

May 21, 2012

It's graduation time. [Bret Stephens](#) has a mock address.

Dear Class of 2012:

Allow me to be the first one not to congratulate you. Through exertions that—let's be honest—were probably less than heroic, most of you have spent the last few years getting inflated grades in useless subjects in order to obtain a debased degree. Now you're entering a lousy economy, courtesy of the very president whom you, as freshmen, voted for with such enthusiasm. Please spare us the self-pity about how tough it is to look for a job while living with your parents. They're the ones who spent a fortune on your education only to get you back—return-to-sender, forwarding address unknown.

No doubt some of you have overcome real hardships or taken real degrees. A couple of years ago I hired a summer intern from West Point. She came to the office directly from weeks of field exercises in which she kept a bulletproof vest on at all times, even while sleeping. She writes brilliantly and is as self-effacing as she is accomplished. Now she's in Afghanistan fighting the Taliban.

If you're like that intern, please feel free to feel sorry for yourself. Just remember she doesn't.

Unfortunately, dear graduates, chances are you're nothing like her. And since you're no longer children, at least officially, it's time someone tells you the facts of life. The other facts. ...

Seems like a good time to reprint [Steve Jobs](#) famous 2005 commencement address at Stanford.

... My second story is about love and loss.

I was lucky — I found what I loved to do early in life. Woz and I started Apple in my parents garage when I was 20. We worked hard, and in 10 years Apple had grown from just the two of us in a garage into a \$2 billion company with over 4000 employees. We had just released our finest creation — the Macintosh — a year earlier, and I had just turned 30. And then I got fired. How can you get fired from a company you started? Well, as Apple grew we hired someone who I thought was very talented to run the company with me, and for the first year or so things went well. But then our visions of the future began to diverge and eventually we had a falling out. When we did, our Board of Directors sided with him. So at 30 I was out. And very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating.

I really didn't know what to do for a few months. I felt that I had let the previous generation of entrepreneurs down - that I had dropped the baton as it was being passed to me. I met with David Packard and Bob Noyce and tried to apologize for screwing up so badly. I was a very public failure, and I even thought about running away from the valley. But something slowly began to dawn on me — I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. And so I decided to start over.

I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.

During the next five years, I started a company named NeXT, another company named Pixar, and fell in love with an amazing woman who would become my wife. Pixar went on to create the world's first computer animated feature film, Toy Story, and is now the most successful animation studio in the world. In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought NeXT, I returned to Apple, and the technology we developed at NeXT is at the heart of Apple's current renaissance. And Laurene and I have a wonderful family together.

I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don't settle. ...

Larry Bell, Houston prof and Forbes contributor, writes on the administration's refusal to allow Virginia to control its destiny and drill off the coast.

It seems the Commonwealth of Virginia won't be receiving "all of the above" energy opportunities they requested from Obama's permitting elves any time soon. Instead, they will just have to settle for more windy promises.

In 2007, the Federal Government had designated certain offshore areas as available for oil and gas leases, raising prospects for creating a boom in new state and local business revenues and jobs. [By 2010, Virginia was poised to become the first East Coast state to receive permits](#) which would enable these welcome developments. Unfortunately, that was then... and this is now.

Last November, despite strong state bi-partisan and public support, the Obama administration unexpectedly dropped Virginia from the government's most recent leasing plan altogether, declaring a seven-year delay with little explanation. Then, only three months later, the president announced federal approval of leasing plans for a wind farm off the Virginia coast. He apparently didn't need to offer much reason for that. ...

WaPo with a story on the [health benefits of coffee drinking](#).

One of life's simple pleasures just got a little sweeter. After years of waffling research on coffee and health, even some fear that java might raise the risk of heart disease, a big study finds the opposite: Coffee drinkers are a little more likely to live longer. Regular or decaf doesn't matter.

The study of 400,000 people is the largest ever done on the issue, and the results should reassure any coffee lovers who think it's a guilty pleasure that may do harm.

“Our study suggests that’s really not the case,” said lead researcher Neal Freedman of the National Cancer Institute. “There may actually be a modest benefit of coffee drinking.”

No one knows why. Coffee contains a thousand things that can affect health, from helpful antioxidants to tiny amounts of substances linked to cancer. The most widely studied ingredient — caffeine — didn’t play a role in the new study’s results.

It’s not that earlier studies were wrong. There is evidence that coffee can raise LDL, or bad cholesterol, and blood pressure at least short-term, and those in turn can raise the risk of heart disease.

Even in the new study, it first seemed that coffee drinkers were more likely to die at any given time. But they also tended to smoke, drink more alcohol, eat more red meat and exercise less than non-coffee-drinkers. Once researchers took those things into account, a clear pattern emerged: Each cup of coffee per day nudged up the chances of living longer.

The study was done by the National Institutes of Health and AARP. The results are published in Thursday’s New England Journal of Medicine. ..

Ed Morrissey makes a serious point about Harvard's Cherokee.

... The system exists to undo disadvantage — so what purpose is there for Warren to enter into it at all? But while we’re criticizing Warren, let’s not leave out Harvard and all of the other public and private organizations that attempt to benefit from the same disunity. Harvard had no hesitation to promote its “woman of color” despite her color being roughly peaches-and-cream.

The system itself is corrupt, but worse, it’s utterly corrupting. That’s the true moral of this story, and we shouldn’t let Warren’s rather large tree blind us to the proverbial forest in this issue. If we want to address systemic disadvantage, to the extent it still exists, we should be reforming the reservation system and inner-city schools to give those who still are truly disadvantaged a chance to overcome those obstacles, and end the system that incentivizes everyone else to exploit those systems at the expense of the actually disadvantaged.

Don't miss the cool giraffe pic below.



WSJ

To the Class of 2012

Attention graduates: Tone down your egos, shape up your minds.

by Bret Stephens

Dear Class of 2012:

Allow me to be the first one not to congratulate you. Through exertions that—let’s be honest—were probably less than heroic, most of you have spent the last few years getting inflated grades in useless subjects in order to obtain a debased degree. Now you're entering a lousy economy, courtesy of the very president whom you, as freshmen, voted for with such

enthusiasm. Please spare us the self-pity about how tough it is to look for a job while living with your parents. They're the ones who spent a fortune on your education only to get you back—return-to-sender, forwarding address unknown.

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If you're like that intern, please feel free to feel sorry for yourself. Just remember she doesn't.

Unfortunately, dear graduates, chances are you're nothing like her. And since you're no longer children, at least officially, it's time someone tells you the facts of life. The *other* facts.

Fact One is that, in our "knowledge-based" economy, knowledge counts. Yet here you are, probably the least knowledgeable graduating class in history.

A few months ago, I interviewed a young man with an astonishingly high GPA from an Ivy League university and aspirations to write about Middle East politics. We got on the subject of the Suez Crisis of 1956. He was vaguely familiar with it. But he didn't know who was president of the United States in 1956. And he didn't know who succeeded that president.

Pop quiz, Class of '12: Do you?

Many of you have been reared on the cliché that the purpose of education isn't to stuff your head with facts but to teach you how to think. Wrong. I routinely interview college students, mostly from top schools, and I notice that their brains are like old maps, with lots of blank spaces for the uncharted terrain. It's not that they lack for motivation or IQ. It's that they can't connect the dots when they don't know where the dots are in the first place.

Now to Fact Two: Your competition is global. Shape up. Don't end your days like a man I met a few weeks ago in Florida, complaining that Richard Nixon had caused his New York City business to fail by opening up China.

In places like Ireland, France, India and Spain, your most talented and ambitious peers are graduating into economies even more depressed than America's. Unlike you, they probably speak several languages. They may also have a degree in a hard science or engineering—skills that transfer easily to the more remunerative jobs in investment banks or global consultancies.

I know a lot of people like this from my neighborhood in New York City, and it's a good thing they're so well-mannered because otherwise they'd be eating our lunch. But if things continue as they are, they might soon be eating yours.

Which reminds me of Fact Three: Your prospective employers can smell BS from miles away. And most of you don't even know how badly you stink.

When did puffery become the American way? Probably around the time Norman Mailer came out with "Advertisements for Myself." But at least that was in the service of provoking an establishment that liked to cultivate an ideal of emotional restraint and public reserve.

To read through your CVs, dear graduates, is to be assaulted by endless Advertisements for Myself. Here you are, 21 or 22 years old, claiming to have accomplished feats in past summer internships or at your school newspaper that would be hard to credit in a biography of Walter Lippmann or Ernie Pyle.

If you're not too bright, you may think this kind of nonsense goes undetected; if you're a little brighter, you probably figure everyone does it so you must as well.

But the best of you don't do this kind of thing at all. You have an innate sense of modesty. You're confident that your résumé needs no embellishment. You understand that less is more.

In other words, you're probably capable of thinking for yourself. And here's Fact Four: There will always be a market for people who can do that.

In every generation there's a strong tendency for everyone to think like everyone else. But your generation has an especially bad case, because your mass conformism is masked by the appearance of mass nonconformism. It's a point I learned from my West Point intern, when I asked her what it was like to lead such a uniformed existence.

Her answer stayed with me: Wearing a uniform, she said, helped her figure out what it was that really distinguished her as an individual.

Now she's a second lieutenant, leading a life of meaning and honor, figuring out how to Think Different for the sake of a cause that counts. Not many of you will be able to follow in her precise footsteps, nor do you need to do so. But if you can just manage to tone down your egos, shape up your minds, and think unfashionable thoughts, you just might be able to do something worthy with your lives. And even get a job. Good luck!

Stanford University

'You've got to find what you love,' Jobs says

This is a prepared text of the Commencement address delivered by Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple Computer and of Pixar Animation Studios, on June 12, 2005.

I am honored to be with you today at your commencement from one of the finest universities in the world. I never graduated from college. Truth be told, this is the closest I've ever gotten to a college graduation. Today I want to tell you three stories from my life. That's it. No big deal. Just three stories.

The first story is about connecting the dots.

I dropped out of Reed College after the first 6 months, but then stayed around as a drop-in for another 18 months or so before I really quit. So why did I drop out?

It started before I was born. My biological mother was a young, unwed college graduate student, and she decided to put me up for adoption. She felt very strongly that I should be adopted by college graduates, so everything was all set for me to be adopted at birth by a lawyer and his wife. Except that when I popped out they decided at the last minute that they really wanted a girl. So my parents, who were on a waiting list, got a call in the middle of the night asking: "We have an unexpected baby boy; do you want him?" They said: "Of course." My biological mother later found out that my mother had never graduated from college and that my father had never graduated from high school. She refused to sign the final adoption papers. She only relented a few months later when my parents promised that I would someday go to college.

And 17 years later I did go to college. But I naively chose a college that was almost as expensive as Stanford, and all of my working-class parents' savings were being spent on my college tuition. After six months, I couldn't see the value in it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out. And here I was spending all of the money my parents had saved their entire life. So I decided to drop out and trust that it would all work out OK. It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required classes that didn't interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked interesting.

It wasn't all romantic. I didn't have a dorm room, so I slept on the floor in friends' rooms, I returned coke bottles for the 5¢ deposits to buy food with, and I would walk the 7 miles across town every Sunday night to get one good meal a week at the Hare Krishna temple. I loved it. And much of what I stumbled into by following my curiosity and intuition turned out to be priceless later on. Let me give you one example:

Reed College at that time offered perhaps the best calligraphy instruction in the country. Throughout the campus every poster, every label on every drawer, was beautifully hand calligraphed. Because I had dropped out and didn't have to take the normal classes, I decided to take a calligraphy class to learn how to do this. I learned about serif and sans serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, about what makes great typography great. It was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can't capture, and I found it fascinating.

None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life. But ten years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer, it all came back to me. And we designed it all into the Mac. It was the first computer with beautiful typography. If I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts. And since Windows just copied the Mac, it's likely that no personal computer would have them. If I had never dropped out, I would have never dropped in on this calligraphy class, and personal computers might not have the wonderful typography that they do. Of course it was impossible to connect the dots looking forward when I was in college. But it was very, very clear looking backwards ten years later.

Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something — your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.

My second story is about love and loss.

I was lucky — I found what I loved to do early in life. Woz and I started Apple in my parents garage when I was 20. We worked hard, and in 10 years Apple had grown from just the two of us in a garage into a \$2 billion company with over 4000 employees. We had just released our finest creation — the Macintosh — a year earlier, and I had just turned 30. And then I got fired. How can you get fired from a company you started? Well, as Apple grew we hired someone who I thought was very talented to run the company with me, and for the first year or so things went well. But then our visions of the future began to diverge and eventually we had a falling out. When we did, our Board of Directors sided with him. So at 30 I was out. And very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating.

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My third story is about death.

When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "No" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything — all external expectations, all pride, all

fear of embarrassment or failure - these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

About a year ago I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a scan at 7:30 in the morning, and it clearly showed a tumor on my pancreas. I didn't even know what a pancreas was. The doctors told me this was almost certainly a type of cancer that is incurable, and that I should expect to live no longer than three to six months. My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor's code for prepare to die. It means to try to tell your kids everything you thought you'd have the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months. It means to make sure everything is buttoned up so that it will be as easy as possible for your family. It means to say your goodbyes.

I lived with that diagnosis all day. Later that evening I had a biopsy, where they stuck an endoscope down my throat, through my stomach and into my intestines, put a needle into my pancreas and got a few cells from the tumor. I was sedated, but my wife, who was there, told me that when they viewed the cells under a microscope the doctors started crying because it turned out to be a very rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. I had the surgery and I'm fine now.

This was the closest I've been to facing death, and I hope it's the closest I get for a few more decades. Having lived through it, I can now say this to you with a bit more certainty than when death was a useful but purely intellectual concept:

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma — which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.

When I was young, there was an amazing publication called *The Whole Earth Catalog*, which was one of the bibles of my generation. It was created by a fellow named Stewart Brand not far from here in Menlo Park, and he brought it to life with his poetic touch. This was in the late 1960's, before personal computers and desktop publishing, so it was all made with typewriters, scissors, and polaroid cameras. It was sort of like Google in paperback form, 35 years before Google came along: it was idealistic, and overflowing with neat tools and great notions.

Stewart and his team put out several issues of *The Whole Earth Catalog*, and then when it had run its course, they put out a final issue. It was the mid-1970s, and I was your age. On the back cover of their final issue was a photograph of an early morning country road, the kind you might find yourself hitchhiking on if you were so adventurous. Beneath it were the words: "Stay

Hungry. Stay Foolish." It was their farewell message as they signed off. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. And I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish that for you.

Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.

Thank you all very much.

Forbes

[No Virginia, There Is No Sanity Clause In Obama Drilling Permit Policy](#)

by Larry Bell



It seems the Commonwealth of Virginia won't be receiving "all of the above" energy opportunities they requested from Obama's permitting elves any time soon. Instead, they will just have to settle for more windy promises.

In 2007, the Federal Government had designated certain offshore areas as available for oil and gas leases, raising prospects for creating a boom in new state and local business revenues and jobs. [By 2010, Virginia was poised to become the first East Coast state to receive permits](#) which would enable these welcome developments. Unfortunately, that was then... and this is now.

Last November, despite strong state bi-partisan and public support, the Obama administration unexpectedly dropped Virginia from the government's most recent leasing plan altogether, declaring a seven-year delay with little explanation. Then, only three months later, the president announced federal approval of leasing plans for a wind farm off the Virginia coast. He apparently didn't need to offer much reason for that.

In 2008, President George W. Bush and Congress lifted a decades-long ban which opened the entire Pacific and Atlantic coasts to offshore drilling, allowing a scheduled 2011 Virginia lease sale to move forward. Soon afterwards, the new Obama administration delayed that lease sale until 2012, later announcing that [no areas off the Atlantic Coast would be available for energy development in their next five-year plan \(2012-2017\)](#). Interior Secretary Ken Salazar explained the reason, stating; "Making decisions based on sound science, public input and best information available is a critical component of the administration's all-of-the-above energy

strategy.” Interior then set in motion a five-year environmental and seismic study of offshore areas, including off the Virginia coast.

Virginia isn't the only Gulf state to be feeling the drilling denial doldrums. The Outer [Continental Shelf Governors Coalition](#) of seven coastal states, including Texas and Alaska, sent a letter to the president in April emphasizing the importance of increasing the speed and predictability of permitting and expanding access to new reserves...actions that he could initiate immediately.

The [Energy Information Administration \(EIA\) projects](#) that Alaskan offshore development permitting delays will cause production to decrease by more than 200,000 barrels per day this year compared with before President Obama took office. According to the energy research firm HIS-CERA, this will cost between 110,000 and 230,000 lost job opportunities across multiple sectors.

Yielding to challenges and legal actions, the [EPA withheld permits to Shell Oil last year](#) that prevented them from drilling in the Arctic Ocean off the northern coast of Alaska. This occurred after the company has already spent five years and nearly \$4 billion on those plans. The Beaufort and Chukchi Sea leases alone cost \$2.2 billion. That project would have generated an estimated 55,000 jobs per year for 50 years, along with \$145 billion in new payroll and \$193 billion in government revenues over that period.

And the reason for blocking it? EPA's appeals board ruled that Shell hadn't included carbon emissions from an ice-breaking vessel in the project's overall greenhouse gas calculations. Yet the board didn't seem to find much of a problem regarding emissions from those tankers that will deliver oil from Venezuela to help make up a shortfall...or from ships carrying crude from Brazil that the president promised we will purchase as their best customer...after lending them \$2 billion to drill for it in the Gulf of Mexico.

This is the same President Obama who [claimed credit during his January 24 State of the Union address](#) for highest levels of natural gas production in more than 30 years, record oil production in eight years, reduction of oil imports by an average of 1.1 million barrels per day, and making the U.S. a net energy exporter. To hear him tell it, these achievements are appropriately attributable to his foresight and actions, rather than to an entrepreneurial energy industry. Speaking at a January 17 meeting of his Jobs and Competitive Council he complained about lack of recognition of this fact, stating, “Folks are acting as if that [natural gas boon] just sprung out of thin air and is one more example of the dynamism of the marketplace.”

While he's right about natural gas production being at record high levels and oil up very slightly, he forgot to mention that is [occurring on private and state-owned lands](#), not on federal lands which presidents have control over. In fact the EIA has reported that both [natural gas and oil production have declined on federal lands](#) since he took office.

As for domestic oil, it is true that production has reached slightly highest levels since 2003. Yet yields on federal lands have fallen 43% over the past 9 years, and have done so most rapidly under Obama's watch. And while total levels have been quite stable, EIA's estimated production for 2012 is only about 13% higher than for the lowest year over an eight-year period (about 2,055,646,000 barrels, compared with 2,073,453,000 barrels in 2003).

In January 2009 when President Obama was inaugurated, the U.S. produced 5,154,000 barrels of oil per day. By November 2011 (the last month for data), the U.S. was producing 5,874,000 barrels per day. This 700,000 barrel increase occurred on private and state lands. Roughly 97% of America's Offshore Continental Shelf is currently closed to drilling.

For historical perspective, let's remember that when Obama was elected, nearly 100% of the offshore areas were available for exploration and development. Now, due to actions that limit offshore areas where oil can be produced, cancel leases, and delay permits, [production on federal lands will most likely continue to fall](#). Fortunately, the most recent EIA "*Short-Term Energy Outlook*" published in January forecasts increased total crude oil production in 2012 and 2013. That good news is due to increases in onshore production in the lower 48, which overshadows decreases in the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska.

This is also the same president that promoted alarmism about a scarcity of American oil resources, mistakenly declaring in June 2010 that "We consume more than 20% of the world's oil, but have less than 2% of the world's oil reserves." According to government data compiled by the Institute for Energy Research, [North America's land areas contain twice the combined proved reserves of all OPEC nations](#), and enough natural gas to provide for our electricity needs at current usage rates for more than 500 years.

EIA estimates that America holds 198 billion barrels of technically recoverable crude... about 26% of the world's 763 billion barrels. If we count oil from all types of sources, offshore and onshore (including that trapped in oil sands and shale), the U.S. has nearly 1.8 trillion estimated barrels. The U.S. Minerals [Management](#) Service estimates that Alaska's National Wildlife Refuge alone contains 10.4 billion barrels of oil, while offshore, the U.S. has 86 billion barrels of oil, and 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

While extolling virtues of failing Solyndra-style green energy companies that can't compete in free markets... and most likely never will... the president continues to demonize and penalize vital industries we will continue to depend upon in the foreseeable future. His all-of-the-above anti-fossil strategies include foot-dragging on drilling leases, use-it or lose-it land lease fees, and proposed tax hikes on Big Oil profits.

Yet having said all this, it is only fair to also recognize that the president did make good on his promises to reduce dependence on foreign oil and reduce petroleum consumption. Isn't it remarkable what a weak economy, debt-diminished global and domestic dollar value, government-exacerbated pump pain, and those few thousand tax-subsidized electric plug-in cars which eventually sold thank to huge rebates can accomplish?

Washington Post

[Coffee buzz: Java drinkers live longer, big study finds; regular and decaf are equally good](#)

by Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — One of life's simple pleasures just got a little sweeter. After years of waffling research on coffee and health, even some fear that java might raise the risk of heart disease, a big study finds the opposite: Coffee drinkers are a little more likely to live longer. Regular or decaf doesn't matter.

The study of 400,000 people is the largest ever done on the issue, and the results should reassure any coffee lovers who think it's a guilty pleasure that may do harm.

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Even in the new study, it first seemed that coffee drinkers were more likely to die at any given time. But they also tended to smoke, drink more alcohol, eat more red meat and exercise less than non-coffee-drinkers. Once researchers took those things into account, a clear pattern emerged: Each cup of coffee per day nudged up the chances of living longer.

The study was done by the National Institutes of Health and AARP. The results are published in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine.

Careful, though — this doesn't prove that coffee makes people live longer, only that the two seem related. Like most studies on diet and health, this one was based strictly on observing people's habits and resulting health. So it can't prove cause and effect.

But with so many people, more than a decade of follow-up and enough deaths to compare, "this is probably the best evidence we have" and are likely to get, said Dr. Frank Hu of the Harvard School of Public Health. He had no role in this study but helped lead a previous one that also found coffee beneficial.

The new one began in 1995 and involved AARP members ages 50 to 71 in California, Florida, Louisiana, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Atlanta and Detroit. People who already had heart disease, a stroke or cancer weren't included. Neither were folks at diet extremes — too many or too few calories per day.

The rest gave information on coffee drinking once, at the start of the study. "People are fairly consistent in their coffee drinking over their lifetime," so the single measure shouldn't be a big limitation, Freedman said.

Of the 402,260 participants, about 42,000 drank no coffee. About 15,000 drank six cups or more a day. Most people had two or three.

By 2008, about 52,000 of them had died. Compared to those who drank no coffee, men who had two or three cups a day were 10 percent less likely to die at any age. For women, it was 13 percent.

Even a single cup a day seemed to lower risk a little: 6 percent in men and 5 percent in women. The strongest effect was in women who had four or five cups a day — a 16 percent lower risk of death.

None of these are big numbers, though, and Freedman can't say how much extra life coffee might buy.

"I really can't calculate that," especially because smoking is a key factor that affects longevity at every age, he said.

Coffee drinkers were less likely to die from heart or respiratory disease, stroke, diabetes, injuries, accidents or infections. No effect was seen on cancer death risk, though.

Other research ties coffee drinking to lower levels of markers for inflammation and insulin resistance. Researchers also considered that people in poor health might refrain from drinking coffee and whether their abstention could bias the results. But the study excluded people with cancer and heart disease — the most common health problems — to minimize this chance. Also, the strongest benefits of coffee drinking were seen in people who were healthiest when the study began.

About two-thirds of study participants drank regular coffee, and the rest, decaf. The type of coffee made no difference in the results.

Hu had this advice for coffee lovers:

— Watch the sugar and cream. Extra calories and fat could negate any benefits from coffee.

— Drink filtered coffee rather than boiled — filtering removes compounds that raise LDL, the bad cholesterol.

Researchers did not look at tea, soda or other beverages but plan to in future analyses.

Lou and Mariann Maris have already compared them. Sipping a local brew at a lakefront coffee shop, the suburban Milwaukee couple told of how they missed coffee after briefly giving it up in the 1970s as part of a health kick that included transcendental meditation and eating vegetarian.

Mariann Maris switched to tea after being treated for breast cancer in 2008, but again missed the taste of coffee. It's one of life's great pleasures, especially because her husband makes it, she said.

"Nothing is as satisfying to me as a cup of coffee in the morning," she said.

Hot Air

The lessons native to the Warren story

by Ed Morrissey

We've had a lot of laughs at the expense of Elizabeth Warren, which come easy when a person refuses to admit the obvious even after it has been made public, and especially when that refusal keeps the story alive long enough to discover something worse. Instead of taking Allahpundit's sage advice to simply say that she relied on oral family history when claiming Cherokee heritage, Warren kept insisting it was true and offered her contributions to a cookbook as evidence. That led to the discovery that Warren had apparently lifted three of her five recipes from other sources, nearly word for word, adding plagiarism to the list of *faux pas* on the table in this election.

Joe Fitzgerald takes a more serious tone in the [Boston Herald](#) this morning in condemning Warren for illegitimate expropriation of the suffering of others:

"She might have gotten away with not having any documentation to back up the identity she claimed, if only she'd exhibited some contrition, but what's making Elizabeth Warren a pariah, even among liberal sympathizers, is that she still doesn't have a clue of how egregiously exploitative she appears to be.

That brazen sense of entitlement, so unattractive, apparently makes humility impossible, even if it's feigned for the purpose of public relations. ...

Native Americans were massacred, plundered, displaced and herded onto reservations where misery, depravation [sic] and despair darkened a barren existence. They were described as "merciless savages" when our Declaration of Independence was authored, and well into the 1950s they were still portrayed as barbarians by Hollywood directors and TV cowboys.

Not unlike slavery, it's a part of our past that now haunts America's conscience. To Elizabeth Warren, however, it offered great political camouflage, a dramatic touch to her resume, as she claimed to be a descendant of those who suffered mercilessly, as if she was somehow deserving of our sympathies, too.

Please. What she deserves is our contempt."

I don't disagree with this, but I'd like to put it into some perspective and context. First, it might *still* be possible that Warren has some small amount of Native American ancestry; we have seen quite a bit of negations of positive claims, but not necessarily a conclusive negation that traces every ancestor back to the Mayflower, or some such. It does sound as though Warren heard some family lore along those lines, unless she just flat-out lied for the last several decades, which could also be true. But it's worthwhile to point out that there is a large difference between being *wrong* and *lying*, which is a difference conservatives like myself have pointed out for years when it came to George Bush's belief that Saddam Hussein had stockpiled WMDs prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

However, the *real* problem in this case is the system that incentivized Warren, Harvard, and everyone else to make claims like this in the first place. Affirmative action programs (and later Equal Opportunity additions) had a well-intentioned purpose to right actual wrongs against

certain populations — and it's hard to imagine two populations with more legitimate grievances than Americans of African or Native heritage. What started out as a well-intentioned purpose became a mockery in almost no time at all, though, and worse. These programs incentivized division in America rather than unity. Instead of just being Americans, we all ended up as hyphenations, the latest of which is "[bow-tying white boys](#)."

Predictably, this led to ridiculous outcomes, like the proclamation that the oh-so-pale Warren was Harvard Law's "[first woman of color](#)." This points out that it's not just the Warrens of the world who seek illegitimate benefit from this system of division we have erected. Warren herself certainly should get criticized for the reasons Fitzgerald mentions; even if she does have 1/32nd Native American ancestry, there is simply no evidence to support the notion that this would have in any way disadvantaged Warren in her education or professional life, or even that anyone would have been aware of it had Warren not proclaimed it herself. The system exists to undo disadvantage — so what purpose is there for Warren to enter into it at all? But while we're criticizing Warren, let's not leave out Harvard and all of the other public and private organizations that attempt to benefit from the same disunity. Harvard had no hesitation to promote its "woman of color" despite her color being roughly peaches-and-cream.

The system itself is corrupt, but worse, it's utterly corrupting. That's the true moral of this story, and we shouldn't let Warren's rather large tree blind us to the proverbial forest in this issue. If we want to address systemic disadvantage, to the extent it still exists, we should be reforming the reservation system and inner-city schools to give those who still are *truly* disadvantaged a chance to overcome those obstacles, and end the system that incentivizes everyone else to exploit those systems at the expense of the actually disadvantaged.



