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QUOTE FOR THE DAY

**“Today is the first day of the rest of your life.”
Charles Dederich, founder of the drug and
alcohol self help program, Synanon.**

WE ALL NEED HELP

**Reds and Blues alike, we have all been
consuming too much of our favorite political
kool- aid over the past several years – time to
politically sober up and exercise a little
independent thinking separate from what the
partisan pundits have been feeding us. Mass
media (TV, cable, internet, papers, radio) have
been leading us around for too long, posing, in
most instances as unbiased news providers
when, in fact, most “new stories” are heavily
editorialized to suit your favorite flavor.**

Interesting poll just released on voters who say they have a high level of trust in mass media. Democrats give a rather high rating of 73%, but independents, only 36% and Republicans barely move the needle, at 10%. According to a 10/16/20 Gallup poll, 31% of Americans identify as Democrats, 31% identify as Republicans and 36% identify as independents. Inasmuch as Independents and Republicans, added together, are a much larger group than Democrats, it's an early indication that a large number are already moving towards political sobriety.

ADJECTIVE - NOUN

Adjective, “a word or phrase naming an attribute, added to or grammatically related to a noun to modify or describe it.”

So it came to the Hermit in a dream (therefore must be divine intervention) that the term, “adjective” needs a companion. Thus was born the newest addition to our lexicon, the verb, “adjectivise,” that is - to influence the reader’s or listener’s understanding of a supposedly

factual report through the use of carefully selected adjectives.

Choosing an adjective has everything to do with the conclusions you come to after reading an article or listening to a speaker. Let's take two examples, "sunny sky" and "cloudy sky". Both are about the same topic, "sky", but they invoke totally separate images. So it is that "journalists" (I'll explain the quotes) can totally flavor a supposedly factual article with the application of the proper adjectives. We encounter this each and every day. In so many instances, I find myself unwilling to call these folks, "journalists", rather, they are, "creative writers", actively involved in, "adjectivising." And there you have it, your new word for the day.

CORRECTION: TODAY REALLY ISN'T DAY ONE

No, actually, if you are an adult American, the first day of the rest of your life is coming right up – January 5th, or, who knows, with all the demands for recounts, allegations of fraud, etc., perhaps that first day will not occur until late January. In any event, when the Georgia

Senate races are finally decided, nearly half the country is going to be happy and the other half miserable.

If the Blues take both races, they will have accomplished the political trifecta – Presidency, House and Senate control – a cruise control situation enabling the Blues to accomplish many of their major objectives.

If the Reds take just one Georgia race, they retain control of the Senate and an ability to forcefully restrict Blue initiatives with which they disagree. Interesting times – yes ?

COVID – 19 UPDATE

We now learn, the much more contagious, mutated form of the virus has been found in California, Colorado and Florida with none of the victims having done any recent travelling.

As of January second 20,139,700 people in the U.S. had contracted the illness and 347,600 had died. It has been known for a long time that long- term care facilities have been the locus for the greatest number of deaths, but an

article in this weekend's WSJ really brings this into perspective. 38% of the deaths in the U.S., or 132,088 of the fatalities have been in nursing homes, meaning that 215,512 deaths have occurred outside long term care facilities, or barely one person out of one hundred of the total infected (non long term care) population.

The same statistic in others countries (i.e. percentage of Covid deaths in long term care facilities) is truly staggering. In Sweden, 47%; Netherlands, 49%; Belgium, 57%; Spain, 59% and Canada - an astronomical 72%.

All of this against a back drop in NY State of Governor Cuomo having forced long term care facilities to take in Covid victims and, according to recent reports, having opined that patients in drug and alcohol rehabilitation facilities should receive covid vaccine before the elderly. Ethical ? Fair? Your call.

An interesting snapshot of other countries reflects: Taiwan - best at early action- 1 death per 3,366,140 people; S. Korea- best at testing- 1 death per 63,290 people; Hong Kong- best at quarantining- 1 death per 54,810;

And, what about the survivors, especially the long haul folks ? (those who continue to suffer long after they are Covid negative).

Heart, lung, kidney, liver problems of an ongoing nature are of the greatest concern, but a small number compared to those who continue to suffer from loss of taste and smell.

I promise, no quizzes, but more new words to cope with. Anosmia is the term applied to a diminished sense of taste and smell. It can have a profound impact on mood and quality of life. As one victim said, "I feel alien from myself. Like a part of me is missing as I can no longer smell and experience the emotions of basic living." Studies have also linked Anosmia to social isolation and an inability to feel pleasure, called, anhedonia. Even worse, some sufferers are tormented by phantom odors that are extremely unpleasant, like the smell of burning plastic, a condition called, parosmia. Bottom line - many, many survivors still have a long way to go to full recovery - every reason to continue our full diligence in protective measures - even after the early fortunate ones get their vaccinations.

2020 – A LOOK BACK

Sensitivity headlines: In Mississippi, a third grader told she must remove her, “Jesus loves me” mask, but ok for those wearing, “Black lives matter” masks. In Pennsylvania, six year old Margot, who has Downs Syndrome, pointed a finger at a teacher in the shape of a gun. Teacher told principal. Principal calls police. Police arrive to apprehend perpetrator- Jeez!! In Texas, a number of real estate agents, when showing houses, no longer refer to a, “master” bedroom- too much association with slavery. In California, many school districts have demanded that teachers no longer use red markers to tell students of errors- too traumatizing. In London, an avenue named after Thomas Rhodes, who died when Cecil Rhodes was only three, becomes a lightning rod for activists who don’t care that there is no connection other than the name, which must be removed because it is so offensive. Hey world- get a grip!!

And a few zany, interesting, funny ones: Don’t get in trouble here – Japan’s legal system has a 99 % conviction rate.--- Got to be expensive –

**in Turkey, a beloved drink, “Salep” is created by using up to 4,000 orchid plants to make a single kilogram.--- Samsung started in 1938 as a small shop selling vegetables and dried fish.--
- A real survivor- George Washington survived small pox, malaria (six times), diphtheria, tuberculosis (twice) and pneumonia. --- If they were a country, cows would rank the world’s sixth largest producer of methane gas- ahead of Brazil, Japan and Germany. ---Elon, we love you, but –Mr. and Mrs. Musk name their baby boy, “X AE A-12.” – OK, what do his friends call him on play dates?--- Where can I buy this – Fungi can be trained to eat cigarette butts, used diapers, oil spills and even radiation---
Gone With the Wind is still the highest grossing film of all time, adjusted for inflation.-
-- Fear of flying- in June 2020, the aviation minister of Pakistan advised that of 860 pilots working for Pakistani air, 260 had fraudulent licenses. ---25,000 times a day – that’s how often we breathe.--- At 17, Lucille Ball left her upstate NY high-school for Broadway only to be told, “You just don’t have it. Why don’t you go home?”**

Your faithful scribe, PB

