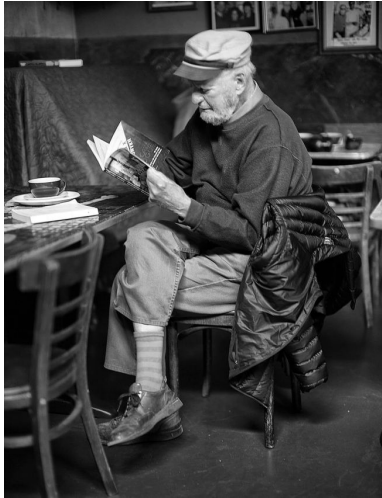


Dear Virginia,

"Pity the Nation"
a poem by Lawrence Ferlinghetti



Pity the nation whose people are sheep
And whose shepherds mislead them
Pity the nation whose leaders are liars
Whose sages are silenced
And whose bigots haunt the airwaves
Pity the nation that raises not its voice
Except to praise conquerors
And acclaim the bully as hero
And aims to rule the world
By force and by torture
Pity the nation that knows
No other language but its own
And no other culture but its own
Pity the nation whose breath is money
And sleeps the sleep of the too well fed
Pity the nation oh pity the people
who allow their rights to erode
and their freedoms to be washed away
My country, tears of thee
Sweet land of liberty!
"Pity the Nation" (after Kahlil Gibran) 2007



Stories, insights
and action for a
world that works
for all of us

~ ~ ~

*Justice is what love
looks like in public.*

Jim Hightower

~ ~ ~

Favorite Resources

[Fix the News](#)

(Future Crunch)

[Reasons to be Cheerful](#)

[Chop Wood, Carry](#)

[Water](#)

[350.org](#)

[Climate Reality](#)

[Project](#)

[Local Futures](#)

[Desert Rose Press](#)

[VirginiaMudd.com](#) ~

~ ~

This Month's Featured Videos and Articles

Our constitutional crisis
What the Supreme Court has done to democracy
What's at stake in November



"January 6 was an attack on the constitution and so was July 1. That no one is above the law has been a pillar of this nation and a cherished value since the 18th century; to knock it down in the 21st destabilizes structures and values that have stood these two centuries and more." [Read "The US Supreme Court just completed Trump's January 6 coup attempt," by Rebecca Solnit.](#)

"The rule of law and order underpins our entire system, the idea that everybody should be treated equally in the courts. The Supreme Court just ripped that up. . . . This is a change in our entire constitutional system. . . . Think of how someone who is not liable for criminal acts might behave. [Watch historian Heather Cox Richardson in this 6 minute video interview.](#)

[Watch this 11 minute interview with historian Heather Cox Richardson on CNN.](#)

Cox warns that if we don't defeat the would-be dictator, Donald Trump, in November we will not be able to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Republic in 2026.



"Trump, Covid, the climate crisis – we've had a hard few years. The wounds linger" by Rebecca Solnit

Rebecca Solnit is one of my favorite authors. She goes deeply and clearly into timely issues. This article is one of them.

"Public life has private impact; some of it breaks our brains, and some of it breaks our hearts. Not to leave our consciences out of this – to watch so much malice and willful destruction, to witness so much injustice, from genocides around the world to gross injustices at home, has an impact. That impact is probably best described as moral injury, which a veterans' organization defines as "the psychological, social and spiritual impact of events involving betrayal or transgression of one's own deeply held moral beliefs and values occurring in high stakes situations". I encourage you to read the whole article [here](#).



A Whole New Ball Game

President Biden has withdrawn from the presidential campaign and endorsed Vice President Harris. The dynamics of the election are dramatically altered. We have been on an emotional political roller coaster, especially these last few weeks, and are still digesting this turn of events. To that end I want to share two pieces that really touched me. Here is a 23 minute presentation by Lawrence O'Donnell, ["I'm watching you, kid."](#) The video was a tear-jerker for me and a kind of unveiling of who Kamala Harris is.

["Joe Biden, My Friend and an American Hero,"](#) is a beautiful tribute to this remarkable President.



Action Sites for Democracy and Climate

Given the threats to our democracy and our Earth, I am leaving this resource guide in until the election in November. **Everyone is needed to do whatever they can!**

Protect Our Democracy: Every Action Counts!

[Chop Wood, Carry Water:](#) Provides daily actions for our democracy.

[thecivicscenter.org](#) : Mobilizing the youth vote in America.

[civicinfluencers.org:](#) Also working to register young voters.

[vote.org:](#) Everything you need to know to vote.

[steady.substack.com:](#) Dan Rather's excellent commentary on current affairs.

[RobertHubbell.substack.com:](#) Reflections on and summary of today's news.

[guides.vote:](#) Non-partisan guide to how candidates stand on issues.

votefwd.org: Write letters to encourage folks to vote.

[Postcards to Swing States](#): Write postcards to help get out the vote.

[Blue Wave Postcards: Clifford and I are doing this. Easy and straightforward.](#)

statesproject.org: A pro-democracy organization working at the state level.

[VoteRiders](#) will tell you what you need to know in order to ensure you can vote.

Climate Action: Every Action Counts!

[100 Things You Can Do to Help in the Climate Crisis](#)

[15 Actions to Make a Difference](#)

All Kinds of Good News



Rights of a River. Rights of Nature

A group of Indigenous women in Peru succeeded in asserting the legal right to integrity and protection of the Marañón River, a sacred waterway that flows from the Andes to the Amazon. This is a significant victory for the preservation of nature, water, forests, and biodiversity; in other words, life itself. It's also a big step forward in the fight against climate change, and for the rights of nature.

[Read more here.](#)



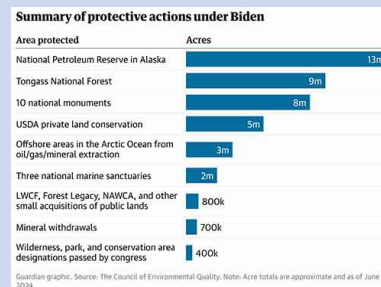
Cement Recycling

University of Cambridge scientists identified a new way for recycling cement from demolished concrete buildings, which might reduce emissions from one of the world's most polluting industries. Cement, the cornerstone of contemporary construction, accounts for 7.5% of worldwide human-made CO₂ emissions due to its energy-intensive manufacturing process. [Here's the article.](#)



China's Great Green Wall

Since 1978, China's ambitious Three-North Shelterbelt Forest Program has reforested 32 million hectares (over 79 million acres) of desert-prone lands in the north of the country. The program has flourished thanks to scientific plant distribution methods and the rise of agrivoltaics, which combines new energy power generation with agricultural production, expanding greenery in fragile sandy areas. [Read more here.](#)



The Biden administration's record of protected lands in America

During Biden's term, around 41 million acres—an area slightly larger than Florida—has been placed under some form of new protection, making him 'one of the nation's strongest conservation presidents.' Protections range from glacial lakes in Minnesota to tribal lands in New Mexico, huge expanses of the Arctic, archaeological sites in Texas, marine sanctuaries, national forests and monuments. [See more here.](#)

Wisdom for Our Time



We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Declaratio of Independence, Paragraph 2

What's Jazz?



Mel Tormé asks Ella Fitzgerald how to explain what is jazz

At the 1976 Grammys, Fitzgerald, with an assist from crooner Mel Tormé, answered the question “What is jazz?” She and Tormé effortlessly launched into a scat duet. Scat is the vocal equivalent of instrumental improvisation, the heart of jazz. Wow! [Enjoy the performance!](#)

*I hope your month will be amazing!
Virginia / Gibi*

My Column

**It's been quite a
month.**

**Time to take
a short break!**

**So no column
this month.**



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