

July 15, 2012

[National Journal](#) post liked what Romney did at the NAACP gathering.

Mitt Romney isn't going to win the African-American vote over President Obama this November. Knowing that, it would have been understandable if Romney declined the NAACP's invitation to visit Houston on Wednesday and address the group's annual convention. The prospect of speaking to a crowd that overwhelmingly supports your opponent is not only politically risky; it's personally intimidating. In such settings, and under such an intense microscope, one small misstep can snowball into a news-dominating disaster. The Romney campaign, known for being risk-averse, easily could have determined the risks outweighed the rewards and avoided the event, opting instead to have their candidate address the conference via video message.

But Romney showed up. With the critical eyes of the political world resting squarely upon him, Romney marched defiantly into the lion's den and delivered a speech that was direct, assertive and dispassionate. Undaunted, the man seeking to unseat the nation's first African-American president stood calmly before a group of his most fervent supporters and informed them that he, not Obama, is the one they've been waiting for.

"If you want a president who will make things better in the African American community, you are looking at him," Romney told the crowd, pausing for added emphasis. As scattered boos echoed throughout the audience, Romney offered an unscripted -- and uncharacteristic -- display of bravado. "You take a look," he nodded. ...

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There were plenty of pitfalls awaiting Romney in Houston. A more cautious candidate would have danced around them, if not avoided them altogether. That's the candidate we thought Romney was. Republicans should hope the new, aggressive Romney is here to stay.

[Corner post](#) says Wolf Blitzer liked Romney's move too. Here's Wolf;

... Here is something I'd like to say to President Obama: You should have attended the NAACP convention in Houston today. Mitt Romney did. It was the right thing to do. The Republican knows the nation's oldest civil-rights group isn't exactly friendly turf but went anyway. On the whole, got a polite reception, but was booed when he said this: [from videotape] "I'm going to eliminate every nonessential expensive program I can find, that includes Obamacare." Despite the boos, it was a smart political move for Mitt Romney to address the NAACP. He knows he is not going to win over a lot of black voters, but attending these kinds of events is important in reassuring a lot of the suburban white voters that he is a moderate, decent politician, someone

that wants to work with all Americans. I'm surprised the president was a no-show. He is sending Vice President Joe Biden, will send a video. I checked the president's schedule for today. He is here in Washington, D.C., over at the White House. He's got meetings. I assume those meetings are very important. but he could have found time to pay his respects to the NAACP. ...

Roger Simon says the Dems have become the party of race.

As someone who was a sixties civil rights worker, wrote movies for Richard Pryor (successfully) and Whoopi Goldberg (unsuccessfully), and has had the pleasure of working with many talented African Americans at PJ Media for nearly seven years now, I think I have earned the right to write what should be painfully obvious to everyone — most of the racism in America today is from blacks (aided and abetted by white liberals) toward whites.

In fact, it's getting to be outrageously so. The rude treatment of Mitt Romney at the NAACP convention is yet another data point in what has become an all-too-predictable scenario.

Much of the reason for this stems from the extreme dependency of the Democratic Party on race politics. With union membership dwindling, the party would literally disintegrate without the overwhelming support of African Americans and Hispanic Americans. Without at least the perception of racism, the Democratic Party has only marginal support. The party is forced to encourage it for its survival. ...

Powerline post on the media bias against SUV's.

Scott wrote here about the appalling case of a 16-year-old St. Paul girl, Clarisse Grime, who was sitting in the grass at her high school, nowhere near the street, when she was struck and killed by a vehicle that careened out of control and bounced off a fire hydrant. The vehicle was driven by an illegal immigrant who has been in Minnesota for ten years without ever having a driver's license. He was known to local authorities, having been convicted of drunk driving in 2001 and driving without a license just a few months ago. But the immigration laws are not enforced in St. Paul.

So today, the St. Paul Pioneer Press reported on Miss Grime's funeral. This was the paper's headline: "St. Paul teen killed by SUV remembered at her funeral." Killed by SUV? That doesn't really seem to be the salient point. But the paper continues with that theme in the story's second paragraph:

Clarisse Grime, run over by an out-of-control sport-utility vehicle, was Martha Tamene Woldegiorgis's only child.

If you read to the end, you learn some of the facts, at least, about the vehicle's driver, Carlos Viveros-Colorado. But somehow the story is a little neater and a little less troubling if you focus on the SUV.

[Washington Times](#) OpEd on the declining value of college.

Almost everyone knows the country went through the wringer after the housing bubble burst. Now a new bubble looms before us - the higher-education bubble.

Just as easy money, lowered lending standards and political hype came together to vastly overinflate the housing sector, a combination of easy money (federal grants and loans available for nearly every student), lowered academic standards (colleges that readily accept students with pathetically weak basic skills) and political hype (the notion that getting a degree will guarantee a huge boost in earnings) have produced a vastly overinflated higher-education system.

The higher-education bubble has been inflating for decades, and it's ready to burst, or at least deflate. That's because many Americans are realizing that the huge cost of college is often a waste. Whereas college degrees used to be regarded as sure-fire investments, the labor market has become glutted with people who have been to college but can't find "good" jobs.

Did you know that 22 percent of customer-sales representatives and 16 percent of bartenders have bachelor's degrees?

Furthermore, at many schools, academic standards have fallen to the point where students can coast through without learning anything worthwhile. As University of Tennessee law professor Glenn Harlan Reynolds recently wrote, "The higher education bubble isn't bursting because of a shortage of money. It is bursting because of a shortage of value." ...

More on this from [Michael Graham](#).

... College Students Complain "We're Taken For Granite," Face A "Doggy-Dog World."

Those expressions were actually used in papers submitted to freshman comp professor James Courter. Other students wrote they found the college experience "homedrum" or had trouble getting into "the proper frame of mime."

Courter quotes them in a Wall Street Journal column bemoaning the poor reading skills of incoming students.

Coincidentally (or something more?) that same issue of the WSJ also featured a piece entitled "America Has Too Many Teachers." In it, Andrew Coulson of the Cato Institute points out that while the number of public school students has grown a mere 8.5 percent since 1970, "the public school work force has roughly doubled — to 6.4 million from 3.3 million — and two-thirds of those new hires are teachers or teachers' aides."

That helps explain part of the reason why since 1980 spending on public school education in the U.S. has doubled in inflation-adjusted dollars.

Twice as many teachers. Twice as much money. But does anybody believe that a high school graduate today is (as a college student might actually say) "twice as much smart?" ...

While college students get dumber, germs are getting smarter. [WaPo Editors](#) on the growing resistance to antibiotics.

ONE OF THE great medical advances of the last century, the invention of antibiotics, is at risk of being lost. Increasingly, microbes are becoming untreatable. [Margaret Chan](#), director general of the World Health Organization, warned in March of a dystopian future without these drugs. "A post-antibiotic era means, in effect, an end to modern medicine as we know it," she said. "Things as common as strep throat or a child's scratched knee could once again kill."

Since the 1940s, antibiotics have greatly reduced the amount of human illness and death and transformed modern medicine, making possible such sophisticated interventions as hip replacements, organ transplants, cancer chemotherapy and care of premature infants. But evidence is mounting that antibiotics are losing efficacy. Through the relentless process of evolution, pathogens are evading the drugs, a problem known broadly as [antimicrobial resistance](#). ...

[DailyDot](#) blog spots a site that collects bizarre, but real life names. Names like Angus Pattie, Hans Ohff, Destinee Hooker,

National Journal **[Romney's NAACP Gamble Pays Off](#)**

by Tim Alberta

Mitt Romney isn't going to win the African-American vote over President Obama this November. Knowing that, it would have been understandable if Romney declined the NAACP's invitation to visit Houston on Wednesday and address the group's annual convention. The prospect of speaking to a crowd that overwhelmingly supports your opponent is not only politically risky; it's personally intimidating. In such settings, and under such an intense microscope, one small misstep can snowball into a news-dominating disaster. The Romney campaign, known for being risk-averse, easily could have determined the risks outweighed the rewards and avoided the event, opting instead to have their candidate address the conference via video message.

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"If you want a president who will make things better in the African American community, you are looking at him," Romney told the crowd, pausing for added emphasis. As scattered boos echoed throughout the audience, Romney offered an unscripted -- and uncharacteristic -- display of bravado. "You take a look," he nodded.

It wasn't the first time his speech attracted the crowd's ire. Minutes earlier, while detailing his "five key steps" to restoring the economy, Romney promised to repeal the president's health care law -- casually referring to it as "Obamacare." The audience didn't like that, and they let Romney hear their displeasure, raining down boos on the Republican nominee. Romney appeared taken aback by the crowd's response, and for a few fleeting moments, it looked as if the Romney campaign's fear of an embarrassing episode would be realized.

Then something happened. Romney, often mocked for his robotic style and lack of nimbleness, stepped away from his script and succinctly explained his opposition to the Affordable Care Act: Business owners say it makes them less likely to hire new employees, he said. Romney then sought to reassure the skeptical crowd of his commitment to health care policies that protect society's most vulnerable and provide effective care to those who need it.

The incident served as a microcosm of the broader occasion, one that revealed a different side of Romney. He easily could have played it safe in Houston, sticking to civil-rights issues and issuing abstract rebukes of Obama's economic and education policies. But he didn't. Instead, he went all-out, forcefully denouncing Obama's job performance and criticizing a law he knew had support among the Obama-friendly audience. Similarly, he could have ignored the boos following his "Obamacare" comment and continued with his carefully-scripted speech. But he didn't. Instead, he stopped and addressed the adversity head-on, explaining his position and with skill and authority.

Those who follow Romney's campaign and report regularly on his events often describe him as rote and guarded, someone whose speeches can seem sleepy, uninspired and vague. Those people saw a different candidate on the stage in Houston. Like a baseball team that grows complacent playing a stretch of home games, Romney displayed renewed focus and determination in front of the hostile road crowd. He spoke with aggravated empathy about the African-American unemployment rate reaching 14 percent. He hammered the issue of job creation, arguing that Obama's economic policies have disproportionately harmed minorities. And he expertly used education reform as a wedge between the president and his supporters in the audience, earning sustained applause when arguing that "candidates cannot have it both ways" -- i.e., Obama must choose between advancing education reforms and protecting teachers' unions.

It was a fine performance, one that delivered a distinct message to observers of all political stripes. Democrats saw a candidate who embraced adversity and wasn't afraid to mix it up. Republicans saw a candidate who was quick on his feet and took a punch without falling down. And independents saw a candidate who isn't the "extremist" or "panderer" his opponents portray him to be. To the contrary, his message to the liberal organization was consistent with his everyday conservative stump speech, and the optics of Romney confidently courting an opposition audience should play well with skeptical suburbanites eager for someone willing to set aside differences and talk about solutions.

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The Corner

[Wolf Blitzer Blasts President Obama for Being NAACP 'No-Show': 'Romney Did the Right Thing. . . The President Did Not.'](#)

by Kathryn Jean Lopez

Earlier today on *The Situation Room* on CNN, Wolf Blitzer told viewers:

Here is something I'd like to say to President Obama: You should have attended the NAACP convention in Houston today. Mitt Romney did. It was the right thing to do. The Republican knows the nation's oldest civil-rights group isn't exactly friendly turf but went anyway. On the whole, got a polite reception, but was booed when he said this: [from videotape] "I'm going to eliminate every nonessential expensive program I can find, that includes Obamacare." Despite the boos, it was a smart political move for Mitt Romney to address the NAACP. He knows he is not going to win over a lot of black voters, but attending these kinds of events is important in reassuring a lot of the suburban white voters that he is a moderate, decent politician, someone that wants to work with all Americans. I'm surprised the president was a no-show. He is sending Vice President Joe Biden, will send a video. I checked the president's schedule for today. He is here in Washington, D.C., over at the White House. He's got meetings. I assume those meetings are very important. but he could have found time to pay his respects to the NAACP. The president should not take the African-American vote for granted. Let's not be under any illusions. He received 95% of the black vote four years ago. He'll do almost as well this time around for sure. But his problem is voter turnout. The president needs excitement, he needs enthusiasm in the African-American community, especially in the battleground states he carried in 2008. Fewer African-Americans may go to the polls this time. They might not vote for Romney, but might not show up, especially now that black unemployment has risen to 14.4%. It's a lot higher than the 8.2% for all Americans. So in my opinion, the president missed an opportunity today. My bottom line is this: Romney did the right thing on this day, the president did not. Now some folks will disagree with me, Kate. That's just me offering my sense of what's going on.

I think Blitzer noticed something that's been missed by a lot of people who are just reporting that Romney was booed for mentioning he'd repeal Obamacare: Mitt Romney gave a quality speech, with confidence, to a group that's not exactly debating its endorsement. And, once he was booed, he hit some kind of stride. I harbor no delusions about Romney running away with the black vote, but maybe, just maybe, he made some progress there today when he said:

I believe that if you understood who I truly am in my heart, and if it were possible to fully communicate what I believe is in the real, enduring best interest of African-American families, you would vote for me for president. I want you to know that if I did not believe that my policies and my leadership would help families of color — and families of any color — more than the policies and leadership of President Obama, I would not be running for president.

Or when he said:

If equal opportunity in America were an accomplished fact, black families could send their sons and daughters to public schools that truly offer the hope of a better life. Instead, for generations, the African-American community has been waiting and waiting for that promise to be kept.

Today, black children are 17 percent of students nationwide – but they are 42 percent of the students in our worst-performing schools.

Our society sends them into mediocre schools and expects them to perform with excellence, and that is not fair. Frederick Douglass observed that, “It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.” Yet, instead of preparing these children for life, too many schools set them up for failure. Everyone in this room knows that we owe them better than that.

The path of inequality often leads to lost opportunity. College, graduate school, and first jobs should be milestones marking the passage from childhood to adulthood. But for too many disadvantaged young people, these goals seem unattainable – and their lives take a tragic turn.

Many live in neighborhoods filled with violence and fear, and empty of opportunity. Their impatience for real change is understandable. They are entitled to feel that life in America should be better than this. They are told even now to wait for improvements in our economy and in our schools, but it seems to me that these Americans have waited long enough.

The point is that when decades of the same promises keep producing the same failures, then it's reasonable to rethink our approach – and consider a new plan.

As Blitzer noticed, it was respectful. He even got a standing ovation — a Republican, at the NAACP convention — besides the applause he received for his commitment to defend traditional marriage. And he was just a little Romney unleashed. If he keeps this up, he might just be our next president.

Video [here](#).

Roger L. Simon **[The Democratic Party as the Party of Race](#)**

As someone who was a sixties civil rights worker, wrote movies [for Richard Pryor](#) (successfully) and [Whoopi Goldberg](#) (unsuccessfully), and has had the pleasure of working with many talented African Americans at PJ Media for nearly seven years now, I think I have earned the right to write what should be painfully obvious to everyone — most of the racism in America today is from blacks (aided and abetted by white liberals) toward whites.

In fact, it's getting to be outrageously so. The rude treatment of Mitt Romney at the NAACP convention is yet another data point in what has become an all-too-predictable scenario.

Much of the reason for this stems from the extreme dependency of the Democratic Party on race politics. With union membership dwindling, the party would literally disintegrate without the overwhelming support of African Americans and Hispanic Americans. Without at least the *perception* of racism, the Democratic Party has only marginal support. The party is forced to encourage it for its survival.

A whole network of connections, careers, and lifestyles has evolved from that, many of them largely counter-productive. Indeed, the argument can be made that the Democratic Party has destroyed the lives of minorities in order to save itself. Their programs, from the Great Society onwards, have done nothing substantial to improve minority lives, only to encourage dependency. The proof of this failure we see before us today in the dreadful statistics on black and Hispanic unemployment, far worse than the already horrendous national numbers. The more minorities are “helped,” the worse their lives become, the less equal we are.

The Democratic Party is then the true racist party, trapped in nostalgia for a time when genuine racism — Jim Crow, etc. — stalked the land. They have to assume significant white racism still exists because *not* to do so threatens the fabric of their being. A Tea Partier [has to be a racist](#) so you can dismiss his ideas without having to confront them or even think about them. Mitt Romney is just another rich white man so you don't have to deal with [what he is saying](#), you don't have to evaluate whether he has a solution to a mutual problem.

It's all racist as I understood the word in the sixties — making assumptions about other people so you don't have to consider their humanity — only it's now in reverse. This isn't to say that whites undergo severe oppression. They don't. But the racial climate of our society is increasingly polarized and the survival of the Democratic Party, as presently constituted, is the cause. Everyone's life suffers as a consequence, with the exception perhaps of those who make a living off race-baiting. That the minorities being exploited suffer most of all is almost a cliché. Unfortunately, it also happens to be true.

Correcting this depressing conundrum will not be easy. It is a long time in the making and is based on numerous mythologies and misconceptions, not to mention deeply entrenched habit. It is also based on vengeance, a vengeance fanned by the liberal media for the preservation of their own power and to validate that same nostalgic self-righteousness. But vengeance is an especially powerful *creator* of racism (remember Gandhi: an eye for an eye and the world will die). Because whites behaved in an atrociously racist manner toward blacks in the past cannot be allowed as any sort of justification for the reverse. That is a prescription for perpetuated mutual destruction.

And yet that remains the spoken/unspoken predicate of election 2012. Just as America rejoiced in electing Barack Obama in 2008 as the first (part) African American president, we are being asked to reelect him for similar reasons. But it would also be racist, perhaps more so, actually to reelect him for similar reasons. The color of Barack Obama's skin is and should be irrelevant. And yet, of course, it has not been and continues to be the trump card of the Democratic Party. If Barack Obama were white, he would be one of the *least* likely candidates for reelection in American history. Instead, despite demonstrated incompetence, he remains in contention, perhaps even the favorite. Under current conditions, however, the reelection of Barack Obama can be seen only as a triumph of racism.

Powerline

The SUV Did It!

by John Hinderaker

Scott wrote [here](#) about the appalling case of a 16-year-old St. Paul girl, Clarisse Grime, who was sitting in the grass at her high school, nowhere near the street, when she was struck and killed by a vehicle that careened out of control and bounced off a fire hydrant. The vehicle was driven by an illegal immigrant who has been in Minnesota for ten years without ever having a driver's license. He was known to local authorities, having been convicted of drunk driving in 2001 and driving without a license just a few months ago. But the immigration laws are not enforced in St. Paul.

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Washington Times

Burst the higher-education bubble

Subjecting academia to market forces would raise diploma value

by George Leef

Almost everyone knows the country went through the wringer after the housing bubble burst. Now a new bubble looms before us - the higher-education bubble.

Just as easy money, lowered lending standards and political hype came together to vastly overinflate the housing sector, a combination of easy money (federal grants and loans available for nearly every student), lowered academic standards (colleges that readily accept students with pathetically weak basic skills) and political hype (the notion that getting a degree will guarantee a huge boost in earnings) have produced a vastly overinflated higher-education system.

The higher-education bubble has been inflating for decades, and it's ready to burst, or at least deflate. That's because many Americans are realizing that the huge cost of college is often a waste. Whereas college degrees used to be regarded as sure-fire investments, the labor market has become glutted with people who have been to college but can't find "good" jobs.

Did you know that 22 percent of customer-sales representatives and 16 percent of bartenders have bachelor's degrees?

Furthermore, at many schools, academic standards have fallen to the point where students can coast through without learning anything worthwhile. As University of Tennessee law professor Glenn Harlan Reynolds recently wrote, "The higher education bubble isn't bursting because of a shortage of money. It is bursting because of a shortage of value."

As a result, many students and parents are looking for less expensive, more effective alternatives to the traditional degree. They're finding plenty of new options with online courses and independent certification of competencies, such as ACT's National Career Readiness Certificates.

This educational revolution will transform higher education for the better as people shop for good value for their education dollars rather than robotically enrolling in a college, taking its courses and paying its bills.

During the bubble, colleges could get away with offering lots of courses that met a standard that former Indiana University English professor Murray Sperber characterizes as "the faculty/student nonaggression pact." That is, the professor didn't demand much of the students and gave high grades; in return, the students didn't expect much from the professor, who wanted time for academic research projects.

The students were happy: Who complains about courses with high grades but little work? The professors were happy, and the administrators were happy because students getting good grades typically don't gripe or, more important, drop out.

But courses in which students just go through the motions without learning anything are a waste of time and money.

The good news is that in the new higher-education world, courses like that will be jettisoned. Like dieters giving up doughnuts in favor of more nutritious, low-calorie foods, college consumers will look for affordable courses that lead to demonstrable educational gains.

The housecleaning in higher education also will sweep out lots of courses that exist only because professors like to teach them. Such courses typically focus on narrow, trendy or highly political subjects that interest the professor. For example, students at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, can take "The Psychology of Clothes: Motivations for Dressing Up and Dressing Down." In the new era of value consciousness, such boutique courses will be culled out.

Not only will boutique courses go, but professors will be required to do more of something many dislike and avoid as much as possible: Work with students.

For decades, the trend has been toward less teaching and more research. Much of that research is of minimal intellectual value, and much of the teaching is perfunctory. We will see the pendulum swing back, with professors being rewarded more on how well they teach than how much they publish.

Another benefit of higher ed's bursting bubble will be that many young people, freed from the unnecessary pressure to get a four-year degree, will be able to begin productive careers sooner, with little or no college debt hanging over their heads.

Americans are used to hearing that our higher-education system is "the envy of the world." That's nonsense. We have some superb programs, but they're surrounded by an ocean of expensive mediocrity.

Fortunately, expensive mediocrity never lasts long when people are able to shop around for better value. That's happening in higher education, much for the better.

George Leef is director of research at the John W. Pope Center for Higher Education Policy (popecenter.org) in Raleigh, N.C.

Boston Herald

Textbook case of inefficiency

Can't buy a quality education

by Michael Graham

Dateline America, 2012: College Students Complain "We're Taken For Granite," Face A "Doggy-Dog World."

Those expressions were actually used in papers submitted to freshman comp professor James Courter. Other students wrote they found the college experience "homedrum" or had trouble getting into "the proper frame of mime."

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Coincidentally (or something more?) that same issue of the WSJ also featured a piece entitled "America Has Too Many Teachers." In it, Andrew Coulson of the Cato Institute points out that while the number of public school students has grown a mere 8.5 percent since 1970, "the public school work force has roughly doubled — to 6.4 million from 3.3 million — and two-thirds of those new hires are teachers or teachers' aides."

That helps explain part of the reason why since 1980 spending on public school education in the U.S. has doubled in inflation-adjusted dollars.

Twice as many teachers. Twice as much money. But does anybody believe that a high school graduate today is (as a college student might actually say) "twice as much smart?"

We know they're not.

We test students all the time, tests like the National Assessment Of Educational Progress (NAEP). And since 1970, these results in math and reading have essentially been flat.

For example, the average 17-year-old's NAEP score in reading back in 1971 was 285. In 2008 it was 286.

That's what we got for doubling our education spending.

When you compare the U.S. to countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the results are even worse. Education reform activist Bill Costello points out that our annual "per-pupil spending in 2006 was 41 percent higher than the OECD average of \$7,283, and yet American students still placed in the bottom quarter in math and in the bottom third in science among OECD countries."

Or as they say down at offices of the teachers union, "money well spent!"

And that's the problem. Despite the deluge of tax dollars, despite having a ridiculously high number of teachers vs. students, and despite the dismal results, the teachers unions and their allies always demand more.

And, unfortunately they often get it because the public has such a skewed view of what's really happening in our schools.

Ask the average American and they'll tell you our teachers are woefully underpaid, our schools are crumbling death traps and our nation is neglecting its children.

When I tell people that, just as an example, the average Boston teacher's salary is around \$82,000, they refuse to believe me.

When I tell them that the teacher-student ratio is lower than it's ever been in the modern era, they can't accept it.

The average person believes the "poor me" propaganda in part because the unions spend so much promoting it. Since 2005, the MTA has spent \$4 million on lobbying and political activism in Massachusetts alone. People fall for it, politicians react and the cost of mediocre education continues to rise.

You want to know who *does* know the truth? The students.

USA Today reports that "millions of kids simply don't find school very challenging," based on analysis of federal data. More than half of eighth-graders say their history homework is too easy and 40 percent of seniors say they almost never write about what they read in class.

Students who care know how crummy many of our schools are. They're just trying to find someone else who cares, too.

Until then, just expect more "poultry excuses" (as one college freshman wrote) for our school systems' poor performance.

Washington Post - Editorial

Resistance to antibiotics is becoming a crisis

ONE OF THE great medical advances of the last century, the invention of antibiotics, is at risk of being lost. Increasingly, microbes are becoming untreatable. [Margaret Chan](#), director general of the World Health Organization, warned in March of a dystopian future without these drugs. “A post-antibiotic era means, in effect, an end to modern medicine as we know it,” she said. “Things as common as strep throat or a child’s scratched knee could once again kill.”

Since the 1940s, antibiotics have greatly reduced the amount of human illness and death and transformed modern medicine, making possible such sophisticated interventions as hip replacements, organ transplants, cancer chemotherapy and care of premature infants. But evidence is mounting that antibiotics are losing efficacy. Through the relentless process of evolution, pathogens are evading the drugs, a problem known broadly as [antimicrobial resistance](#).

Some bacteria, such as those causing tuberculosis and gonorrhea, have become resistant to multiple antibiotics. In the past few years, researchers discovered a new enzyme known as [NDM-1](#) that can confer resistance to antibiotics on bacteria and can easily jump among different species. As the first-line antibiotics are lost, the replacement treatments are often more expensive, and more toxic.

Meanwhile, the [pipeline of new antibiotics](#) is drying up. Major pharmaceutical companies have pulled out of the market, unwilling to make the sizable investments in research and development required for [new drugs](#). Since antibiotics are usually taken for a brief period and then stopped, they aren’t as profitable as drugs for chronic disease. The number of new antibiotics approved by the Food and Drug Administration has steadily declined.

For years, antimicrobial resistance has been a secondary issue in public policy. Now Congress has taken a promising step with provisions in legislation [President Obama signed Monday](#). As an incentive to develop new antibiotics, the FDA Safety and Innovation Act gives pharmaceutical companies an extra five years of exclusivity to the data behind their product, on top of the existing five years. The intent is to keep competitors, including generics, at bay for longer. It is not clear whether this incentive alone will be sufficient to bring new antibiotics to market, but it is a recognition of the problem.

Far more ambitious action will be needed. Europe has launched a \$741 million, seven-year, [public-private collaborative research effort](#) to accelerate drug development. For new and existing drugs, it is essential that patients and doctors avoid the irresponsible overuse of antibiotics that occurred in the past. For the most serious infections, where few alternatives exist, the FDA should create streamlined regulatory pathways for approval of new antibiotics.

Alarm bells have been ringing for a long time about the march of the microbes. It is time to pay attention.

DailyDot

Strange but true: 23 real-life names tweeted by Name Curator

by Kris Holt

Have you ever introduced yourself to someone, only to find out the person's name is Peer Fish? That seems like something conjured up by *The Simpsons* writers, but it's one of many odd names confirmed and chronicled by a terrific Twitter account.

[Name Curator](#) does little more than tweet real unusual names, along with proof that those monikers were actually bestowed by parents upon their offspring.

Run by Adelaide, Australia resident [Ben Osborne](#), the account has tweeted hundreds of names since last September. Here's a look at 23 of the best ones to date.

1) [Angus Pattie](#)

New Zealander Pattie doesn't only have the misfortune of sharing his name with a high-quality burger. The seven-year-old also made the news after [suffering sunburn](#).

2) [Dick Passwater](#)

An unfortunate name to the utmost degree didn't stop Passwater from [achieving some success](#) as a NASCAR driver in the '50s.

3) [Fabulous Flournoy](#)

The 38-year-old professional basketball player got his name from the [optimistic outlook on life](#) his mother had during rough times. Sidenote: His mother Lucy has quite possibly the world's greatest nickname, Luce with the Juice.

4) [Howdy Ledbetter](#)

One can only imagine the awkwardness in trying to extract Ledbetter's forename from him when first meeting [the car upholsterer](#). "Hi, what's your name?" "Howdy." And so on.

5) [Azalia Snail](#)

As if [the musician's name wasn't terrific enough](#), Snail takes her name in good humor in her Twitter handle, [@azaliaescargot](#).

6) [Tiny Kox](#)

There's really not much to be said about this [Dutch lawmaker's name](#). Poor fella.

7) [Flex Plexico](#)

Saying this one out loud is the one of the most fun things you'll do all day. Plexico is a [Navy Personnel Command public affairs officer](#), though he sounds like he should be a WWE wrestler.

8) [Hans Ohff](#)

You'll have hell to pay if you place your mitts on one of [Ohff's Collins-class submarines](#).

9) [Autumn Fogg](#)

Let's hope Fogg, who [Sports Illustrated helpfully points out](#) is "not a weather forecast," doesn't lose her way in the mist during a middle-distance race.

10) [Larry L. Lavender](#)

We have to wonder if Lavender, now an auctioneer, favored a certain type of scent when he [owned an Ohio beauty salon](#).

11) [Dom Perignon Champagne](#)

Champagne was [murdered in 2006](#) at the age of 18.

12) [Perfect Engelberger](#)

Champagne's mother has [an interesting name herself](#).

13) [Destinee Hooker](#)

Hooker is a pro U.S. volleyball player who [carries a laptop around to keep in touch with fans](#).

14) [Preserved Fish](#)

Fish was a [shipping merchant in the 19th century](#) who had just about the best name possible for a whale boat captain.

15) [Yourhighness Morgan](#)

Morgan had hoped for a royal career as a college football player. However, his athletic career was cut short after suffering a number of concussions, [as noted in this article](#) written by the also wonderfully named Chuck King.

16) [Zeddie Little](#)

The star of the [Ridiculously Photogenic Guy meme](#) made Name Curator's tweets for his [ridiculously memorable forename](#) (and face).

17) [Siphiwe Tshabalala](#)

A South African soccer player and scorer of [the terrific opening goal](#) at the 2010 FIFA World Cup, Tshabalala [plies his trade with Kaizer Chiefs in his homeland](#).

18) [Buford Pusser](#)

A man whose name drips with toughness [inspired several books, songs, and movies](#), including one [starring the Rock](#).

19) [Kirksey Nix](#)

The purported former leader of the so-called Dixie Mafia and allegedly involved in an assassination attempt on Tennessee Sheriff Buford Pusser, Nix is [serving life in jail](#) for murder.

20) [Cookie Crackenbush](#)

It's not too difficult to "cracken" some jokes about this [Salvation Army branch manager's name](#).

21) [Stormy Wing](#)

Wing is a [rodeo rider](#) who'll undoubtedly hope for calm conditions during rides.

22) [Kermit Bloomgarden](#)

Having [lost his right leg a few years before passing away](#), Bloomgarden showed it ain't easy being a Broadway producer.

23) [Sir Cosmo Duff Gordon](#)

Not only was Gordon [a Titanic survivor](#), he competed in the 1906 Olympic Games, [winning a silver medal in a team fencing event](#).



