

August 28, 2012

David Harsanyi sees momentum shift to the GOP.

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As Romney was being pounded daily by the Obama campaign and liberal groups with a series of brutal ads scrutinizing (and often misrepresenting) his private sector record at Bain Capital, Republicans began to grumble about the GOP campaign. A less than spectacular trip to Europe and Israel confirmed their worst fears. Romney wasn't on point. Romney wasn't connecting. Romney was terrible.

And Romney, most definitely, wasn't tough enough. Popular conservative radio talk show host Laura Ingraham accused him of bringing a "down pillow to a gun fight." Democratic National Committee Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz played on the Romney-is-soft theme, telling the presumptive GOP's campaign to "put their big boy and big girl pants on."

Since that time a sea change of opinion has taken hold on the right, as a once-skeptical base has found a reason to embrace Romney (his gutsy call on picking a reform-minded conservative) and the party realists are beginning to think that the former Massachusetts governor's tactical plan might even work.

It's still early, of course, and the political establishment is always willing to jump ship, but there seems to be genuine and growing belief that momentum is on the GOP's side. What is making everyone so confident? Why do they think they can win? Romney surrogates believe aggressiveness, the president's record and a bold fiscal conservative argument have turned Romney's fortunes. ...

John Podhoretz says Romney has a distinct advantage with his convention speech.

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So the public knows what Obama has to offer. Those who love him will love him; those who think he's OK will think he's OK; everybody else who doesn't like him to varying degrees are unlikely to alter their views. Which means unless he delivers a masterpiece on September 6, his speech (and the convention that preceded it) are not likely to make much of a difference for him.

For Romney, therefore, the stakes are high and the rewards potentially higher. For Obama, it may just be another day being a rather gabby president.

Podhoretz continues his campaign analysis in the NY Post.

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First, one has to consider the effect on Romney of the Obama campaign's unprecedented barrage against him. Chicago spent an astounding \$120 million over the summer, much of it on negative ads targeting Romney personally, and almost all of it in 12 battleground states. To give you a sense of how much spending that is, the McCain campaign in 2008 spent a mere \$75 million in the general election against Obama in all 50 states.

Though Romney has certainly been bloodied a bit — we all know how he won't release a lot of his tax returns — the polling from those states and nationally suggests he's suffered mere flesh wounds. We won't really know if the Obama campaign managed to cut deeply enough to cause a lingering infection until the general election campaign is in full swing.

But if the infection doesn't materialize, that will mean the Obama campaign spent tens and tens of millions for nothing. On June 23, Obama was up in the RCP average by 2.4 points. Yesterday, two months later, 1 point. All that spending, and Romney's position actually improved. ...

Jennifer Rubin thinks the Dems were real lucky the storm prevented Biden from making a fool of himself in Tampa.

I suppose the Obama team thought that it was clever to send Vice President Biden to Tampa during the Republican National Convention. It's the equivalent of trash talking. ("You think you own Tampa? We own Tampa!") On Friday it was announced that Biden would not go, out of concern that emergency personnel would be stretched too thin. The Obama team should count its lucky stars that it had reason to cancel.

President Obama did not show good judgment in selecting Biden as the man to step into the presidency at a moment's notice. Biden is not only long-winded but misguided on virtually every point of foreign policy. His "[y'all back in chains](#)" remark is symptomatic of his willingness to say or do anything. Even [Rep. Charlie Rangel](#) (D-N.Y.) has called him out for his race baiting. ("Did he think it was cute .□.□. Yes, he did. Was it something stupid to say? You bet your life it was

stupid.”) He is perhaps the last person you’d want in [a crisis](#). It points not only to poor judgment but also Obama’s vanity (Don’t admit an error.).

Obama could have dumped Biden this year; lots of presidents including Democratic idol FDR made a change. But the idea that Obama might need someone’s help (specifically, Hillary Clinton’s) was likely too much to stomach. So he’s stuck with a man who is thought by many to be foolish and slightly out of it.

Meanwhile along comes smart, disciplined, vibrant Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.). According to the [latest CNN poll](#), voters — despite his newness on the national scene (for most people) and his status as a mere congressman — find Ryan to be more likable than Biden. Ryan’s favorables are +6, while Biden is at -1. A majority of voters think that the choice of Ryan was excellent or good, and by a substantial margin, they find him to be qualified to serve as president (52 to 43 percent). By a huge 57 to 39 percent, voters think that picking Ryan reflects favorably on Romney’s ability to make important decisions.

So why stick Biden in the same city to highlight that unfavorable comparison? This was arrogance getting the better of the Obama camp. It is fortunate it had reason to cancel.

Imagine what could have occurred. Since his opponent is in town, Ryan might have strolled out from the convention to a Biden event one day. Shake his hand and even suggest a little impromptu debate. Yikes!

Well, there will be time for a full debate in October. It should be an illuminating face-off: fresh ideas vs. hackneyed politics, mathematical precision vs. [absurd](#) invention (“The vice president should know better than to spout off half-baked facts in service of a dubious argument.”) and conservative reformer vs. defender of the status quo.

In the meantime, the Romney-Ryan campaign should do all they can to highlight the differences between the two men and what they say about the men at the top of the tickets.

[Blogger Joel Runyon](#) has an encounter with an old man at a coffee shop. The old man turned back at his coffee, took a sip, and then looked back at me.

“In fact, I’ve done lots of things that haven’t been done before”, he said half-smiling.

Not sure if he was simply toying with me or not, my curiosity got the better of me.

Oh really? Like what types of things?, All the while, half-thinking he was going to make up something fairly non-impressive.

I invented the first computer.

Um, Excuse me?

I created the world's first internally programmable computer. It used to take up a space about as big as this whole room and my wife and I used to walk into it to program it.

What's your name?". I asked, thinking that this guy is either another crazy homeless person in Portland or legitimately who he said he was.

"Russell Kirsch"

Sure enough, after .29 seconds, I found out he wasn't lying to my face. Russell Kirsch indeed invented the world's first internally programmable computer and as well as a bunch of other things and definitely lives in Portland. As he talked, I began googling him, he read my mind and volunteered:

Here, I'll show you

He stood up and directed me to a variety of websites and showed me through the archives of what he'd created while every once in a while dropping some minor detail like:

I also created the first digital image. It was a photo of my son.

At this point, I learned better than to call Russell's bluff, but sure enough, a few more google searches showed that he did just that.

Runyon has a follow on to the above post.

After debating a few days whether or not to even share last weeks post, I hit publish. Over the first few days, it got some traffic along with some residual views from [views from my six pack transformation](#). But Sunday, the piece really took off. It hit [the top of Hacker News for 6+ hours](#), and got [featured on BoingBoing \(twice!\)](#). In short, over the last few days, the story has received over ~350,000 visits in the past few days and been shared 40,000 times on facebook and 8,000+ times on twitter.

After melting some servers, Russell's words still reverberated.

- *Nothing is withheld from us which we have conceived to do.*
- *Do things that have never been done.*

All this started from talking to some old man I didn't know in a coffee shop. It was an incredible conversation and even more incredible experience. Here's 7 things I've learned from my encounter with Russell Kirsch:

Make Stuff

This is really simple.

Make stuff.

*Go create something. The only limit on you is what you can imagine. So imagine some impossible things. **Then stop waiting around and go create them.***

You Are Not That Important – Be Humble

I could have missed out on an incredible encounter if I would have treated Russell like anybody else you see at a coffee shop.

*I could have thought I was too important for a tangential conversation with a stranger about Macs and PCs **but instead I chose to listen.***

On the flip side, a few people commented that Russell needed to learn humility – saying he sounded arrogant. If anything came across like that, it's my fault in the story telling. If anything, Russell was one of the most humble people I've ever met. ...

Human Events **Momentum shift** by David Harsanyi



In the weeks leading up to Mitt Romney's surprising pick of Paul Ryan as his running mate, dissatisfaction and pessimism within Republican and conservative circles was reaching epidemic levels.

As Romney was being pounded daily by the Obama campaign and liberal groups with a series of brutal ads scrutinizing (and often misrepresenting) his private sector record at Bain Capital, Republicans began to grumble about the GOP campaign. A less than spectacular trip to Europe and Israel confirmed their worst fears. Romney wasn't on point. Romney wasn't connecting. Romney was terrible.

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It's still early, of course, and the political establishment is always willing to jump ship, but there seems to be genuine and growing belief that momentum is on the GOP's side. What is making everyone so confident? Why do they think they can win? Romney surrogates believe aggressiveness, the president's record and a bold fiscal conservative argument have turned Romney's fortunes.

In the money

Money can't buy votes—as liberals often imply—but it has given Romney the flexibility to compete anywhere he wants and as quickly as he needs. It has allowed the nominee to respond to attacks instantaneously and at the same time to stay on the offense.

And Romney, needless to say, has a lot of money, and that advantage is growing. Obama, who dominated the money game in 2008, outspending McCain 3-1 overall and as much as 10-1 in some swing states, continues to fall behind Romney—who has approximately 50 percent more in the bank than the president.

According to recently released FEC filings, Romney has \$185.9 million cash on hand at the end of July, while Obama has \$123.7 million. Obama has raised \$49.2 million in July but spent \$59 million, which, spokespeople for Romney gleefully point out, makes complete sense.

With Ryan on board, fundraising has gone into overdrive. And as one campaign official points out to Human Events, the excitement hasn't only helped with cash flow and crowds, but also in areas that can't be easily measured, like finding sufficient manpower for phone banks.

The Romney campaign also points out that early in the race, the Obama team—flush with cash because they didn't have a primary fight—was outspending Romney 2-1 on television in critical states with negative ads. Yet, the polls hadn't moved much. In the stretch run, the GOP believes

it's Obama who's going to have to make some tough decisions about where to spend his dollars.

President Obama

In the end, this election will be largely a referendum on Obama. And no one has done more for the Romney campaign than the president.

One campaign staffer tells Human Events that the president had vastly overestimated the effectiveness of relentless attacks on Romney's Bain Capital record—and that in some sense, probably hurt the president as much as his opponent. (Though it should be noted that Romney has a team charged with deflecting these Bain attacks.) Overkill, they argue, made Obama seem petty and reinforced the idea that he was reflexively anti-capitalist.

But the staffer also points to Sen. Harry Reid's (D-Nev.) baseless accusation that the GOP nominee hadn't paid taxes in 10 years, coupled with the release of a super-PAC ad holding Romney culpable for the death of a steel worker's wife, as a turning point in the race. It was this moment that establishment media outlets were forced to acknowledge the hysterical tactics being deployed by Democrats. The GOP has pounced, painting Obama's as a politician who can sling mud with the best of them.

Is it working? Well, in a rare press conference last week, President Obama had to defend himself from questions about his campaign's negativity. This marks a complete turnaround from 2008, when Obama had free range to invent himself as an optimistic outsider, a man who could rise above the pettiness and ugliness of Washington politics.

Clearly, these expectations of an Obama presidency have not been met. Republicans plan to play on this sentiment repeatedly down the stretch and already have begun producing ads aimed at fence sitters and independents, in which former Obama supporters share their tales of disappointment and assure likeminded undecideds that it's all going to be OK. Well, if they do the right thing.

While some of the damage has been self-inflicted, the Romney campaign also feels that they have been successful in quickly capitalizing on Obama "gaffes." The "you didn't build that!" comment perfectly distills the perception Romney wants to create about the president's position on entrepreneurship. Nothing is more devastating than using Obama's own words to do it.

Ryan and the economy

A recent Gallup poll shows that while Americans approve of Obama's handling of terrorism, education and foreign affairs, they give him terrible marks on three major economic issues: the deficit, creating jobs and the economy in general.

So it's not surprising that an Associated Press-GfK poll finds that Romney holds 48 percent favorable to handle the recovery (among independents, 46 percent to 27 favor the GOP candidate.) Overall, 47 percent say Romney would do better boosting job growth compared to 43 for the president. What is surprising is that Romney is doing it with the kind of overt conservative plank that conventional wisdom says should hurt him.

Many Republicans have remarked that the Paul Ryan pick has not only focused the race on issues, it has sharpened the focus of their own candidate and may help him harness the energy and idealism that propelled the GOP congressional sweep in 2010.

Though rhetoric and deed rarely match up in governance, Romney, as CNBC's Larry Kudlow has pointed out, "is the most fiscally conservative Republican standard-bearer since Ronald Reagan."

Before you scoff at this contention, Romney's surrogates will tell you to read through his speeches and positions. When was the last time a major Republican candidate picked a fight on Medicare? Romney, sources tell Human Events, also plans to make Social Security a campaign issue. His education plan embraces choice. His economic plan would lower the government-spending share of GDP to 20 percent from 24 percent by 2016, which, Kudlow argues, is probably the largest proposed spending cut ever.

While most candidates temper their conservatism as they enter the general election, Romney has gone in the other direction. And insiders believe it's what voters want to hear. Nothing exhibits this approach more than the pick of Paul Ryan.

Is the tide turning?

Polls seem to be bearing out some of the optimism the Romney camp is feeling.

Last week, University of Colorado Professors Ken Bickers and Michael Berry released their mathematical model of the Electoral College that has correctly predicted every presidential race since Ronald Reagan, showing Romney winning 320 Electoral Votes to President Obama's 218. While that seems mighty generous, last week did bring a slew of polls showing Romney making up ground.

Though Democrats, and helpful pundits, have encouraged the perception of Obama's inevitability all year, nearly every major national polling firm has had the race within the margin of error from the start. Polls now show Romney not only competitive in Virginia, Florida and Ohio, but also making gains in states that conventional wisdom says were out of his reach: Wisconsin, Michigan Nevada and others.

Conventional wisdom also told us that Ryan was going to be a drag on the senior vote. Yet, a new Washington Post-ABC News poll finds that Ryan has a 50 percent favorability rating with seniors— a 35 percent unfavorable. One-third of seniors have a strongly favorable view of Ryan. Last week, polls showed the race tightening in Florida.

Then again, many Republicans that spoke to Human Events argue that the voters shouldn't be obsessed with polls, but rather they should be looking at how Obama acts—defensive, flailing, trying to find his footing—to understand what's really going on. They ask: Is Obama acting like a guy who is winning?

We'll soon find out.

Contentions

[Romney Has a Natural Convention Advantage over Obama](#)

by John Podhoretz

Three days before the GOP convention begins, the race is effectively tied. The first CNN poll to feature “likely voters” has it 49-47 with Barack Obama on top; Gallup and Rasmussen, which have daily tracking polls, have it dead even. I [go into greater detail about Mitt Romney’s pretty good position here.](#)

More important, though, is the opportunity Romney has when he delivers his convention speech Thursday night with the entire country watching. It is likely that 75 percent of the people who will see him on Thursday may never have heard him say more than a soundbite or two. Romney tends to rise to occasions, like the 20 Republican debates in which he performed—never badly, and probably outright won 15 of them. But this is the occasion of occasions—the most important night of his life and potentially a turning point in the nation’s life.

This is obviously a huge opportunity for Romney; and it’s an opportunity that Barack Obama does not have.

As far as the convention speeches go, Romney has a surprising advantage over Barack Obama: The gift of novelty. What he will be doing the nation will never have seen him doing before. People will be curious to see how Romney does, interested to hear what he says—and, in a country that has spent a decade watching “American Idol,” will be full of opinions about how he performs.

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NY Post

[Romney on the rise](#)

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Though Romney has certainly been bloodied a bit — we all know how he won't release a lot of his tax returns — the polling from those states and nationally suggests he's suffered mere flesh wounds. We won't really know if the Obama campaign managed to cut deeply enough to cause a lingering infection until the general election campaign is in full swing.

But if the infection doesn't materialize, that will mean the Obama campaign spent tens and tens of millions for nothing. On June 23, Obama was up in the RCP average by 2.4 points. Yesterday, two months later, 1 point. All that spending, and Romney's position actually improved.

Nobody could argue that Romney has run a dazzling campaign. Indeed, he didn't even try. Boston spent the summer husbanding its resources and accreting a massive amount of money to spend once he is formally the candidate of the GOP.

September will begin with Romney holding a gigantic financial advantage — and he will be using it closer to the election, when (assuming it's well-conceived and useful) such spending will be far more effective than summer ads. Even more important for Romney was his vice-presidential pick. The selection of Paul Ryan has proved to be a spectacular success, and spectacular in unexpected ways.

First, and unpredictably, the pick strengthened Romney's support among seniors. It was thought Ryan's budgetary plans for Medicare would frighten seniors, but Romney spent a week hammering home that under his plan Medicare would not change for anyone over 55 — whereas Obama had already stripped \$716 billion from Medicare to pay for other aspects of ObamaCare.

In Florida, to take the most potent example, Romney's support among the elderly has boomed.

Then there's the effect of the pick on Ryan's home state of Wisconsin. There has been a surge toward Romney since the Ryan pick, and the state is now generally considered a toss-up. On June 11, Obama was up by 4.4 points in the RCP average; as of today, that's 1.4 points.

In a very close race, Wisconsin's 10 electoral votes — votes that electoral-college fanatics playing with all kinds of scenarios to get Romney to the 270 he needs to win have consistently assigned to Obama — could be decisive.

Even more telling is what Wisconsin polls suggest about Obama's standing nationwide. If things go badly for him in the fall, Wisconsin will have been the great harbinger, beginning in 2010.

Obama won the state by 14 points in 2008. In the midterm elections of 2010, Wisconsin was part of the great shellacking delivered to Obama and Democrats, as reformer Scott Walker took the governorship by 6 points.

When Walker sought to limit the power of the state's unions, they ginned up a recall effort this year that cost Democrats months of effort and tens of millions of dollars — and lost when Walker got almost exactly the same percentage of votes he had in 2010.

Of course, Obama can change the momentum of the race, which seems to be moving in Romney's favor with a brilliant performance from here on in and better economic data to buttress it.

But he hasn't shown any political brilliance in a long time, and there's not much evidence the economy is going to do him favors. (And if Democrats think one repugnant Senate candidate in Missouri is going to turn this around, they're delusional.)

For his part, Romney can halt his own momentum. He's done it before; he did it several times during the GOP primaries.

He is also poised for takeoff.

Contentions

[Biden vs. Ryan](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

I suppose the Obama team thought that it was clever to send Vice President Biden to Tampa during the Republican National Convention. It's the equivalent of trash talking. (*"You think you own Tampa? We own Tampa!"*) On Friday it was announced that Biden would not go, out of concern that emergency personnel would be stretched too thin. The Obama team should count its lucky stars that it had reason to cancel.

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Obama could have dumped Biden this year; lots of presidents including Democratic idol FDR made a change. But the idea that Obama might need someone's help (specifically, Hillary Clinton's) was likely too much to stomach. So he's stuck with a man who is thought by many to be foolish and slightly out of it.

Meanwhile along comes smart, disciplined, vibrant Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.). According to the [latest CNN poll](#), voters — despite his newness on the national scene (for most people) and his status as a mere congressman — find Ryan to be more likable than Biden. Ryan's favorables are +6, while Biden is at -1. A majority of voters think that the choice of Ryan was excellent or good, and by a substantial margin, they find him to be qualified to serve as president (52 to 43 percent). By a huge 57 to 39 percent, voters think that picking Ryan reflects favorably on Romney's ability to make important decisions.

So why stick Biden in the same city to *highlight* that unfavorable comparison? This was arrogance getting the better of the Obama camp. It is fortunate it had reason to cancel.

Imagine what could have occurred. Since his opponent is in town, Ryan might have strolled out from the convention to a Biden event one day. Shake his hand and even suggest a little impromptu debate. *Yikes!*

Well, there will be time for a full debate in October. It should be an illuminating face-off: fresh ideas vs. hackneyed politics, mathematical precision vs. [absurd](#) invention (“The vice president should know better than to spout off half-baked facts in service of a dubious argument.”) and conservative reformer vs. defender of the status quo.

In the meantime, the Romney-Ryan campaign should do all they can to highlight the differences between the the two men and what they say about the men at the top of the tickets.

Blog of Impossible Things **[An Unexpected Ass Kicking](#)**

by Joel Runyon

I sat down at yet-another coffee shop in Portland determined to get some work done, catch up on some emails [and write another blog post](#).

About 30 minutes into my working, an elderly gentleman at least 80 years old sat down next to me with a hot coffee and a pastry. I smiled at him and nodded and looked back at my computer as I continued to work.

“Do you like Apple?” As he gestured to the new Macbook Air I had picked up a few days prior.

“Yea, I’ve been using them for a while.” Wondering if I was going to get suckered into a mac vs. pc debate in a portland coffee shop with an elderly stranger.

“Do you program on them?”

“Well, I don’t really know how to code, but I write quite a bit and [spend a lot of time creating online projects](#) and helping clients run their businesses.”

“I’ve been against Macintosh company lately. They’re trying to get everyone to use iPads and when people use iPads they end up just using technology to consume things instead of making things. With a computer you can make things. You can code, you can make things and create things that have never before existed and do things that have never been done before.”

*“That’s the problem with a lot of people”, he continued, “they don’t try to do stuff that’s never been done before, so they never do anything, **but if they try to do it, they find out there’s lots of things they can do that have never been done before.**”*

I nodded my head in agreement and laughed to myself – thinking that would be something that I would say and the coincidence that out of all the people in the coffee shop I ended up talking to, it was this guy. What a way to open a conversation.

The old man turned back at his coffee, took a sip, and then looked back at me.

“In fact, I’ve done lots of things that haven’t been done before”, he said half-smiling.

Not sure if he was simply toying with me or not, my curiosity got the better of me.

Oh really? Like what types of things?, All the while, half-thinking he was going to make up something fairly non-impressive.

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At this point, I learned better than to call Russell's bluff, but sure enough, [a few more google searches showed that he did just that.](#)



*Want to mess with your mind? Without the man in the photo, the photo of this man wouldn't exist.
*mind blown**

As he started showing me through [the old history archives of what he did](#) while any hope of productivity vacated my mind as I listened to his stories and picked his brain about what he had done.

At some point in the conversation, I mentioned to him:

"You know Russell, that's really impressive."

"I guess, I've always believed that nothing is withheld from us what we have conceived to do. Most people think the opposite – that all things are withheld from them which they have conceived to do and they end up doing nothing."

"Wait", I said, pausing at his last sentence "What was that quote again?"

"Nothing is withheld from us what we have conceived to do."

That's good, who said that?

God did.

What?

God said it and there were only two people who believed it, you know who?

Nope, who?

God and me, so I went out and did it.

Well then, I thought – as he finished showing me through the archives – I'm not going to argue with the guy who invented the computer. After about 20 minutes of walking me through his contributions to technology, he sat down, finished his coffee, glanced at his half-eaten pastry now-cold, checked his watch and announced:

Well, I have to go now.

With that, we shook hands, he got up, walked to his car and drove off as I just sat there trying to figure out what exactly had just happened. As I sat there thinking: two things he said reverberated in the back of my mind:

- Nothing is withheld from us which we have conceived to do.
- Do things that have never been done.

The first meaning: if you've conceived something in your mind, decide to do it, and are willing to put in the work – nothing can stop you.

The second is fairly self-explanatory but carries the extra weight of it coming from the guy who invented the very thing that's letting me type these words out on the internet.

“Do things that have never been done before” - The guy who invented the computer

Yessir.

Time to step it up.

Blog of Impossible Things

[7 Things I Learned From My Encounter With Russell Kirsch](#)

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- Do things that have never been done.

All this started from talking to some old man I didn't know in a coffee shop. It was an incredible conversation and even more incredible experience. Here's 7 things I've learned from my encounter with Russell Kirsch:

Make Stuff

This is really simple.

Make stuff.

Go create something. The only limit on you is what you can imagine. So imagine some impossible things. **Then stop waiting around and go create them.**

You Are Not That Important – Be Humble

I could have missed out on an incredible encounter if I would have treated Russell like anybody else you see at a coffee shop.

I could have thought I was too important for a tangential conversation with a stranger about Macs and PCs **but instead I chose to listen.**

On the flip side, a few people commented that Russell needed to learn humility – saying he sounded arrogant. If anything came across like that, it's my fault in the story telling. If anything, Russell was one of the most humble people I've ever met. Just because someone talks about their accomplishments (even as something as big as the first american internally programmable computer), doesn't mean they're arrogant. He was relaying facts after I asked him to elaborate.

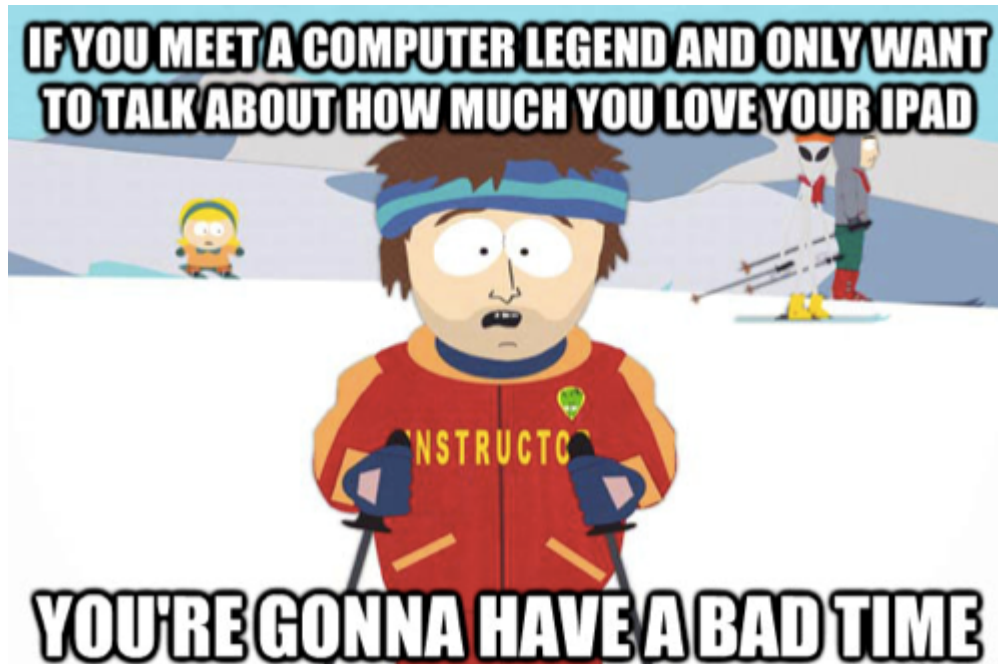
I've kept in touch with Russell since the encounter and let him know about the popularity of his posts. I asked him if there was anything he'd like to add, but he told me he preferred not to talk about his accomplishments en masse.

If one of the guys responsible for one of the biggest advances in the biggest pieces of technology in the last 50 years can be humble about their accomplishments - you can too – you never know who you might meet.

Details May Make You Right, But They'll Probably Make You Miserable

Several people got so angry about one or two minor details, they missed the point of the story. *The story was not supposed to be a wikipedia entry about the history of the computer or the creative potential of the iPad.*

Sure, there are ways you can create on an iPad. Sure, there were other advances in computer technology before Kirsch. It wasn't supposed to be a persuasive essay on the inferiority of iPads or a historical paper on the computing technology of the last 50 years. **It was a story.**



If every time you meet a person with a different viewpoint than you and all you want to do is tell them how stupid they are, you're gonna have a bad time.

If I would have interrupted Kirsch to reference wikipedia at every possible second and asked for cited references as he told me his story – not only would that have been incredibly rude way to talk to people – but I would have missed out on the opportunity to actually talk to him, hear his story and (maybe, just maybe) learn something from him!

If I would have cut him off on the iPad comment, which was little more than an icebreaker, I would have missed his entire reasoning behind it. And, even if I disagreed with him, I would still be able to have a conversation with him since he was explaining his point of view and not bullying, pushy or arrogant about it at all.

Sure details are important, but they can also make you so dogmatic that you completely miss the point. Being open to learning from other people is more important than defending your viewpoint.

Don't Complain – Fix It Yourself

Russell invented the [first square pixel while creating the first digital picture](#). As much as square pixels are used (they laid the foundation for satellite imagery, CT scans, virtual reality and

Facebook), they have a lot of limitations and end up getting pixelated and grainy up close (you'll notice this if you zoom in on any photo to any measurable degree).

He mentioned it to me during our conversation.

"I've been waiting ever since for someone to change it – and no one has."

He elaborated on this in an [interview with Wired a few years back](#):

"Squares was the logical thing to do," Kirsch says. "Of course, the logical thing was not the only possibility ... but we used squares. It was something very foolish that everyone in the world has been suffering from ever since."

Now retired and living in Portland, Oregon, Kirsch recently set out to make amends. Inspired by the mosaic builders of antiquity who constructed scenes of stunning detail with bits of tile, Kirsch has written a program that turns the chunky, clunky squares of a digital image into a smoother picture made of variably shaped pixels.

He applied the program to a more recent picture of his son, now 53 years old, which appears with Kirsch's analysis in the May/June issue of the *Journal of Research of the National Institute of Standards and Technology*.

"Finally," he says, "at my advanced age of 81, I decided that instead of just complaining about what I did, I ought to do something about it."

So, instead of waiting for someone else to fix it, he's started on it himself. He's continuing that work with variable pixels now after be inspired by mosaics and even written a program to turn square pixels into variable pixels to smooth out the photo images.

Instead of complaining, critiquing and criticizing other people's work (or even your own) and waiting for someone else to fix it – step up and fix it yourself.

Don't Stop Creating

No matter your age, you can create. Just because you're young doesn't mean you can't start, and just because you're old doesn't mean you're done. Russell started his work with his computers in his twenties and is still working on the pixel problems well into his 80s.

It's never to late to keep changing things.

Keep creating. Don't stop – Russell hasn't (and he still finds time to randomly blow young people's minds in coffee shops throughout Portland). Just because you're young doesn't mean you can't start and just because you're old, doesn't mean you're done.

You're only done when you decide you are.

Live A Good Story

A couple people told me I made up the story. I didn't.

A couple people lamented that Russell was bragging. He wasn't.

I've said from the beginning – [do something worth writing about...then WRITE ABOUT IT.](#) People love good stories and you're not bragging if you're simply relaying facts of what happened.

If other people get offended by your stories, then maybe they need to step up their story. If you're bored with life, try living a better story yourself, rather than trying to have other people live worse ones.

LifeTip: If someone's accomplishments make you feel small, there's two things you can do. You can get mad and angry about it and let it make you feel really insecure OR you can use it as a challenge and inspiration to do something yourself and step your own game up and start telling a better story yourself. I recommend the second option (after all, that's why I started everything I'm doing).

Live a good story. Then don't be afraid to tell people about it.

Most Of All

Most of all. Stop reading. Start doing. There's a lot of things that haven't been done yet that need you to go do them. Go.

Thanks Russell. Time to step it up indeed.



I THOUGHT
YOU SAID YOUR
ECONOMY WAS
THE **BUSH**
ECONOMY.



EXACTLY. **MY**
ECONOMY IS THE
BUSH ECONOMY.
BUT IF YOU
RE-ELECT ME,
IT WILL BE THE
CLINTON ECONOMY

WHO'S ON FIRST.

IT LOOKS LIKE THIS
REPUBLICAN
CONVENTION
IS ALL ABOUT THE
WEATHER!



IT'S **WHETHER**
VOTERS DECIDE
MITT ROMNEY
IS THE ELITIST,
FELONIOUS,
TAX-DODGING
RACIST, MURDERING
ONE-PERCENTER
OBAMA **CLAIMS**
HE IS...



OR
NOT!



BLOWHARDS EXPECTED IN TAMPA



ISSAC



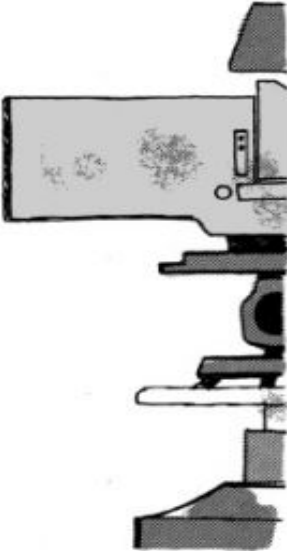
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NEW ORLEANS