

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

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August 11, 2017

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*Any statements in this issue of the Watch which are not sourced are mine and identified by “WW”.

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State of the Nation

32% of Americans say the country is headed in the right direction while 61% say it is on the wrong track. [Bloomberg, 7/12/17]

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Employment

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for July 2017 is 4.3%.

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 **unemployment rate for July 2017 is 8.6%**. [BLS data is based on those 16 years of age and older.]

As of July 30, 2017 Gallup found an unadjusted unemployment rate of 4.9%. It also found an under-employment rate of 12.6% (unemployed + those working part-time but wanting full-time). [This is based on those 18 years of age and older.]

According to its website, as of 7/31/17, Gallup will no longer routinely measure unemployment and underemployment.

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There are 6.2 million jobs available and 7 million people looking for jobs. 18% of those between the ages 25 – 54 are not working. [Washington Post, 8/10/17]

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America has added more than 1,000,000 jobs since Donald Trump took office. [CNN, 8/4/17]

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13.5% of the U.S. population is foreign born. This number includes naturalized citizens, legal permanent residents, asylums, refugees, those holding nonimmigrant visas and those in the U.S. illegally. [AP]

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The following is a comparison of Russian and U.S. conventional forces.

	<u>United States</u>	<u>Russia</u>
Active-Duty Troops	1,367,450	831,000
<u>By Land</u>		
Artillery	6,831	5,281
Tanks	2,831	2,950
<u>By Air</u>		
Fighter Jets	2,988	633
Attack Helicopters	760	348
<u>By Sea</u>		
Submarines	79	107
Aircraft Carriers	10	1

[Wall Street Journal, 6/17/17]

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As NAFTA faces “renegotiation” during the first four months of 2017, certain U.S. agriculture exports to Mexico have dropped while others have grown. Soybeans (– 15%), Broiler meat (– 11%), Corn (– 6%), Beef/Veal (+ 11%), Milk/Cream (+ 18%) [Wall Street Journal, 6/17/17]

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Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the least trusted of them all?

How much do you trust:	Great Deal	Good Amount	Not Very Much	Not at all
Trump administration	14%	23%	30%	41%
The Congress	6%	23%	46%	22%
The media	8%	22%	31%	37%
Public opinion polls	8%	27%	40%	21%
That elections are fair	17%	33%	29%	18%
Intelligence Community	23%	37%	23%	14%
The Courts	22%	38%	25%	12%

[NPR/PBS Newshour/Marist poll, 6/25/17]

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Since the Affordable Care Act was introduced in July 2009, there have been 31 NBC/WSJ surveys in which Americans were asked whether the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was a good idea or a bad idea.

At no time until January 2017, did more people think it was a good idea than a bad idea.

In that January 2017 survey, 45% thought it was a good idea and 41% thought it was a bad idea.

In June 2017, 41% thought it was a good idea and 38% thought it a bad idea.

Also in the June survey, when respondents were asked whether the health care legislation passed by the House of Representatives was a good idea or a bad idea 48% thought it was a bad idea and only 16% thought it was a good idea.

[NBC/WSJ, 6/17]

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In the U.S., there are nearly 100 opioid related deaths every day. If opioid use rises as experts expect, the drug could kill more than 500,000 people over the next 10 years. [STAT News]

In just one year, 1.27 million Americans needed emergency room or inpatient hospital stays for opioid related issues.[Washington Post, 6/20/17]

In 2015, “more than 33,000 people died of opioid overdoses, and 20,000 more died from other drugs.” [Washington Post, 8/1/17]

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“The chief executives of America’s 350 largest companies made an average of \$15.6 million in 2016, or 271 times more than what the typical worker made last year. (Numbers below based on 2016 dollars).

	<u>Average CEO Compensation</u>	<u>Ratio of CEO pay/average worker pay</u>
2016	\$15.6 million	271/1
2015	\$16.3 million	286/1
2000	-----	376/1
1989	-----	59/1
1965	-----	20/1

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The number of U.S. households grew by 7.6 million in the 10 years spanning between 2006 and 2016. During that same period the number of households renting their homes rose from 31.2% of households to 36.6% of households. This is the highest level of renters since 1965 when 37% of households were rented. [Pew Research, 7/19/17]

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Half of new business formation in the United States occurred in 20 of the 3100 U.S. counties. [USNews & World report, CBER]

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Is America in a state of decline?

<u>June 2017</u>		<u>January 2015</u>	
Yes	52%	Yes	49%
No	44%	No	48%

[NBC/WSJ poll, 6/2017]

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42% of Americans live in a household with a gun. 57% live in households with no guns. 67% of gun owners say they own a gun for protection, 38% for hunting, 30% for sport shooting, 13% as part of a gun collection and 8% for their job. [PEW Research, Spring 2017]

Estimates of the number of guns in civilian hands in the United States vary from 270,000,000 to 310,000,000. The number of gun owners seems to have declined over time. [Pew Research.org, 6/4/13]

A somewhat different cut says that 3% of Americans own half of the country's 265,000,000 guns. [USA Today, 9/22/16]

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This and That

“In politics you have to know how to read the ground, the real topography. You can't just go by the work of past mapmakers, you have to see clearly what's there now. It's unconservative not to.” [Peggy Noonan, WSJ, 7/22/17]

If you tried to sign up for “Wake Up to Politics” (mentioned in the previous WW issue) and got no response it is because Gabe was off at camp for a total of eight weeks.

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A record was broken at the 4th of July Nathan’s Hot Dog Eating Contest. Joey Chestnut ate 72 hot dogs in 10 minutes. His personal record is 73.5 hotdogs in that time period. [Arizona Daily Sun]

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As of June 3, 2017, at least 2 billion users were checking into Facebook at least once a month.

66% of monthly users return daily. Approximately 75% of Facebook users are outside of the United States. [Wall Street Journal]

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Twitter by the numbers

- 328 million active users (This number has not grown in 2 years.)
- 68 million daily active users
- 350,000 tweets sent per minute
- 500 million tweets sent per day
- 200 billion tweets per year

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Americans age 18-29 get most of their news from the Internet, while Americans age 50+ get most from TV. [Frank Luntz]

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The average American makes 1.5 trips to the grocery store a week, spending an average 53 hours a year roaming the aisles. [Business World, WSJ, 6/17/17]

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I ran into an old political friend and asked what he was up to. He said he was working on various crises around the world. I asked him where. He responded, “In places where ‘duck’ is both a verb and a noun.”

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Germany has become the 14th European country to approve same-sex marriage. It joins the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Norway, Sweden, Portugal, Iceland, Denmark, France, Britain, Luxembourg, Ireland and Finland. [Wall Street Journal, 7/1/17]

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In the June 18, 2017 issue of the New York Times there is a full-page ad on the back page of the first section called “Baby Steps.” It is authored by Andy Katz-Mayfield, one of the Co-Founders of Harry’s. Harry’s is a grooming company for men, which started by selling razors. (I use the razor.)

The ad begins with a discussion of his then seven month old daughter but the heart of the article announces a new policy for the company.

“...we’re offering a new parental leave policy: 16 weeks of equitable paid leave to every person on our team. This applies to men, women, transgender people, birthing parents and non-birthing parents. Everyone. Because all parents deserve the resources and tools to make the best decisions for their families – to be great coworkers, and also great parents. [NYTimes, 6/18/2017]

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As various congressional and executive investigations go forward there is often commentary by the media that an individual’s particular interview or appearance is “under oath.” The reality is that whether under oath or not, a false statement made to an appropriate government official can be a felony under 18 U.S. Code 1001.

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“We have been seeing a generation of media figures cratering under the historical pressure of Donald Trump. He is really is powerful...

“...They have been making the whole political scene lower, grubbier. They are showing the young what otherwise estimable adults do under pressure, which is lose their equilibrium, their knowledge of themselves as public figures, as therefore examples – tone setters. They’re paid a lot of money and have famous faces and get the best seat, and the big thing they’re supposed to do in return is not be a slob. Not make it worse...”

“...So many of our media figures need at this point to be reminded: You belong to something. It’s called: us.

“Do your part, take it down some notches, cool it. We have responsibilities to each other.” [Peggy Noonan, WSJ, 6/17/17]

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A recent study shows that as much as 14% of college students are homeless. [Washington Post, 6/26/17].

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76% of Americans are afraid the United States will be engaged in a major war in the next four years. This number is up 10% points since February. [NBC/SM, 7/14/17]

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23 percent of traditional retail jobs in the U.S. are located in rural and small metropolitan areas. On the other hand, only 13 percent of e-commerce jobs are in rural or small metros. As the retail business moves increasingly to urban centers and online, the bottom may be falling out for the industry in rural areas already hit by manufacturing closures. [The New York Times, 6/27/17]

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84% of Republicans/leaners and 63% of Democrats/leaners say that a friend’s vote for Trump would have no effect on their friendship. Conversely 85% of Republicans/leaners and 85% of Democrats/leaners say their friend’s vote for Clinton would have no effect on their relationship. [Axios, Pew Research, 7/9/17]

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52% of Americans are paying more attention to politics since Donald Trump was elected President. This group includes 58% of women and 46% of men. [Pew Research, 7/9/17]

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70% of women and 54% of men view online harassment as a major problem. [Pew Research, 7/20/17]

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After the demise of the health care bill in the Senate, former Congressman John Dingell told a reporter that John McCain was “tough as a two-dollar steak, sharp as the knife you need to cut it.”

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Quotes

(Courtesy of Simma Liebman)

I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure.
[Clarence Darrow]

He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire.
[Winston Churchill]

He had delusions of adequacy.
[Walter Kerr]

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President Trump

On 8/8/17, Gallup found that 36% of Americans approve of his job performance and 58% disapprove.

Below are his job ratings as found by Gallup on the first and 15th of each month.
(All voters)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>
8/1/17	36%	60%
7/15/17	38%	56%
7/1/17	37%	57%
6/15/17	38%	57%
6/1/17	39%	55%
5/15/17	38%	57%
5/1/17	41%	55%
4/15/17	41%	53%
4/1/17	38%	57%
3/15/17	42%	53%
3/1/17	43%	51%
2/15/17	40%	54%
2/1/17	43%	52%

During the first 6 months of the year, Gallup interviewed a random sample of 81,155 adults living in all 50 U.S. states. In 17 states Trump has approval ratings ranging from 50% to 60%. In 16 states he has approval ratings of 42% to 49%. In the last 17 states he has approval ratings ranging from 26% to 39%.

The following are some additional looks at the president’s job performance. (The numbers below of are registered voters unless followed by an “A” which means all voters.) [QUPIAC – Quinnipiac]

<u>Date</u>	<u>NBC/WSJ</u>	<u>WP/ABC</u>	<u>CNN/ORC</u>	<u>NYT/CBS</u>	<u>FOX</u>	<u>QUPIAC</u>
AUG			38/56A	36/58cbsA		33/61
JULY	xxx	36/58A	xxx	xxx	41/53	xxx
JUNE	40/56	xxx	xxx	36/57cbs	44/50	40/55 34/57
MAY	39/54	xxx	xxx	xxx	40/53	37/55 36/58
APR	40/54	42/53	44/54	43/49cbs	xxx	35/57
MAR	xxx	xxx	45/52	40/52cbs	43/51	37/56
FEB	44/48	xxx	xxx	39/51cbs	48/47	38/55
JAN	xxx	xxx	44/53	40/48cbs	xxx	36/44

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The following are job approval numbers from Gallup for the same time period of the last nine presidents and Trump. As you will see, Trump’s job approval rating by the public at large is the worst of any president at this point in their tenure going back to Bill Clinton.

Job Approval – Roughly seven months into 1st term

Kennedy	76% (8/61)
Eisenhower	74% (8/53)
George HW Bush	69% (8/89)
Nixon	62% (8/69)
Reagan	60% (8/81)
Carter	60% (8/77)
Obama	56% (8/09)
G W Bush	55% (8/01)

Clinton	44% (8/93)
Trump	36% (8/17)

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On the economy, Trump has an approval rating of 46% and disapproval of 45%. [CBS, 8/6/17]

On foreign policy, Trump has an approval rating of 38% and disapproval of 59%. [CNN, 8/6/17]

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67% disapprove of Trump's tweeting. 68% find them inappropriate, 65% insulting and 52% find them dangerous. Conversely, 41% find them interesting, 36% effective and 21% refreshing. [ABC/WP, 7/13/17]

Twitter came into being in 2006.

President Trump's main account has 32.4 million followers.

- His POTUS account has 18.8 million followers.
- On Facebook, Trump follows 1.7 million people and has 22.4 million likes.
- On YouTube he has 4.3 million followers.
- On Instagram he has 7 million followers.
- In total, he has 86.7 million followers. When you take into account the fact that some folks use several different accounts he has 60 million actual followers.
- Trump follows 45 people.

By the way, the first president to use twitter was Barack Obama. He has 92 million+ followers and follows 629,000 people.

(I follow 271 people and have 417 followers.)

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The NBC/WSJ survey conducted a unique survey in the second week of July. The interviews were conducted in 16 states: Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin.

It was conducted in counties that flipped from favoring former President Barack Obama, a Democrat, in 2012 to backing Mr. Trump in November, and counties in which Mr. Trump's support in the November election surged at least 20 percentage points higher than GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney drew in 2012.

References to national numbers are from the NBC/WSJ surveys of the noted dates.

The following are some of the survey's findings:

- When elections are held in 2018, 47% would prefer a Republican controlled Congress while 37% would prefer a Democrat controlled Congress.
[National # – 50% would prefer a Democrat controlled Congress (6/17)]
- Trump job approval is 50% and disapproval is 46%
[National # - Trump approval 38% and disapproval 57% (RCP Average)]
- 70% are not confident that life for their children's generation will be better than it is for them.
- 55% believe that the political systems in the country are stacked against people like them.
- 44% rate the economy in their area as good or excellent (40% good/4% excellent)
- 55% rate the economy in their area as only fair or poor (39% fair/16% poor)
- 56% say that immigration strengthens the United States, 34% say it weakens the United States.
- 52% say free trade is good, 37% say it is bad
[National # - 57% say free trade is good/37% say it is bad (4/17)]
- Since Trump won the election, 52% say media has been too critical/37% say media has been fair and objective

From which one or two of the following news sources do you get most of your information about politics and current events?

	<u>July 2017</u>	<u>February 2017</u>
NBC/ABC/CBS or similar	34	30
Fox News cable channel	23	27
Social media/Facebook/Twitter	18	16
Local newspaper	16	10
CNN	14	23
National newspapers: USA		
Today/NYT/WSJ	10	14
Conservative news outlets, blogs, web, talk radio	10	11
MSNBC cable channel	9	10

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About President Trump

President Trump seemed to relish those moments on his TV show “The Apprentice” when he would each week face a group of aspirants and say to one of them, “You’re Fired.”

In real life, he does not appear to have the strength that those moments on TV suggested.

Rather than face the people in his White House and administration that he no longer wants around, through public tweets and other actions he sets out to humiliate them and encourages others—like Anthony Scaramucci—to do the same. He sets out to make their lives so miserable that the only way they can preserve a modicum of self-respect, is to quit, see Sean Spicer and Reince Preibus.

It matters not how early a person supported his campaign for president or how significant that support was at the time (February 28, 2016), Trump feels no compulsion to return the support and subsequent loyalty, see Senator Jeff Sessions. [WW]

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It is hard to understand where Trump comes up with the “facts” that he uses when making certain declarations. Does he know that he is lying? When will the

people in his base realize the he is distorting facts that are important to them?
[WW]

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Trump continues to treat authoritarian leaders with envy. There is suggestion that what he would really like is to have control over this country in the same way that the authoritarians he respects have over theirs, for example Russia, China and Saudi Arabia.

Trump seems to be obsessed with Putin. The Russian has his number.

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On June 30, 2016, then Defense Secretary Ash Carter announced the lifting of the ban on transgender service members in the United States Armed Services. The Department had been studying the issue for at least a year before that date. And for the first time transgender members of the armed forces could serve openly.

On July 26, 2017, President Trump announced (on Twitter, of course) a ban on transgender people serving in the military. Of course this position is directly contrary to what he said during the campaign. [NYTimes]

His announcement apparently came as the result of a brewing fight on Capitol Hill as to whether taxpayer money “should pay for gender transition and hormone therapy for transgender service members.” That dispute had threatened the passage of a \$790 billion defense and security spending package in the House.

Rather than try to deal with that minor issue, the President decided to change the entire policy on transgender service members.

Since that time the issue has been in limbo. The military has announced that there are no changes and, for now, transgender people can still serve in the military. [NYTimes, 7/27/17]

58% of Americans believe that transgender people should be allowed to serve in the military. This includes 83% of Democrats, 53% Independents and 32% of Republicans. [Ipsos/Reuters, 7/28/17]

In a PEW survey of LGBT Americans in 2013, 5% identified as transgender. 63% of Americans said in 2016 that homosexuality should be accepted. This compares with 51% in 2006. [PEW, 5/12/16]

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By the beginning of August recess, fewer of Trump's nominees for various government agencies had been confirmed than over the same time period of the previous three presidents. The cause seems to be a combination of slow selections and paperwork by the administration, resulting in the paperwork not getting to the relevant Senate Committees. The process is then further delayed by the Democrats using procedural techniques to slow down the process. Confirmations by August of 1st term: Obama 310, Bush 294, Clinton 252, Trump 124. [Washington Post, 8/5/17]

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By this time in their first term each of the last six presidents had participated in more solo press conferences than Trump. George H.W. Bush had 18, Jimmy Carter had 12, Barack Obama had 9, Bill Clinton 8, Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush each had 3. Trump has only had 1. [Reliable Sources Newsletter]

Notwithstanding the lack of solo news conferences, Trump certainly has not wanted for media and public attention. [WW]

“The truth, six months in, is that he is not presidential and is not getting it done. His mad, blubbery petulance isn't working for him but against him. If he were presidential he'd be getting it done- building momentum, gaining support. He'd be over 50%, not under 40%. He'd have health care, and more.” [Peggy Noonan, WSJ, 7/29/17]

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In moves that strike hard at President Donald Trump's rural base, the 11 other nations that participated in the now-defunct Trans-Pacific Partnership are pursuing 27 separate negotiations aimed at undercutting U.S. exporters, according to a Politico analysis.

The TPP, which Trump scuttled immediately after taking office, was a suspect deal to many factory workers. But for already struggling farmers, it was a chance to erase the punishing tariffs that prevented them from selling more beef, pork and dairy to such massive importers as Japan and Vietnam.

Now, Politico reports, the United States is already losing market share in exports of some agricultural products, while top competitors like the EU and

Australia are looking forward to enormous cost advantages. Meanwhile, Trump has been slow to develop a trade strategy of his own. That has farming communities like Wright County, Iowa, which backed Trump by a 2-1 margin, reconsidering their faith in the president. [Politico, 8/7/17]

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Also at the six month mark, when asked about Trump's dealings with Vladimir Putin, 25% of Americans believe that Trump has done something illegal while an additional 29% say he has done something that is not illegal but is unethical. 36% say he has done nothing wrong.

These judgements seem to be driven in great part by the political persuasion of the respondents. Of those claiming that Trump has done something illegal 41% are Democrats but only 4% are Republicans. 27% of Independents have this view.

As one would expect, of the 36% who say Trump did nothing wrong, 73% are Republicans, 13% are Democrats and 32% are Independents. [NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist, 6/25/17]

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The flow of leaks from the White House to the media has, if anything, grown over the last several months. [WW]

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Trump is determined to unwind any number of the decisions that were made by Obama. For example, "Betsy DeVos, announced plans to dismantle a set of Obama-era policies devised to protect students and tax payers from predatory for-profit colleges." [NYTimes, 7/1/17]

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According to an economist at the American Enterprise Institute the pay gap between female and male staffers in the current White House has tripled under the Trump administration. "A typical female staffer earns 63.2 cents for every dollar earned by a male staffer. This gap is more than double the 17% national pay gap. The gap in the final year of the Obama administration was 11%. [Daily Beast, 6/5/17]

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Revisiting the 2016 election (for the last time)

How folks voted in the 2016 presidential election was “affected” by the type of internet communication system they used.

	Electoral Votes	
	<u>Trump</u>	<u>Clinton</u>
Windows	329	209
MAC	58	443
Android	144	353
iOS	291	217

[Axios – Survey Monkey, 6/30/17]

53% of all respondents including 78% of Democrats, 53% of Independents and 26% of Republicans think that the Russian government interfered with the 2016 presidential election. [NBC/WSJ poll, 6/2017]

Recently I was introduced to the regular newsletters of Bruce Mehlman. The following is a link to his 2016 election analysis which I found to be quite useful:
<http://bit.ly/Mehlman2016Election>

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After the 2016 election

The Democratic Party is in a very deep hole across the country.

The following represents the political control in the several states by the two parties.

In the 30 states won by Trump, Republicans now control:

- 100% of the state legislative chambers
- 80% of the Governors
- 77% of the US Senators
- 73% of the House Members
- 77% of the State Supreme Courts
- And have BOTH the Governor and both houses in 25 of these states.

Popular vote in 30 states altogether

Trump 2016: 40,811,511

Clinton 2016: 32,453,841
 Romney 2012: 38,843,090
 McCain 2008: 37,873,369

In the 20 states (and DC) won by Clinton, the Democrats now control:

- 70% of the State Legislatures (15 Dem, 3 Rep, 3 Split)
- 60% of the Governors
- 88% of the U.S. Senators (90% excluding DC)
- 70% of the House members (66% excluding DC)
- 85% of the State Supreme Courts
- And have BOTH the Governor and both houses in 7 of these states.

Popular vote in 20 states altogether

Trump 2016: 22,173,314
 Clinton 2016: 33,399,675
 Obama 2012: 32,568,632
 Obama 2008: 34,011,052

[Democracy Alliance/Committee on States/WW]

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Both political parties have their detractors.

	<u>GOP Party</u>	<u>Dem Party</u>
Cares about the middle class	42%	57%
Has high ethical standards	41%	44%
Is too extreme	54%	45%
Too willing to cut government programs even when they work	64%	
Sees government as the only way to solve problems		61%

[PEW, 6/18/17]

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2020

Now that we have elected the first president in history that has no history as a government official—elected, appointed or otherwise—well known people are suddenly being talked about as in the mix for running for president in the future.

The following is a list of people who have been mentioned as potential candidates who have no previous government experience. Folks are on the list whether or not they have disclaimed any interest.

The list of people without government experience is followed by a list of current or past government officials who have been mentioned or have done something to suggest they are thinking about running for president.

Dwayne Johnson – Actor
Bob Iger – CBS
Howard Schultz – Chairman, Starbucks
Mark Cuban – Businessman and Owner, Dallas Mavericks
Kanye West – Entertainer
Mark Zuckerberg – CEO, Facebook
Oprah Winfrey – Oprah Network (Says she is not interested)

Congressman John Delaney (D) – Announced 7/22/17
John Hickenlooper (D) – Governor of Colorado
Steve Bullock (D) – Governor of Montana
Corey Booker (D) – U.S. Senator
Martin O’Malley (D) – Former Governor
Amy Klobuchar (D) – U.S. Senator
Terry McAuliffe (D) – Governor of Virginia
Kamala Harris (D) – U.S. Senator

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The Congress

As of the last week of July, Congress had an approval rating of 10% and a disapproval score of 84%. [Quinnipiac]

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[WW relies on the Cook Political Report for the House data below. Data as of 7/28/17.]

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Democrats	194
Republicans	241

	Democrats	Republicans
Safe in 2017	175	189
Likely	10	23
Lean	7	21
	Tossup	
	3	7

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There is considerable speculation that given the way this administration is “operating”, the prospects of the Democrats retaking the House in 2018 are getting better and better. These speculations are a bit premature.

“Multiple indicators, including generic congressional ballot polls, President Trump’s tepid approval, and recent special election results, point to broad midterm danger for Republicans. But as we noted earlier this month, at this point in the cycle it can be trickier to predict individual races than the national environment. Are Democrats within range of picking up the 24 seats they need? Yes, but it’s not obvious which races will materialize and which won’t.

“To win the House, Democrats will probably need to put at least 50 GOP seats in play.” [David Wasserman, Cook Political Report, 7/28/17]

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[WW uses a combination of the Cook Political Report, Inside Politics and Sabato to create the chart below.]

THE SENATE

Republicans	52
Democrats	46
Independents	2

	Democrats	Republicans
Seats not up in 2018	23	44
Safe in 2018	12	7
Likely	6	0
	Stabenow	
	Menendez	
	Casey	
	Kaine	
	King	
Lean	3	2
	Nelson	Flake
	Brown	Heller
	Baldwin	
Toss-ups	4	0
	Donnelly	
	McCaskill	
	Heitkamp	
	Manchin	

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Democrats are less approving of the way Democrats in Congress are handling their job than Republicans are of the way Republicans in Congress are handling their job.

Democrats approved of how Democrats in Congress are doing their job by 49% to 45% while Republicans approved of how Republicans in Congress are doing their job by 53% to 39%.

Independents are disapproving of how both Democrats and Republicans are handling their jobs. 65% of Independents disapprove of how Democrats are doing their job while 70% of Independents disapprove of how Republicans are doing their job. [Winston Group, 6/23/17]

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Women Will Get it Done

Since 1947 prize money for U.S. Open women has averaged 37% that of men. This year the men will compete for a total of \$12 million, while the women's purse is \$5 million. [Bloomberg]

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“For women in business and beyond, it was an I-told-you-so day. The twin spectacles Tuesday — an Uber board member's wisecrack about women talking too much, and Senator Kamala Harris, Democrat of California, being interrupted for the second time in a week by her male colleagues — triggered an outpouring of recognition and what has become almost ritual social-media outrage.

“Academic studies and countless anecdotes make it clear that being interrupted, talked over, shut down or penalized for speaking out is nearly a universal experience for women when they are outnumbered by men.”
[GenderAvenger Blog, 6/18/17]

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While Uber has reportedly approached at least five women about the open CEO role—including Facebook's Sheryl Sandberg, YouTube's Susan Wojcicki, General Motors' Mary Barra, EasyJet's Carolyn McCall, and HP's Meg Whitman—all of them have apparently turned down the gig. Now, all three remaining prospects are men. [Fortune]

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On Wednesday, Facebook released a diversity update, which showed mild improvements across the organization, but a major bump in one area: female new graduate hires in engineering. This year's class is 27% female—a number that is impressive considering that just 18% of computer science majors in the U.S. are women. [The Broadsheet, 8/3/17]

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Start-ups with at least one female founder wind up building companies where nearly half the staff are women, a new study finds.

With an average of 48% female workers, women-led firms have nearly twice the industry average and outpace some of the nation's largest tech companies in gender diversity including Google (31%), Facebook (33%) and Uber (36%),

according to the study by online start-up investing platform FundersClub that surveyed 85 U.S.-based tech start-ups. [GenderAvenger]

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France voted a record number of women into parliament election results showed on Monday, after President Emmanuel Macron's victorious Republic on the Move (LREM) party fielded a gender-balanced candidate list. Of the 577 newly elected lawmakers, 223 were female, beating the previous record of 155 set after the last election. [GenderAvenger, 6/20/17]

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Restaurants

Rasberrys Catering and Bistro
411 E 5th Street
Ketchum, Idaho 83340
208-726-0606
rasberrys.net

Rasberrys is owned and operated by twin sisters Callie and Maeme Rasberry.

There are two sections to the restaurant. One is on the porch which seats 26 people. This is where we were seated.

Carolyn ordered gazpacho and chicken tacos. I had tomato soup, quiche and lemon blueberry homemade ice cream.

The rest of the building at the porch level is a retail furniture store. The balance of the restaurant is one floor down and seats 37-40 people.

There is a series of two tops and four tops on the porch. In the downstairs area there are a series of pieces of artwork that make it look like there are windows to the outside. The tables are squares and rounds.

The downstairs section and the restrooms can be reached by elevator or a flight of 17 stairs. One of the sisters told me about the elevator but I was not listening so I walked down the stairs and back up.

As you come down the stairs there is an alcove that opens to the balance of the restroom and includes a white ceramic commode with a wooden table on the side of the commode. There is a counter top on which sits a silver metal wash basin headed by a large mirror. The walls are tan wooden panels. The floors are also wood.

Rasberrys is only open Monday thru Friday from 11 am – 3 p.m.

There is a substantial catering business.

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Amaranth Restaurant
21 East 62nd Street
New York, New York 10065
212-980-6700

I have eaten at this restaurant several times always with Jay and Rita and a couple of times including Debbie. It is one of Jay and Rita's favorites. On my most recent visit it was just Rita, Jay and me for lunch on a Wednesday.

The restaurant is fairly narrow and as you enter there is a greeting station immediately to the left. Immediately to the right is a four top. The restaurant is fairly crowded and seats 85-90 people on 2, 4, and 6 tops. There are five small tables outside on the sidewalk. (There is a substantial awning, so even though it began to rain during our recent visit, those at the sidewalk tables continued eating as if nothing was happening.)

The restaurant opens at noon. On this occasion I arrived about 11:30 a.m. and various folks were still putting silver, etc. on the tables. I asked one of the folks if I could have a chair while I waited and had no problem.

When the maître d' arrived at the greeting stand just before noon, I told him I was meeting Jay and he took me to a table he said was Jay's favorite.

Jay and Rita came in shortly after noon and it became clear that they are regulars. The restaurant started to fill up.

Rita had as her only course an appetizer portion of Buffalo Mozzarella, Roasted Tomato and Avocado. Jay and I shared three orders of Octopus Carpaccio.

I could not resist ordering a slice of Risotto Cream Cheese pie.

The Men's and Ladies' Rooms are at the back of the restaurant next to the kitchen.

The Men's room is one of the smallest I have ever seen. In fact, there are commode stalls in other restaurants that are larger than this room. The white ceramic washbasin and the white ceramic commode are separated only by a large covered waste receptacle. The floor is covered by large grey square ceramic tiles and the walls by smaller rectangular tiles. One of the walls is painted a light blue. While the room is well worn it is clean enough.

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MEDIUM RARE
3500 Connecticut Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20008
202-237-1432

I went to Medium Rare with Florence and Peter after seeing the movie Dunkirk at the Uptown Theater.

As you enter there is a bar with 8 high stools. The restaurant seats 150 people at tables of 2, 4 and 6. The restaurant seems to be willing to move tables into various combinations to accommodate larger groups. The chairs are hard and less than comfortable.

There is a single set menu (except for brunch periods). The pre-fix menu is Artisan Rustic Bread, Mixed Green Salad and Culotte Steak & Hand-cut fries with a secret sauce. The steak is sliced and the initial portion is quite enough.

However, as our plates began to empty our server showed up with a large platter of steak and fries providing additional portions. (Frankly the initial serving was enough for me.)

The pre-fixe price of the main dinner costs \$19.50 and the desserts are \$8.00. Drinks are of course extra.

The menu includes various desserts. We ordered the Grandpa's Apple Pie with vanilla bean ice cream and the Hot Fudge Sundae. We were served a very large piece of pie and a full scoop of ice cream. The ice cream sundae is piled in a dish which is the size of a large half cantaloupe.

Dinner is served daily from 5 p.m. until 10 p.m. and on Friday and Saturday until 11 p.m. Reservations are available on Open Table or by phone Sunday thru Thursday. On Friday and Saturday reservations are not available but if you call a half hour before you show up you have a pretty good chance of getting a table without waiting too long. When we got there on a Friday night it was wide open but it was early in the evening.

The restaurant is open from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday. On Saturday it is open from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. On Sunday it is open from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

There are two unisex restrooms. The restroom is quite dark. The walls and floor are covered with large black tiles with a string-like decoration running through them. Along one wall is a black ceramic wash basin with a mirror, a black ceramic urinal and a little further along is a black ceramic commode.

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True Food Kitchen
7100 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
240-200-1257
www.truefoodkitchen.com

This is a relatively new restaurant in Bethesda. Locations can be found in twelve other states. One of the founders is the renowned physician Dr. Andrew Weil. Its menu is based on the Anti-Inflammatory Diet, described as a way of selecting and preparing foods based on science that can help people achieve and maintain optimum health over their lifetime.

We went to the restaurant with Jen and Todd for an early dinner.

The greeter's stand is to your right as you enter. There are a series of tables to the left of the doorway and then upholstered benches run the length of the

restaurant on both sides of the long eating area that runs from the front to the back. There are tables between the long benches and the kitchen. The benches handle 2 tops, 4 tops and 6 tops.

To the left as you enter is an open kitchen.

To start Debbie and Jen had the Heirloom Tomato & Watermelon with marcona almond, white balsamic and Chevre. Todd opted for the Charred Cauliflower Harissa Tahini, medjool date, oil, mint and Pistachio. I ordered the Farmers Market Crudites, chilled raw vegetables, Tzatziki & black olive dip.

For her entrée Jen ordered the Poke Bowl, wild caught albacore, avocado, quinoa rice, mushroom, snow peas, cucumber, cashew, turmeric ponzu. Todd selected the Sustainable seabass, broccolini, sugar snap pea, roasted mushroom, ancient grains and Umami Sauce. Debbie picked the Wild Mushroom, asparagus, roasted garlic and taleggio pizza. I tried the Shitake Lettuce Cups tofu, jicama, sambal, Thai basil and cashews.

For dessert we shared the Flourless Chocolate Cake and Key Lime Pie.

Our server was Catherine, a college student doing a summer job. She was particularly friendly, knowledgeable and energetic.

There is an outside eating area which is available in appropriate weather. It is undoubtedly quieter there than in the indoor part of the restaurant which is very loud.

The restaurant seats 200 people inside and 34 folks outside on the patio. Dogs are welcome on the patio.

The restaurant is open 7 days a week. Monday thru Thursday it is open 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. On Fridays the hours are 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. and on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sundays the hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Brunch is served from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Parking on the street was easy and there is an hourly parking garage adjacent to the restaurant on Woodmont Ave.

Mike

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