

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

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State of the Nation – page 2

Employment – page 5

This and That – page 7

* * * * *

Odds and Ends – page 8

Quotes – page 9

* * * * *

President Biden – page 11

* * * * *

Congress – page 14

House – page 14

Senate – page 15

2024 election – page 16

* * * * *

Women Will Get It Done – page 17

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WW Recommends Books (& other things) – page 18

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Restaurants – page 21

* 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

28% of registered voters say the country is headed in the right direction.
59% of registered voters say the country is on the wrong track.

	<u>Right track</u>	<u>Wrong track</u>
Democrats	50%	31%
Republicans	8%	87%
Independents	21%	64%

[Econ/YouGov 10/12/21]

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In 2021 about half of Americans get news on social media at least “sometimes”; this is down slightly from 2020.

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Often	19%	23%
Sometimes	29	30
Rarely	19	18
Never	24	21
Don’t get digital news	9	7

The following shows the percentage of U.S adults who use a particular site and how many regularly get news on that site.

	<u>Regularly get news on site</u>	<u>Use the site</u>	<u>Regular users</u>	
			<u>Men</u>	<u>Woman</u>
Facebook	31%	66%	35%	64%
YouTube	22%	72%	56	43
Twitter	13	23	56	43
Instagram	11	41	36	63
Reddit	7	17	67	31
TikTok	6	21	30	68
LinkedIn	4	26	54	44
Snapchat	4	23	40	59
WhatsApp	3	21		
Twitch	1	7		

[PEW 9/20/21]

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This year, Social Security checks are going up by 5.9%, the highest increase in decades. The boost will affect nearly 70 million people. [NBC News 10/13/21]

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Already this year, 18 weather disasters costing at least \$1 billion each have hit the United States. These 18 events put 2021 in second place for the most billion-dollar disasters, just behind 2020 when there were 22 such events. Last year shattered the previous annual record of 16 such events, which occurred in 2017 and 2011. [WP 10/11/21]

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More than a third of adults seeking housing, groceries, or new cars had trouble procuring them between August 15th and September 15th, 2021. Below is the full list of hard-to-get items.

A house or apartment	44%
Specific types of groceries and food	43%
Paper goods, such as towels or toilet paper	39%
A new car, pickup truck, etc	34%
A used car, pickup truck, etc	30%
Supplies for home repairs, improvements	29%
Home appliances	23%
Exercise and sports equipment	23%
Motorcycles	22%
Furniture	21%
Electronics, cell phones, computers	18%
Clothing/Apparel	14%

[Morning Consult 9/21/21]

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A rising share of U.S. adults are living without a spouse or partner – the following is the percentage of the population ages 25-54 who are:

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2019</u>
Unpartnered	29%	38%
Cohabiting	4%	9%
Married	67%	53%

Men are more likely than women to be unpartnered. A change from 30 years ago. [PEW 10/5/21]

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The following list details annual public spending per child on early childhood care.

Norway	\$29,796
Iceland	24,427
Finland	23,353
Denmark	23,140
Germany	18,656
Sweden	18,010
OECD average	14,436
Austria	12,864
Slovenia	10,664
New Zealand	10,349
Spain	9,084
Chile	8,450
Lithuania	8,184
Australia	8,088
Hungary	7,222
Israel	3,322
UNITED STATES	500

[NYT 10/06/21]

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Americans' approval of the job being done by the U.S. Supreme Court has fallen to 40% - its lowest point since at least 2001. 53% disapprove of the job the Court is doing.

Approval has fallen 18 points over the last year when it was 58%. The previous low was 42% in 2016.

Further, confidence in the federal judiciary as a whole is now at 54%, the lowest it has been since 1973 except for a 53% rating in 2015. Other than those two scores, the previous low was 61% in 2014 and 2016. [Gallup 9/23/21]

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52% of Americans say the government is doing too many things that should be left to individuals and businesses. 43% want the government to do more to solve

the country's problems. A year ago, 54% said the government should do more to solve problems. [Gallup 10/14/21]

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Of the three branches of the U.S. government, which one do you trust the most?

The US Congress (the legislative branch)	16%
The Presidency (the executive branch)	25%
The US Supreme Court (the judicial branch)	58%

[Marquette University law school poll 9/16/21]

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The FBI says murder and manslaughter rose 29.4% in 2020. This is the largest one-year increase since the federal government began compiling national figures in the 1960s. [WP 2021]

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Employment

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for September 2021, is 4.8%. That unemployment rate is lower than the 5.2% in August and substantially less than the 7.8% unemployment rate of September 2020.

If one considers the total number of unemployed + those marginally attached to the labor force + those working part-time who want full-time work, the unemployment rate in September was 8.5%, down from 9.2% in July and substantially less than 12.8% a year earlier.

The Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is 61.6%, down from 61.7% in August 2021.

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The 4.8% September unemployment rate certainly seems positive given that as recently as June the rate was 5.9%. The rate is the number that gets extensive media coverage when it is made public, given that it is produced by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. BLS uses the U-3 number, described as Total Unemployed, as a percent of the civilian labor force (it is the official unemployment rate).

Unfortunately, that number does not paint a true picture of the unemployment situation in the United States. That number only represents the unemployment status of people who are in the labor force on a fulltime basis.

The fact is that in the last year, 2,000,000 women and 1,000,000 men have left the labor force. In the year February 2020-2021, 3,000,000 women dropped out of the labor force.

WW is of the view that the more realistic employment picture is the U-6 number, which for September is 8.5%. The U-6 number is described as total unemployed, plus all persons marginally attached to the labor force, plus total employed part time for economic reasons, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus all persons marginally attached to the labor force.

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The Demographics of Unemployment for September 2021

Unemployment by Gender (20 years and older)

Women –3.7% (down from last month)

Men –4.2% (down from last month)

Unemployment by Race

White – 4.2% (down from last month)

Black – 7.9% (down from last month)

Hispanic – 6.3% (down from last month)

Asian –4.2% (down from last month)

Unemployment by Education (25 years & over)

Less than high school –7.9% (up from last month)

High School –5.8% (down from last month)

Some college –4.5% (down from last month)

Bachelor's Degree or higher – 2.5% (down from last month)

In August, 31 states had unemployment rates below the national average of 5.2%. 21 states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, had unemployment rates that were above the national average.

The state with the highest unemployment rate in August was Puerto Rico at 8.4%. [BLS 10/21]

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This and That

For decades, U.S. Supreme Court Justices have interrupted each other when questioning the lawyers making an argument before the court. Justice Thomas was apparently not comfortable with that system and so he rarely asked questions.

During the coronavirus pandemic, the court could not meet in its building, so it began meeting remotely on Zoom. For the first time, anyone who could access the internet could tune into the proceedings. (The court building's chamber in which the court meets, is relatively small so only small numbers of people could get into the court on any day when it was in session and proceedings were not broadcast.)

Chief Justice Roberts realized that the previous system of organizing a hearing would not work on Zoom so he instituted a system in which he would call on the Justices to speak in the order of their seniority.

Suddenly, Justice Thomas, the most senior justice, began asking questions and has not stopped. Now that the Court is meeting back in its building, Justice Roberts has continued using the seniority system.

Separately, Justice Sotomayor makes the case that the change was also made to solve another problem within the Court. Reality, and various studies, showed that female justices were interrupted more often than male justices by other male justices and male advocates.

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In the 30 days between August 17 and September 18, American households used an estimated 1,237,519 rolls of toilet paper, according to the consumer research firm MRI-Simmons.

The NRDC said that the average individual uses about 141 rolls a year or 2.7 rolls each week. Some people argue that this estimate is too large and so the balance of this report uses the number of 1 roll per week/52 rolls a year.

Using the 52 rolls a year standard, over the life of the product it uses:

- 120 pounds of wood
- 0.5 BTUs of Energy
- 530 gallons of water
- 3.7 pounds of solid waste
- 309 pounds of greenhouse gases, around the amount emitted from a car burning 16 gallons of gasoline

The same amount of toilet paper made from 100% recycled material would use no virgin wood, 40% less electricity, 48% less water and generate 69% less greenhouse gases and 8% less solid waste. [WSJ 9/18-19/21]

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Democrat leaders are of an age.

At 78, Joe Biden is the oldest President to sit in the Oval Office.

At 81, Nancy Pelosi is the oldest House Speaker.

At 82, Steny Hoyer is the House Majority Leader.

At 81, James Clyburn is the House Whip.

At 80, Bernie Sanders, is the Senate Budget Committee Chairman.

At 70, Chuck Schumer is the Senate Majority Leader.

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Four decades ago, there were 33 major railroads. Today there are 7 major railroads. [WP 9/25/21]

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Odds and Ends

If you go online to make a restaurant reservation and you can't find anything around the time in which you are interested, call the restaurant. Chances are you may get a reservation. WW's experience is that at least one out of three times, there are reservations available via the phone that are not available online.

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From a WW reader,
Albert Oehrle

“When I hear ‘Great question’, it means to me that the interviewee needs a little time to think about an answer, if only enough to comment on how great the question is.”

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As of November 2020, there were 47 unique, individual parties across the country with 225 state-level-ballot-qualified political party affiliates nationwide. Some parties are recognized in multiple states. For example, the Democratic and Republican parties are recognized in all 50 states and Washington, DC. These two parties are 102 of the 225 total state-level parties.

Three minor parties were recognized in more than 10 states as of November 2020.

- Libertarian Party – 35 states
- Green Party – 22 states
- Constitution Party – 15 states. [Ballotpedia 10/21]

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Quotes

“When ideas go unexamined and unchallenged for a long enough time, they become mythological and very, very powerful. They create conformity. They intimidate.”

E.L. Doctorow

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“Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the mouth.”

Mike Tyson

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“Instead of getting ‘back to normal,’ we have settled into a ‘new normal’ of deep polarization and dysfunctional governing.”

Amy Walter

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“We need to be informed for freedom – give the tools of judgement and character and habit to use your freedom responsibly and effectively. Such formation for freedom is a key part of what our institutions are for, starting with the family and spreading outward to the institutions through which we work, learn. Worship, govern, and otherwise organize ourselves.”

A Time to Build, p. 63-64

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George Washington's Rules of Civility

Written when he was just 14 years old, the rules were drawn from an English translation of a French book of maxims.

- When in company, put not your hands to any part of the body, not usually discovered.
- Show nothing to your friend that may affright him.
- Put not off your clothes in the presence of others nor go out your chamber half dressed
- Spit not in the fire, nor stoop low before it. Neither put your hands into the flames to warm them, nor set your feet upon the ire, especially if there be meat before it.
- Turn not your back to others especially in speaking; jog not the table or desk on which another reads or writes, lean not upon anyone.
- Let your countenance be pleasant, but in serious matters somewhat grave.
[Thanks to Joel Jankowsky for providing this list]

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Quotes by Mother Teresa

“Some people come in our life as blessings. Some come in our life as lessons.”

“If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway.”

“A life not lived for others is not a life.”

“I prefer you to make mistakes in kindness than work miracles in unkindness.”

“Love is a fruit in season at all times and with reach of every hand.”

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Now that I'm Older

- I don't mean to brag, but I finished my 14-day diet food supply in 3 hours and 20 seconds.
- I love approaching 83, I learn something new every day and forget 5 other things.
- It's weird being the same age as old people.
- Marriage Counselor: Your wife says you never buy her flowers. Is that true?
Me: To be honest, I never knew she sold flowers.
- You don't realize how old you are until you sit on the floor and then try to get back up.

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President Biden

(The following is based on registered voters unless indicated otherwise.)

President Biden's job approval ratings

<u>Date</u>	<u>NBC</u>	<u>WP/ABC</u>	<u>CNN</u>	<u>FOX</u>	<u>QUINNIPIAC</u>
OCT'21			50/50		40/53
SEPT'21	xxx	xxx	xxx	50/49	44/50
SEPT'21	XXX	44/51A	52/48	XXX	XXX
AUG'21	49/48A	xxx	xxx	53/46	47/44
JULY'21	CNBC	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
JULY'21	48/45A	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
JUNE'21	xxx	xxx	xxx	56/43	xxx
MAY'21	xxx	xxx	xxx	54/42	49/41
APR'21	51/43	52/42	52/45	54/43	48/42

<u>Date</u>	<u>AP-NORC</u>	<u>ECON/YOUGOV</u>	<u>POL/MORNCON</u>
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OCT'21		42/51	46/51
OCT'21	xxx	44/49	45/52
SEPT'21	50/49	46/48	47/50
SEPT'21	xxx	43/52	XXX
AUG'21	xxx	47/46	47/49
AUG'21	54/46	48/46	50/48
AUG'21	xxx	47/47	51/46
AUG'21	xxx	49/44	52/46
JULY'21	59/41	49/45	52/45
JULY'21	xxx	50/43	52/44
JUNE'21	55/44	52/44	53/44
	xxx	51/43	52/43
MAY'21	xxx	52/42	55/41
APR'21	63/36 A	xxx	xxx

As of October 14, the following is Biden's approval rating based on Real Clear Politics:

	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>
Over all	43.9%	52.1%
On the economy	44.3%	50.5%
On foreign policy	38.4%	53.2%

Gallup now does monthly or semi-monthly surveys of all adults. WW will include a periodic polling summary—Registered and Likely Voters—by FiveThirtyEight.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Gallup (All Adults)</u>		<u>FiveThirtyEight (Reg/Likely voters)</u>	
	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>
9/17/21	43%	53%	45.7%	48.8%
8/17/21	49%	48%	48.5%	45.9%
6/18/21	56%	42%	51.8%	42.4%
5/18/21	54%	40%	52.7%	40.7%
4/21/21	57%	40%	53.4%	40.1%
3/15/21	54%	42%	53.8%	40.2%
2/18/21	56%	40%	54.4%	37.8%

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Other elected presidents' approval ratings in the September of their first year in office.

	<u>Approve</u>	
Joe Biden	43	September 2021
Donald Trump	38	September 2017
Barack Obama	52	September 2009
George W. Bush	76	September 2001
Bill Clinton	50	September 1993
George H.W. Bush	70	September 1989
Ronald Reagan	52	September 1981
Jimmy Carter	57	September 1977
Richard Nixon	59	September 1969
John Kennedy	79	September 1961
Dwight Eisenhower	61	September 1953

[Gallup]

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Judges Nominated and Confirmed to Date

President Biden has been able to affect the federal judiciary early.

As of October 7, 2021, 16 judges nominated by Biden have been confirmed, 5 to the Courts of Appeals, and 11 to the District Courts.

There are currently an additional 80 vacancies in Article III courts, 6 in the U.S. Courts of Appeals, 72 in the U.S. District Courts, and 2 in the in the U.S. Courts of International Trade.

President Biden has nominated an additional 35 individuals, 27 to the district and 8 to the circuit courts.

The chart below reflects the number of Article III court judges appointed by every U.S. president since Jimmy Carter.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Supreme Ct</u>	<u>Appeals Ct</u>	<u>District Ct</u>	<u>Int'l Trade</u>
Biden – 7 months	16	0	5	11	
Trump – 4 years	234	3	54	174	3
Obama – 8 years	325	2	55	268	
GW Bush – 8 years	325	2	62	261	
Clinton – 8 years	373	2	66	305	
GHW Bush – 4 years	192	2	42	148	

Reagan – 8 years	376	4	83	290
Carter – 4 years	261	0	59	203

[USCourts/Wikipedia/List of federal judges appointed by Joe Biden]

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The following are the favorability ratings for a variety of political leaders based on the Real Clear Politics averages for October 5, 2021.

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
Joe Biden	45.3	50.7
Donald Trump	43.7	52.3
Kamala Harris	42.0	50.0
Nancy Pelosi	36.0	56.5
Chuck Schumer	32.8	46.0
Kevin McCarthy	28.3	41.0
Mitch McConnell	26.8	55.8

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2022 Election

The 117th Congress
Congress

Approval of the Congress was growing after the 2020 election but since mid-May it has been falling, and the decline continues.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Real Clear Pol. 10/12/21	25.0%	65.8%
Real Clear Pol. 9/1/21	28.5%	60.3%
Real Clear Pol. 8/3/21	31.4%	59.6%
Real Clear Pol. 6/15/21	28.8%	60.5%
Real Clear Pol. 5/18/21	35%	56.3%
Real Clear Pol. 5/4/21	36.3%	55.5%
Real Clear Pol. 4/6/21	34.3%	57.0%
Real Clear Pol. 3/2/21	29.7%	60.0%
Real Clear Pol. 2/22/21	26.3%	60.0%
Real Clear Pol. 1/5/21	18.7%	70.3%

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THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Washington Watch uses the Cook Political Report for its report on elections in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Currently:

Democrats - 220 seats

Republicans - 212 seats

Vacancies - 3 seats

OH – 11, special election 11/2/21 – Dem seat

OH - 15, special election 11/2/21 – Rep seat

FL – 20, special election 1/11/22 – Dem Seat

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Only time will tell the impact of the redistricting that followed the 2020 census. For example, the state of West Virginia which, by the way, had six members of the House as recently as 1960, will now go from 3 members to 2 members as a result of population loss. Because all 3 seats are held by Republicans, Republicans will lose a seat in the overall count.

There are currently 19 seats in which incumbents have announced they are not running for re-election because they are either running for another office or retiring. 9 of those seats are currently held by Republicans and 10 by Democrats.

There are an additional 14 seats that are “potentially” open - 12 seats held by Republicans and 2 by Democrats. All of these incumbents are considering running for other office.

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THE SENATE

[WW uses Jessica Taylor of the Cook Political Report and Inside Elections for the Senate chart below. When those two organizations do not agree, WW uses Sabato as a tie breaker.]

Republicans – 50

Democrats – 48

Independents – 2

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Seats not up in 2022	34	30	2

Safe in 2022	10	16
	Padilla	Murkowski
	Bennet	AL – open
	Blumenthal	Boozman
	Schatz	Grassley
	Duckworth	Crapo
	Van Hollen	Young
	Schumer	Moran
	Wyden	Paul
	Leahy	Kennedy
	Murray	MO – open
		OH – Open
		Hoeven
		Lankford
		Scott
		Thune
		Lee
Likely	0	1
		Rubio
Lean	4	2
	Kelly	Johnson
	Warnock	NC – open
	Hassan	
	Cortez Masto	
Toss Up	0	1
		PA – open

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2024 Election

The following people have indicated or been named as someone thinking about or planning to run for president in 2024.

Donald Trump

Kristi Noem – Governor of South Dakota

Nikki Haley – Former governor of South Carolina (Announced she will not run if Trump runs)

Mike Pompeo – Former Secretary of State

Larry Hogan – Governor of Maryland
Ben Sasse – U.S. Senator
Ron DeSantis – Governor of Florida
Tom Cotton – U.S. Senator
Josh Hawley – U.S. Senator
Rick Scott – U.S. Senator
Ted Cruz – U.S. Senator
Tim Scott – U.S. Senator
Mike Pence – Former Vice President
Chris Christie – Former Governor New Jersey

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Women Will Get It Done

Melanie Newman and Jessica Mendoza are the first all-female baseball broadcast team on ESPN.

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Mary Barra, Chief Executive Officer of General Motors, is now the first woman to Chair the Business Roundtable.

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Angela Merkel was the first female chancellor of Germany, a role she has played since 2005.

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For the first time in the 84-year history of the vigil at the Tomb of the Unknown soldier, on the 30,770th day of continuous guarding, there was an all-female guard change.

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Ethel Percy Andrus, founder of AARP, was the first female high school principal in California.

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Alyson Shontell will be the next Editor in Chief of Fortune magazine making her the first woman to lead the 92-year-old business magazine.

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Jenna Johnson and JoJo Siwa made history as the first same-sex partners on “Dancing with the Stars.”

WW Recommends Books & Other Things

In this feature of the Washington Watch, WW will primarily recommend books you may find interesting but may also now and then mention a TV program or other things. I welcome your suggestions and your input. What have you been reading or watching that you think WW readers might like?

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The Authority of the Court and the Peril of Politics by Justice Stephen Breyer

A sitting justice reflects upon the authority of the Supreme Court—how that authority was gained and how measures to restructure the Court could undermine both the Court and the constitutional system of checks and balances that depends on it.

A growing chorus of officials and commentators argues that the Supreme Court has become too political. On this view the confirmation process is just an exercise in partisan agenda-setting, and the jurists are no more than “politicians in robes”—their ostensibly neutral judicial philosophies mere camouflage for conservative or liberal convictions.

Stephen Breyer, drawing upon his experience as a Supreme Court justice, sounds a cautionary note. Mindful of the Court’s history, he suggests that the judiciary’s hard-won authority could be marred by reforms premised on the assumption of ideological bias. Having, as Hamilton observed, “no influence over either the sword or the purse,” the Court earned its authority by making decisions that have, over time, increased the public’s trust. If public trust is now in decline, one part of the solution is to promote better understandings of how the judiciary actually works: how judges adhere to their oaths and how they try to avoid considerations of politics and popularity.

Breyer warns that political intervention could itself further erode public trust.

Without the public’s trust, the Court would no longer be able to act as a check on the other branches of government or as a guarantor of the rule of law, risking serious harm to our constitutional system

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Wildland:
The Making of America’s Fury
by Evan Osnos

After a decade abroad, the National Book Award– and Pulitzer Prize–winning writer Evan Osnos returns to three places he has lived in the United States—Greenwich, CT; Clarksburg, WV; and Chicago, IL—to illuminate the origins of America’s political fury.

Evan Osnos moved to Washington, D.C., in 2013 after a decade away from the United States, first reporting from the Middle East before becoming the Beijing bureau chief at the *Chicago Tribune* and then the China correspondent for *The New Yorker*. While abroad, he often found himself making a case for America, urging the citizens of Egypt, Iraq, or China to trust that even though America had made grave mistakes throughout its history, it aspired to some foundational moral commitments: the rule of law, the power of truth, the right of equal opportunity for all. But when he returned to the United States, he found each of these principles under assault.

In search of an explanation for the crisis that reached an unsettling crescendo in 2020—a year of pandemic, civil unrest, and political turmoil—he focused on three places he knew firsthand: Greenwich, Connecticut; Clarksburg, West Virginia; and Chicago, Illinois. Reported over the course of six years, *Wildland* follows ordinary individuals as they navigate the varied landscapes of twenty-first-century America. Through their powerful, often poignant stories, Osnos traces the sources of America’s political dissolution. He finds answers in the rightward shift of the financial elite in Greenwich, in the collapse of social infrastructure and possibility in Clarksburg, and in the compounded effects of segregation and violence in Chicago. The truth about the state of the nation may be found not in the slogans of political leaders but in the intricate details of individual lives, and in the hidden connections between them. As *Wildland* weaves in and out of these personal stories, events in Washington occasionally intrude, like flames licking up on the horizon.

A dramatic, prescient examination of seismic changes in American politics and culture, *Wildland* is the story of a crucible, a period bounded by two shocks to America's psyche, two assaults on the country's sense of itself: the attacks of September 11 in 2001 and the storming of the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. Following the lives of everyday Americans in three cities and across two decades, *Osnos* illuminates the country in a startling light, revealing how we lost the moral confidence to see ourselves as larger than the sum of our parts.

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Master of the Game:
Henry Kissinger and the Art of Middle East Diplomacy
by Martin Indyk

A perceptive and provocative history of Henry Kissinger's diplomatic negotiations in the Middle East that illuminates the unique challenges and barriers Kissinger and his successors have faced in their attempts to broker peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

“A wealth of lessons for today, not only about the challenges in that region but also about the art of diplomacy . . . the drama, dazzling maneuvers, and grand strategic vision.”—Walter Isaacson, author of *The Code Breaker*

More than twenty years have elapsed since the United States last brokered a peace agreement between the Israelis and Palestinians. In that time, three presidents have tried and failed. Martin Indyk—a former United States ambassador to Israel and special envoy for the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations in 2013—has experienced these political frustrations and disappointments firsthand.

Now, in an attempt to understand the arc of American diplomatic influence in the Middle East, he returns to the origins of American-led peace efforts and to the man who created the Middle East peace process—Henry Kissinger. Based on newly available documents from American and Israeli archives, extensive interviews with Kissinger, and Indyk's own interactions with some of the main players, the author takes readers inside the negotiations. Here is a roster of larger-than-life characters—Anwar Sadat, Golda Meir, Moshe Dayan, Yitzhak Rabin, Hafez al-Assad, and Kissinger himself.

Indyk's account is both that of a historian poring over the records of these events, as well as an inside player seeking to glean lessons for Middle East peacemaking.

He makes clear that understanding Kissinger's design for Middle East peacemaking is key to comprehending how to—and how not to—make peace.

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Resistance:
How Women Saved Democracy from Donald Trump
by Jennifer Rubin

In the tradition of *Shattered* and *Game Change*, *Washington Post* columnist Jennifer Rubin provides an insider's look at how women across the political spectrum carried a revolution to in the ballot box and defeated Donald Trump, based on interviews with key figures such as Kamala Harris, Amy Klobuchar, Stacey Abrams, Nancy Pelosi, and many more.

In a compelling narrative, bookended by Donald Trump's 2016 victory and his 2020 defeat, Rubin delivers an absorbing analysis of the women's counter-Trump revolution. *Resistance* tracks a set of dynamic women voters, activists and politicians who rose up when Donald Trump took the White House and fundamentally changed the political landscape. From the first Women's March the day after Trump's inauguration to the Blue Wave in the 2018 midterms to the flood of female presidential candidates in 2020 to the inauguration of Kamala Harris, women from across the ideological spectrum entered the political arena and became energized in a way America had not witnessed in decades. They marched, they organized, they donated vast sums of cash, they ran for office, they made new alliances. And they defeated Donald Trump.

Democratic women candidates learned that they could win in large numbers, even in red districts. Black women voters in 2020 surged in Georgia and in suburbs in key swing states. Women across the country voted in greater numbers than in any previous election, flipped the Senate, and ensured victory for the first female Vice President in the nation's history. While Democrats recorded impressive victories, Republican women delivered critical victories of their own.

From the White House to Congress, from activists to protestors, from liberals to conservatives, *Resistance* delivers the first comprehensive portrait of women's historic political surge provoked by the horror of President Trump. This is the indelible story of how American women transformed their own lives, vanquished Trump, secured unprecedented positions of power and redefined US politics decades to come.

Resistance is essential reading for understanding the most important election in American history and the role women played in redesigning modern politics.

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Restaurants

WW was recently asked, if on a given day I was at home prior to breakfast, lunch, or dinner where would I go for each of those meals in Washington.

Breakfast – Seasons Restaurant at the Four Seasons Hotel

Lunch and Dinner – (Alpha order) – Equinox, I Ricchi, La Piquette, Tosca

Equinox – 818 Connecticut Ave NW 202-331-8118

I Ricchi – 1220 19th St. NW 202-835-0459

La Piquette – 3714 Macomb St NW 202-686-2015

Tosca – 1112 F St NW – 202-367-1990

CLARITY

442 Maple Ave E

Vienna VA 22180

703-539-8400

Reservations – clarityvienna.com

Carol, Debbie, and I went to Clarity for lunch on a Tuesday afternoon. It was about a 30-minute ride from our home (Carol, Debbie, and I all live in the same condominium.) Carol drove. Whatever system Carol used to find the restaurant it did not seem that complicated.

We had a 12:30 p.m. reservation, at least at this time of year and on this day, there was plenty of room for walk-ins. Here are the hours:

Monday 5-10 pm

Tuesday - Thursday 11:30 am – 2 pm / 3-10 pm

Friday 11:30 am – 2 pm / 5 -11 pm

Saturday - Sunday 5-11 pm

During this time of year, there is a covered outdoor area that holds 4 four-tops and 2 tall two-tops. It appears that the area has some walls and heaters for those times when it is cool. We had a reservation for this outdoor area but there were maybe another dozen people eating inside.

The interior of the restaurant is long and narrow. Starting from the front, there is on right hand side a long banquette with a series of 4 tops divided by half walls and curtains or only curtains. The same configuration exists on the other side of the restaurant and in the middle of the restaurant there are a series of tables with seating from four to six people at round tables.

Continuing to the back of the restaurant there is an L-shaped bar with high-chair seating and then a smaller bar which runs on the side of the open kitchen. In the far back there are two private dining rooms, one with a long table that seats about 10 people and doubles as a wine room; the second room looks like it may seat up to 30 people. It also has a large TV and a bar.

Various estimates of the number of people that can be seated at the restaurant at one time range from 90-100. But even without the outdoor space, one could see the limit raised to something closer to 120 people assuming the kitchen could accommodate that many diners.

Our server Nolan has been working at Clarity since it opened some six years ago by Chef Owner Jon Krinn.

The breadbasket delivered to our table contained 4 rolls, 2 onion sage and 2 French bread.

Debbie and Carol shared Sea Salt Cured Spanish Mangalica Jamon de Segovia – pea shoots/watermelon/Antietam goat chevre/sherry vinaigrette.

Carol selected Cast Iron Roasted Pennsylvania Free Bird Chicken Breast – la ratte fingerling potatoes/filet beans/earth n east okra/sherry jus.

Debbie chose her main course from the Starter group. Pennsylvania Organic Chicken Wings – fermented jalapeno hot sauce/roasted garlic/ old bay/ ash goat cheese dressing.

For my starter I picked an Earth N East Baby Chioggia Beet Salad – apple & pear butter/ pistachios/ mizuna/goat feta/purple sweet potato chips. (For those of

you who, like WW, had never heard of mizuna, they're Japanese mustard greens) The size of the salad was ample, especially the number of beets that were included.

For my main course I chose Emilia Romagna Style Orecchiette Pasta – meatloaf Bolognese/San Marzano tomatoes/24-month aged parmesan. (WW rarely comments on a particular dish but this pasta was so good I actually took my unfinished portion home which is very rare.)

None of us selected a dessert.

The restaurant seems to have a substantial liquor and wine selection. Carol said the glass of Chablis she ordered was very good.

One of the things from the menu that drew all of our attention was in a section called “Clarity Crafted Cocktails.” The item is called a Jailbreak Old Fashioned – Clarity’s own whistle pig, 30325, 17-year rye, 111p gin barrel aged bitters/organic raw sugar. Cost, \$34.

Our server told us that the menu changes every day and so WW decided to find out whether that is true. WW found the menu from October 1st online and received the menu for the 5th when we had lunch at the restaurant on that date.

The Clarity menu has three sections – Firsts, Mains, Desserts.

The bottom line – in comparing the menus for the 1st and 5th, WW finds that two-thirds of the items in each section are the same in the two menus. And the selections that are different in each menu are different than the same items when comparing the two.

For example, in the menu for October 1st, the two items that are different in the First section are Roaster Squash Soup and Cove Main Mussels. On the menu for October 5th the two items that are in the First section are Parsnip Potage and Florida Pompano.

There are separately identified restrooms for men and women.

The men’s room is standard. The wall has a painted red stripe several inches wide around the entire room just above waist height. Above the stripe the wall is painted grey and below the stripe the wall is covered with very large grey tiles. There is also a painted yellow stripe around the whole room close to the ceiling.

Directly to the right of the door is a rectangular white ceramic wash basin intended to be used by one person at a time. There is a mirror above the wash basin. The floor is covered with rectangular wood tiles.

There is a separate hanging white ceramic urinal with a small wall separating it from the wash basin area.

A separate commode area has a separate door and partial metal walls. Within the commode room there is a white ceramic floor-based commode with appropriate silver metal wall hangers.

Interestingly, Italian language classes were being piped into the speakers in the rest rooms.

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Mike

325 7th St, NW, STE 825
Washington, DC 20004
202-728-1100
mberman@dubersteingroup.com