

# Thoughts on Coming Apart and the Coming Great Reset



**Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer**

**Kit Webster**

**June 8, 2024**

## Thinking About The Trump Conviction

It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it. - Aristotle

The Supreme Court tried to block me from relieving student debt. But they didn't stop me. - Joe Biden

But what I'm seeing is that we don't mind disliking each other now. We like it. That's the new thing, that we're enjoying the estrangement. - Peggy Noonan

Some things have to be believed to be seen. - Ralph Hodgson

(One of the most profound quotes of all time)

No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man. - Heraclitus

## Markets

### [Updated Charts](#)

> Two of my current themes: how to buy an election - much corruption happens prior to any ballot's being cast or counted - and the coming great inflation, are summarized in this excerpt from the Grant Williams podcast with Le Shrub. Biden is buying votes with abandon and the price to be paid is future inflation.

I'll tell you one example about the Freddie Mac thing, which I call the story on page 14 of the FT that will soon make it on the front page of the Wall Street Journal. It's a crazy story. And when I saw it and I was like, why is this on page 14? It drove me crazy. So just to keep it simple, so Freddie Mac made an application to the FHFA to offer secondary mortgages to its clients. Now, to keep this simple, if you have a mortgage with Freddie Mac, you can borrow up to 80%, an additional mortgage. So it's like an equity release mechanism for people, but you don't have to refinance your first mortgage, so you just add on top. Which is very elegant because now if you're a boomer and you own a house, you go and get a consumer loan unsecured, you're going to pay a much higher rate, so you can go to Freddie Mac and borrow it at a more sensible rate. And this whole thing could release about \$1 trillion worth of consumer spending power to the homeowners. And if you add Fannie on top, if Fannie does the same, that's another trillion. So you're talking about 2, 3 trillion dollars that could get unlocked of consumer spending power. But here's the crazy part. The part for me is that there was no requirement for formal ruling, which is really, really convenient. So basically, Freddie made the application mid-April, they had a consultation period for 30 days, which has now expired last week, and the FHFA has to approve it within 30 days. This is something to really watch out for. By mid-June, we could have this thing approved. And already a group of Republicans came out and started shouting, but no one even noticed because no one even noticed the first one. So it's all really convenient. So again, it's a very convenient mechanism. And the second thing that, again, no one is talking about, which, again, I'm not in the US so I'm not sure if I'm missing something,

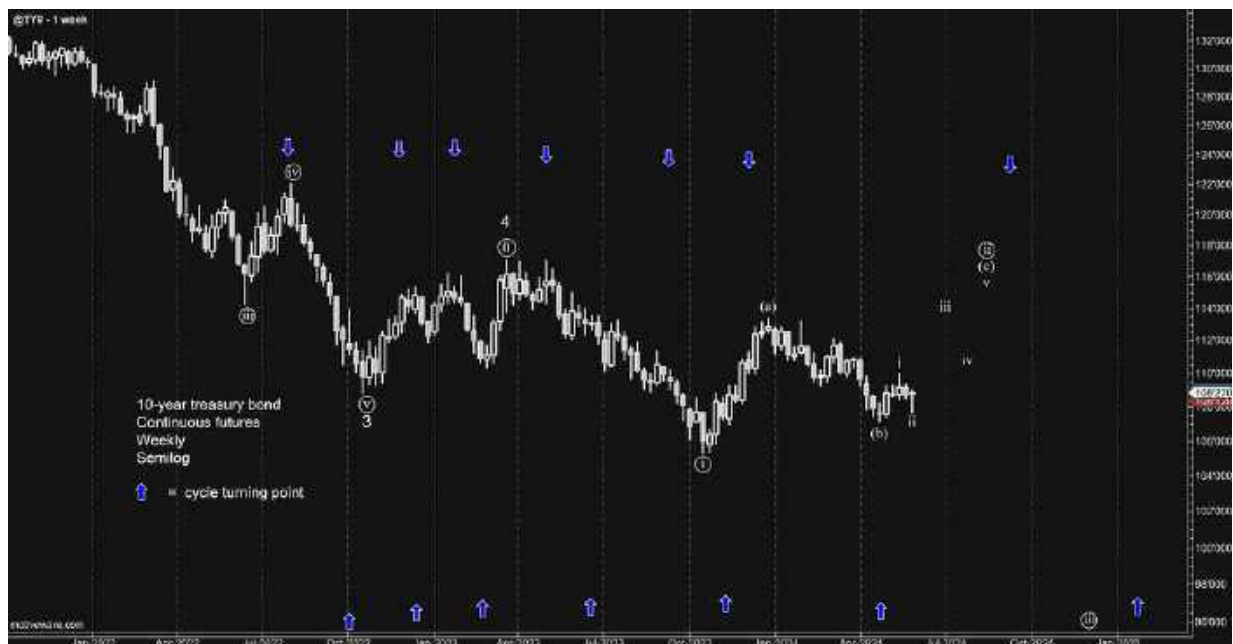
but I don't see it mentioned, is the supplementary security income. So basically, the expand expanded the definition of households that qualify for supplementary security income to include households that are now receiving SNAP [food stamp] payments, which is Supplementary Nutrition Assistance Program. So here's the numbers. So right now in the US, 7.4 million people receive SSI, so the supplementary security income. And on average, that's like \$650 a month. But on the other side, 41.9 million people get SNAP payments. So that's 12% of the population gets SNAP. So basically right now, this is going to get implemented September 30th, right now you're going to have five times more people that can get a check of the SSI. So I call that a pleb TAM expansion. So you're basically, it's like you're giving bribes to 12% of the US population. It's September 30th, two months before the election. Honestly, this is so emerging markets, it's just brilliant.

> Let's talk about timing.

Most market commentators are thinking that the government will bribe and maneuver and do whatever it takes to keep the economy together before the election. All hell then breaks loose in the first quarter of next year.

I use two, flawed tools to peer into the future: Elliott waves and cycles. If the world unfolds as it should wrt these two indicators, when does the timing for a potential, significant problem occur?

I think the dollar has already turned down and that the stock markets are weeks away from some kind of a top. What is the critically-important bond market say? When do interest rates turn back up?



My forecast is and has been that interest rates will generally decrease prior to a significant increase to new highs for the last few years. The graph, itself, indicates, very roughly, a top in bonds / low in interest rates around August of this year. Cycles indicate a top around the end of November of this year, with a range of approximately, plus or minus, one month. So my charts are in rough agreement, but earlier, than the consensus.

The fact that I am in agreement with the majority makes me uncomfortable, but let's watch this unfold.

> The stock market is very close to another top. Yet to be seen whether it is the top for a while.

> I remain concerned that we are walking along the edge of a precipice. The next six months could be telling.

## > **Thinking About the Trump Conviction**

(A lot of space on this subject because I think it is important - primarily for its unintended consequences. Keep in mind that I dislike Trump intensely.)

I thought Jonah Goldberg, a conservative writer and a strong critic of Trump, summed it up well in a recent column:

This is all a long-winded way of saying in the matter of the People of the State of New York v. Donald J. Trump, I want to make the case for blaming the victim.

Blaming the victim is one of those things “everyone knows” we’re never supposed to do. Interestingly, this is not some ancient biblical or Thomistic injunction. The phrase “blaming the victim” is barely a half-century old. The phrase was almost nonexistent before the 1971 book *Blaming the Victim* by William Ryan. Angry at the Moynihan Report, Ryan argued that Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s diagnosis of family breakdown in the African American community as the driver of urban crime and dysfunction was outrageous. It was a seminal text of the “root causes” arguments we are so familiar with today. It took on added ideological baggage in the context of rape and sexual assault. And—let me just say—rightly so. Blaming women for being attacked because they dress provocatively or get drunk in unwise situations or locations is morally reprehensible. But, as the curmudgeonly father of a young woman, I feel compelled to say that this doesn’t mean that women shouldn’t be mindful of their circumstances. The matter of blame—morally and most emphatically legally—should and must reside squarely on the criminal.

But let's set intergenerational poverty and sexual predation aside. As a matter of real life, we all can think of circumstances where we, or people we know, went looking for trouble. I think most reasonable people can hold two independent ideas simultaneously. The person who hurls a string of F-bombs at a cop and gets a beating as a result was behaving stupidly. Indeed, it's fair to say—not as a matter of law, but of common sense—that he was “asking for it.” But we can also believe that the police officer should not have beaten the victim. We have all sorts of moral intuitions of this sort. The teenager who thinks he's good at parkour was an idiot for jumping from rooftop to rooftop, and it's tragic that he fell to his death. But it is not as tragic as the teen who is struck by a stray bullet while doing her homework. The hiker who is mauled by a bear for trying to take a selfie with some cubs does not arouse the same sympathy as the visitor mauled by a bear at a zoo because the zookeeper left the enclosure unlocked.

Donald Trump had sex with an adult film actress while his third wife was nursing their newborn child. He had an affair with a former Playboy model. He denies this, but as far as I can tell no one else does. Even Trump's staunchest defenders don't try—at least not very hard—to do so. He falsely recorded his effort to pay off to Stormy Daniels as legal expenses. He spent his entire professional life abusing the legal system, stiffing contractors out of their fees by threatening to bankrupt them in frivolous legal actions. As a landlord, he violated fair housing laws. As a presidential candidate, he promised to put his business interests in a blind trust, but once elected he didn't and monetized the presidency for his own benefit. Also as a presidential candidate, he led chants of “Lock her up!” about his political opponent. He invited Russia to release information about her. He was impeached (the first time) for abusing his power in an attempt to intimidate a foreign leader to investigate Joe Biden for corruption. When he tried to steal the 2020 election, he pressured his own Justice Department to allege crimes to buttress his false claims that the election was illegitimate. This was also around the time he encouraged a mob that visited riotous violence upon the Capitol in an effort to intimidate Congress out of fulfilling its constitutional duties. He's promised to pardon people who beat up cops on his behalf. He calls them “hostages” and plays their warbling rendition of “The Star-Spangled Banner” before his rallies, like some weak-tea Americanized version of the “Horst-Wessel-Lied [the beginning of the Nazi anthem].” He defended the mob that chanted “Hang Mike Pence.” He's argued—through lawyers in court—and in his own words that he should be immune to any criminal charges that stem from actions he took as president, and to a certain extent, as ex-president. He's vowed that when he's president again he reserves the right to do what he's outraged is being done to him. I could go on, but you get the picture.

Now, I want to be clear: Except for the misdemeanor of false records, none of these things are proven crimes and some of them are not crimes at all. Contrary to a lot of talking heads, politicians are not legally barred from trying to “influence an election.” That is what running for office is. Nor is paying off parties to adulterous engagements illegal. If it were, I have no doubt many politicians would be in the clink.

But as a matter of common sense, karma, moral intuition, or whatever term you like, I am utterly incapable of mustering the slightest sympathy for Donald Trump. If I were to publish a dictionary of common phrases, I would put his picture next to the entry on “F—k Around and Find Out.”

His entire life has been one extended experiment with testing, violating, and abusing the rules—some legal, some moral, some normative—for his own benefit. The system isn’t supposed to apply to him. This, in almost dialectic fashion, has invited responses that also violate the rules of the system. I’ve been making this point for nearly a decade now. Trump’s violations of norms have elicited countless violations of norms from his opponents. That’s what happens when you break the rules: You give permission to others to break them, too. The amazing thing is how people go blind to the rule-breaking of their own team. Sen. Mike Lee thinks that the prosecution of Donald Trump is an affront to all he holds dear, invoking A Man for All Seasons with the Democrats as William Roper, defenestrating the rule of law not for Wales, “But for Biden.” Trump’s myriad transgressions seem to be utterly invisible to him.

But as I said, we can hold two ideas simultaneously. I think this case against Donald Trump should never have been brought. As a matter of law—not karma—Alvin Bragg is in the wrong. I don’t necessarily believe that he thinks he’s breaking the rules, but there’s a lot of that sort of motivated reasoning going on with rule-breakers these days. This case would not have been brought against anyone but Trump, as Elie Honig and others have argued. I am unconvinced by the argument he committed a felony. I don’t blame the jurors for reaching that conclusion. I might have reached the same given the instructions of the judge, the evidence presented by the prosecution, and the abysmal defense mounted by the Trump team. But I still think the verdict is wrong.

This brings up another reason to blame Trump. He didn’t let his lawyers mount the sort of defense that might have gotten him acquitted. Refusing to give an inch, he wouldn’t let them concede the affairs, or pursue a strategy that didn’t align with what he thinks are his political and psychological interests. “Deny everything,” and “always punch back,” are the Roy Cohn rules Trump lives by, and why not? They’ve worked for him until now.

And they may continue to work for him. One of the problems with the backlash that Trump invites from his enemies is that it often elicits yet another backlash against them. The flimsiness of this case is causing some people—and nearly all

elected Republicans and most conservative pundits—to rally to Trump. It's not at all far-fetched to imagine that Trump comes out of this stronger. Or he might not. No one really knows. But the fantasy that this will be the thing that rids us of Trump has taken many forms and has never paid off.

I have no problem with reasonable criticism of this case and the verdict. Why would I? I agree with much of it. Where I part company is with the idea that this proves Donald Trump was “right” about the system. He's like a human monkey wrench hurling himself into the gears of the system and then, when mangled by it, crying about how he's a victim and that his victimhood proves the system never worked.

It is abhorrent and reprehensible to call this case a Stalinesque show trial. If you know anything about Stalin's Great Terror and say this, you are whitewashing profound evil and slandering the United States. In Stalin's show trials, the accused were tortured. Their families were tortured. Victims were threatened with death—and the deaths of their families—if they didn't sign and repeat false confessions. Rep. Nancy Mace plays a similar game. “There's no difference: Putin silences Navalny, Biden's DOJ targets Trump. The left's outrage over Navalny is hypocritical as they cheer on Biden's tyranny.”

If you know anything about Putin or Navalny and can say, with a straight face, “There's no difference” the best one can say in your defense is that you are a staggering idiot. I don't think Mace deserves such generosity. This is not like Castro's Cuba, as Marco Rubio says either.

It is entirely defensible to say that this verdict undermines faith and confidence in the judicial system. That is exactly what I thought it would do, and so I was a skeptic of bringing it all along. But you know what else undermines faith and confidence in the judicial system? Claiming that we are no different than Stalin's or Putin's Russia.

Our legal system has never been perfect. It's produced a fair number of miscarriages of justice. But normally, politicians—particularly ones who claim to be conservatives and admirers of the American experiment—do not respond to such mistakes by defecating from a great height on their country. But they are willing to do so, not for Wales, but for Trump. ...

I think it's fine to be angry about the Bragg case. I also think it's fine to think justice was done, or that it will be done pending appeal. Reasonable people can disagree. But I think moments like this demand a little of that superfluousness. Watching cable news and perusing social media last night, I felt utterly out of step with the defining political passions of this moment. It was only when I watched the livestream of Advisory Opinions that I heard anyone acknowledge the conflicting truths of this case, the competing shades of gray that define the reality and the facts.

You don't owe anyone your passion. It's fine to be loyal to a party or even a politician. But you shouldn't relinquish the keys to your supply of anger or righteousness. The [loudest](#) voices make the same error, but from different directions: They invest in Donald Trump the future of America's soul. But America is about more than Donald Trump. If he loses in his battles, it will not be proof that America is irremissibly lost. And if he wins, it will not be proof that America is irremissibly lost. Both visions are predicated on a lie about this country and how it works. But that lie can become true only if enough people decide to believe it. So don't give the monkey wrench that power.

Liberal Ian Bremmer put it this way: "Falsifying business records is normally a misdemeanor, but Bragg, an elected Democrat in deep-blue Manhattan, had campaigned on putting Trump in cuffs. To upgrade the charges to felonies, he drew on a controversial legal theory to claim that the records were falsified in an attempt to commit or conceal an underlying federal crime of the jury's choice. Judging by the outcome, the gambit worked – although it also helped further politicize and delegitimize the case and could make the conviction vulnerable to reversal on appeal.... Notably, the New York trial was by far the weakest and least serious of all the criminal cases Trump faced. The three that remain – the Fulton County election interference case, the federal election interference case, and the federal classified documents case – are orders of magnitude more consequential, but none is expected to start before September if at all this year. Should he win in November, he won't be able to pardon himself of the New York convictions, but he will be able to quash the two federal indictments and at least postpone the Georgia trial until he's out of office. Odds are that the 34 guilty verdicts will be the only legal accountability Trump will see before the election – and perhaps ever."

What's done is done.  
Therefore, what?

By pushing a minor case to the maximum and clearly targeting Trump (I'm not going to get into whataboutisms), the "justice system" has compromised its credibility. More than that, and **TRAGICALLY**, everyone is now fair game. All politicians have skeletons in their closets. Indictments will become part of the political landscape, particularly as MAGA is out for revenge. Trump has stated that he will prosecute his political opponents if elected - and Hillary and the server thing will probably be one of the first up. She got a pass when almost surely guilty. (To be fair, Trump did say on Hannity that he would not prosecute his opponents. However, just this week he said, "Sometimes, revenge can be justified," so there are contradictions here.) Andrew McCabe, former Director of the FBI said on *CNN* that employees of the FBI are afraid of being jailed by Trump



This was predictable. We are going to destroy everything before this is over. It is just very, very sad.

There was much Democrat celebrating. They need to be careful what they ask for. Compromising integrity and institutions in the name of Trump Derangement Syndrome is a very bad, actually fatal, idea.

## Short Takes

> Speaking of mountains out of molehills - In my opinion Hunter Biden is a low-life scuzzball, who is probably guilty of both the gun charge and evading taxes. His gun trial has become kabuki because of politics - including efforts by the DOJ to make it go away. Many parallels with the Trump - Bragg trial. Of course, the Hunter trial will have far less fallout than the Trump trial.

> Chinese Defense Ministry - The Chinese army is ready, together with the Russian army, to defend justice in the world.

In a fascinating turn of events, the Chinese and Ukrainians met, with China agreeing to work with Kyiv in several, non-war-related areas.

> Pippa Malmgren

Not everybody understood this was a three-way race because the mainstream press refused to report Robert Kennedy's rather astonishingly strong poll numbers. Zogby recently conducted a massive 50-state poll, with ten times as many participants as usual so as to lower the margin of error to almost nothing. They asked some 26,000 voters who they would support in a one-to-one race between only Trump and Kennedy and, separately, between only Kennedy and Biden. The results were stunning. If faced with a choice between President Biden and Kennedy, assuming there was no serious Republican contender like Trump, then Kennedy would win 367 Electoral College votes while Biden would win only 171. If faced with a choice between President Trump (pre-felony conviction/pre-appeal) it was a vastly narrower margin but, Kennedy still won against Trump by taking 270 Electoral College votes versus 268 for Trump. However, after the 34 Trump felony convictions (pre-appeal), one could expect this margin to be even wider in Kennedy's favour. The polls also concluded that Trump beats Biden hands down in a one-to-one matchup pre-Trump's felony conviction/pre-appeal process. ...

What matters is that we are not witnessing politics anymore. We are witnessing the unraveling of the American social contract. The social contract in many nations is clear. You are either in power or in prison. Political life consists of

bouncing back and forth between the two extremes. The US seems to be well on its way to this outcome now.

> Speaking of the Hunter Biden trial - Sarah Isgur, a conservative commentator, is growing in stature in liberal media as well for her clear, reasoned discussions of legal issues - here she is in the *New York Times*

Hunter Biden faces up to 25 years in prison if convicted on three felony gun charges in a trial that [began] in Wilmington, [Delaware], on Monday, .... "A criminal defendant can accept a plea deal from the prosecution anytime before the jury returns its verdict, which means that he might still have a chance to avoid a full trial. If he can, he should. ... Hunter Biden's best arguments aren't even the ones he can make at trial. In his own memoir, he admitted that he regularly used drugs around the time he bought the gun. That means the outcome of the trial seems largely a foregone conclusion. On appeal, however, Hunter Biden is likely to argue that the law itself is an unconstitutional infringement on his Second Amendment rights to own a gun. This is a politically tricky, but a legally reasonable argument. ... In short, Hunter Biden should take whatever deal he is being offered. It doesn't get easier from here."

> Is this 21st century America or what? CNN will have commercial breaks during the presidential debate.

> I want to reiterate my major theme about Biden. Not about student loans, etc. About steps he has taken that will fundamentally change the future, even the way the world operates: confiscating Russia's reserves was a profound act that will accelerate the use of currencies other than the dollar and erode our "privilege;" the Covid payments, Inflation Reduction Act, Chips Act and deficits that will fan the flames of inflation; and the energy policy that is damaging the reliability of our electric grid without a workable plan to provide stable, plentiful electricity. No one is looking at these things, but these will be his legacy and will fundamentally impact your life and your standard of living. Forgiving student loans is regrettable. These policies are existential. Our essentially-open border does not rise to that level of seriousness, but the unintended consequences will be significant.

Biden has been a terrible president for reasons that do not make the headlines. Trump will likely do better with the border, and will probably begin to rationalize energy policy without addressing the underlying problems, but that is about it. And there we are.

> The next nightmare in combat is drone swarms.

I feel a trend coming on that I could support - man legally changes his gender to identify as a woman "so he can retire five years earlier" in Argentina.

> There wouldn't happen to be an election coming up, would there?

WASHINGTON—President Biden is expected to sign an executive order Tuesday that would ban migrants who cross the border illegally from claiming asylum, allowing them to be quickly deported back to Mexico or their home countries, according to officials familiar with the planning.

> Perspective

**POLITICO**



Here are some patterns from the Supreme Court's last term that might surprise you. About 50 percent of the court's cases were decided unanimously. Only five of 57 cases — just 8 percent — were decided 6-3 with the six Republican appointees all on one side and the three Democratic appointees on the other. Ninety percent of the 57 cases were decided with at least one liberal justice in the majority. Kavanaugh, Roberts, and Barrett were all in the majority over 90 percent of the time, while Justices Jackson, Sotomayor, and Kagan were all more likely to be in the majority than either Samuel Alito or Clarence Thomas. The three liberal justices voted together in fewer than a quarter of the non-unanimous cases, and the six conservatives voted together only 17 percent of the time.

> Washington DC is one of more than a dozen cities where non-citizens can vote in local elections.

> The *Telegraph* -

Joe Biden's administration is quietly offering "mass amnesty" to hundreds of thousands of migrants, an investigation has found, as the president faces a backlash ahead of the election.

More than 350,000 asylum cases have been closed by the US government since 2022 for applicants who do not have a criminal record and are not seen as national security threats, the New York Post found.

Although this means no official decision on asylum status has been made, it allows migrants to stay indefinitely in the US without fear of deportation.

> *The Guardian*

Researchers found that in 2022, 22.3 US women per 100,000 died either during pregnancy or within a year of giving birth. That is a slight improvement from 2021, when American women died at a rate of 32.9 per 100,000.

Still, alarming disparities persist, particularly between white and Black mothers. White mothers in America died at a rate of 19 per 100,000 in 2022. By contrast, Black mothers died at a rate of 49.5 per 100,000, or roughly 2.5 times the rate of white Americans.

Nearly every demographic group of American mothers dies at a higher rate than all mothers in peer nations. Norway, for instance, did not document a single maternal death. The United Kingdom, which conducts an in-depth investigation into every death, counted 5.5 maternal deaths per 100,000.

Notably, most of the deaths of American mothers – more than 80% – are preventable, according to CDC data cited by the Commonwealth report.

> I'm shocked that this is even controversial - it is the foundation of our current culture

**Facebook's 'Race Blind' Algorithm  
Backfires In Their Face: Finds 90%  
Of 'Hate Speech' Was Directed  
Toward White People And Men**  
en-volve.com

> It begins (the *Telegraph*)

Researchers from The Netherlands analysed data from 47 Western countries and discovered there had been more than three million excess deaths since 2020, with the trend continuing despite the rollout of vaccines and containment measures.

They said the “unprecedented” figures “raised serious concerns” and called on governments to fully investigate the underlying causes, including possible vaccine harms.

> I have read a ton of history, but, except for the Civil War, 19th century America has always been a weak spot. I am now listening to *The Rest is History* podcast - highly recommended if you have an interest in history. I just finished a series on the fall of the Sioux/Lakota nation.

Jesus Christ.

I knew that we were bad to Indians / Native Americans. Disease, taking their lands away, killing the buffalo, endless relocation and violation of treaties. I grew up in Georgia, learning about the Trail of Tears. But the slaughter and massacre were horrendous. "Extermination" ultimately became official policy from the president on down.

Yes, Indians could be a brutal people, and yes, they massacred and mutilated whites as well as each other - Little Big Horn came before Wounded Knee - but some of the things we did to them were just unspeakable. I would like to think that we are better than this, but we are not.

I know that humans can be really nasty - even evil - the Holocaust, Hutus and Tutsis, the killing fields, the Ukraine starvation, the Uighurs, the extermination of Aborigines in Tasmania, Ghengis Khan - it never stops.

And I know that Americans can do terrible things, particularly during slavery and to African Americans.

But to hear about the treatment of the Sioux, even for my cynical brain, was overwhelming.

I actually wept when I listened to the description of the massacre at Wounded Knee. Partially, it was from the story, itself. Partially, it was the accumulation of atrocities over the series. Partially, it was the inevitable end of an era and a way of life. What was left of the nomads was now confined to reservations. Civilization had triumphed.

(You may have heard stories about the mutilations continually carried out by the Plains Indians. According to the podcasters, this was because Indians wanted to disable their enemies for the afterlife. They could not fight in the afterlife if their arms were cut off; they could not create more enemies in the afterlife if their genitals were cut off.)

> Bird flu has been found in mice.

Mexico man dies of bird flu.

More cases of bird flu found in humans.

Not transmitting from human to human, at least not yet.

(If it becomes a thing, we will have to rename bird flu for fear of reprisals against birds and being specie-ists.)

> The Alito flag thing. IMO, flying the flags was a bad idea, even if the explanations are true and reasonable. In my view, the Supreme Court must live up to the Caesar's Wife Standard - they not only need to be above reproach, they need to be seen as being above reproach.

> Fascinating that the betting markets have Biden at only 83% probability of being nominated by the Democrats. Trump is at 92%.

There is a balloon war going on between North and South Korea. One side sends balloons filled with various items, including poop (North to South) and K-pop usb sticks (South to North), to the other. (Beth snarkaly noted that K-pop is the digital equivalent to poop, so that it was a fair exchange.)

> China is facing a similar fate, without the war - from *GZero Daily*

Russian leaders know their country has a serious demographic problem. With a current population of about 146 million, Russia has watched that number shrink in recent years.

“Measures to increase the birthrate are a priority of the government and the president,” a Kremlin spokesman said recently. President Vladimir Putin declared 2024 the “Year of the Family” and is paying subsidies to Russian women who have three or more children.

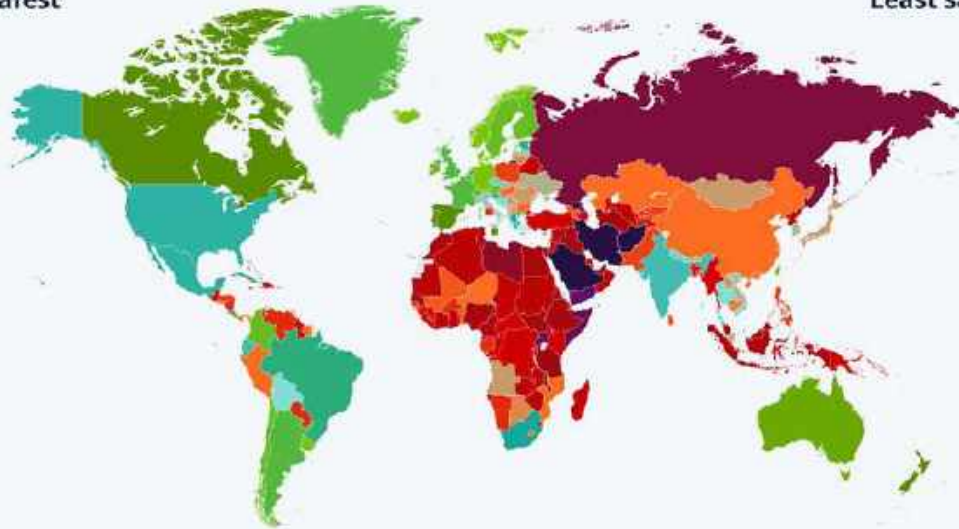
The problem is an old one, but disease and war have given it new life. COVID killed more than 1.1 million Russians, according to independent sources, and the war in Ukraine has blown a much bigger hole in Russia’s working-age population. An estimated 150,000 Russians have died on the battlefield, and over a million more have fled the country since the invasion, either to avoid conscription or to find better job prospects.

About 1.26 million children were born in Russia in 2023. That’s the lowest total in a generation, according to the Russian government’s own stats. All these numbers compound the drop in births and life expectancy that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union. In fact, the only significant recent boost to Russia’s population came when it added 2.4 million people by invading and annexing Crimea.

The irony: Over time, demographic decline will become a serious drag on a Russian economy that’s now deeply dependent for productivity and growth on a war that’s killing so many young Russian men.

# The Best and Worst Countries for LGBTQ+ Travelers

The safest and least safe countries for LGBTQ+ travelers according to the Gay Travel Index 2024



Index based on 18 categories ranging from marriage for all to the death penalty for LGBTQ+ people. As of March 1, 2024

Source: Spartacus International Gay Guide



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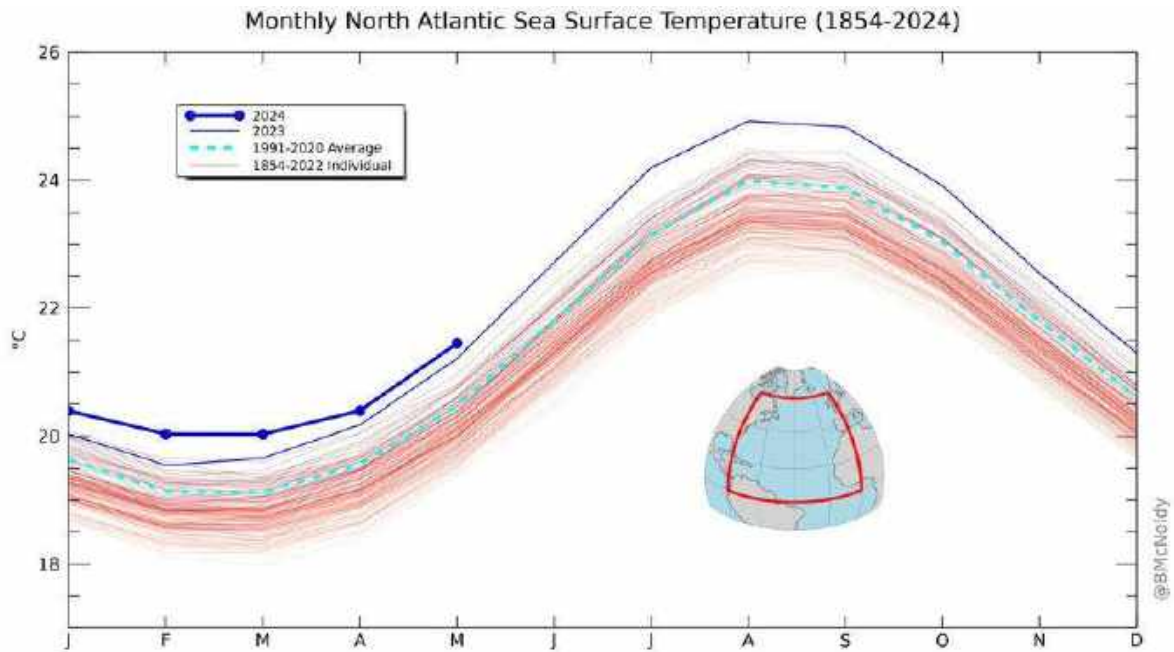


> D-Day was this week. Tens of thousands of real heroes, not the diminished use of the word today. Against real evil. While evil exists today, we are often fighting other things. A truly awesome, magnificent, humbling accomplishment.



## It Ain't Easy Being Green

- > Doomberg had two quotes that will provide fodder for future essays:  
The green agenda is incompatible with democracy.  
In the clash between renewable energy and the laws of physics, the laws of physics are undefeated.
- > Something's happening here ....



## Miscellany



Hattip CH



So bad, it's good



