return.

* * * * *

Here are a few items that I found particularly tasty during the last couple of weeks:

The San Francisco Airport Salad – Saifun noodles, cilantro, green onions, peanuts, turkey nuggets choice of iceberg lettuce, spinach or 50/50. Christina's Restaurant, Sun Valley, Idaho.

French Toast – Restaurant at the Shangri-La Hotel, Vancouver, British Columbia

Pepperoni Pizza and Chicken Wings – Crown Plaza Hotel, Seattle Airport

Donuts made with Potato flour – We tried plain, chocolate and blueberry. The Holy Donut, Portland, Maine. (This store opens at 8 a.m. and closes when it runs out of donuts.)

In the Alaska Airlines Board Room (lounge) you can make your own pancakes in a machine WW has not seen before. – Seattle Airport

Mike

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