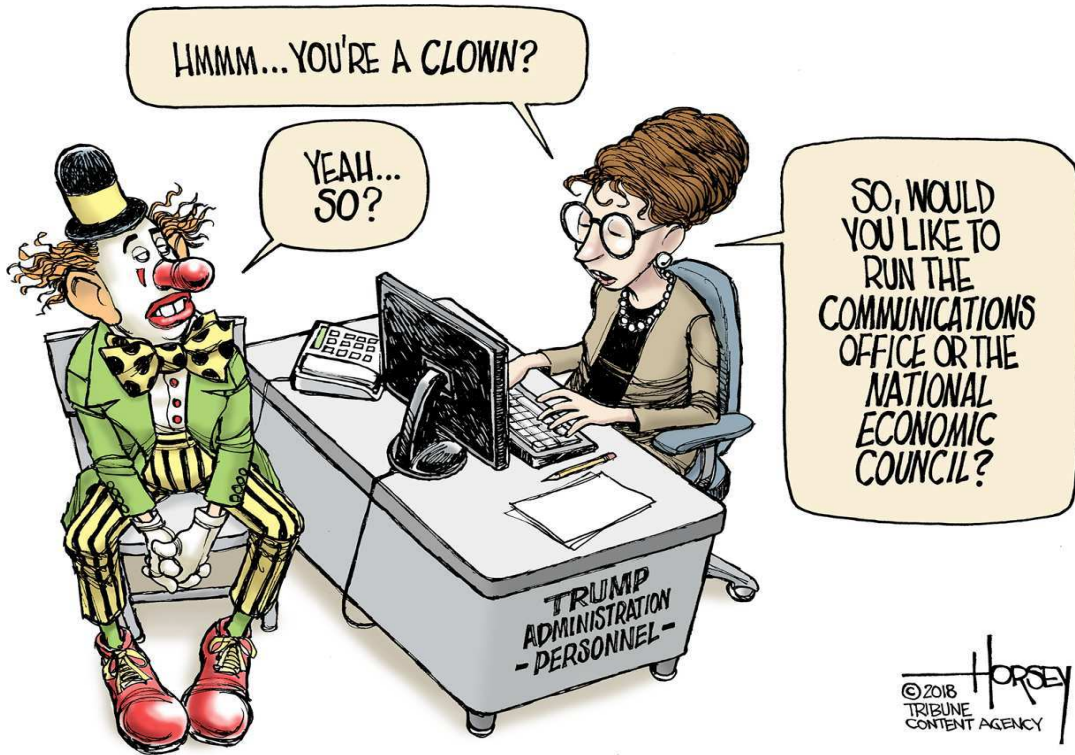


# O P I N I O N



## Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

To clarify the misreading of my previous Letter to the Editor:

I support "Butte" as the best alternative for our roundabout art as I stated here previously. It echoes the colors of our forests, the shape of cinder cones, the experience of driving among ponderosas — even the "field iron" of homesteads and ranches. At no point did I mean to suggest that the roundabout art should resemble a high tech bicycle or anything else, as one respondent implied.

Sisters aspires to be a town known for art. We have a world-renowned residency here, and there are rumors of another. This is an opportunity for us to step up to the current art world rather than to present ourselves exclusively as a venue for local genres and safe choices.

It really comes down to what art is. The Impressionists were roundly derided for their ground-breaking work in the 1860s because it was new and no one had seen anything like it before. Now they are among the most-loved

artists ever.

"Art does not reproduce the visible; rather, it makes visible." — Paul Klee, painter.

True art pushes limits, explores ideas and materials, transforms the tried and tired into evocative, imaginative forms, and encourages thought and discussion; "Butte" does all this. The big-city/small-town dichotomy is false. Thoughtful, expressive, meaningful art is at home anywhere and everywhere.

And if selection depends on the artists being local, that should have been a strict requirement in the Call for Entries. Artists don't make pots of money, and we spend unbelievable amounts of time and energy — uncompensated — to submit proposals to selection committees. Art should be judged on its merits, never on where the artist lives.

Joellyn Loehr



See LETTERS on page 29

### Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Chance rain/snow 42/23	Slt. chance snow 45/25	Chance snow 43/24	Chance snow 43/24	Slt. chance snow 45/25	Slt. chance snow 45/29

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## Jonah Goldberg

In 2001, Linton "Lin" Wells, a former Navy officer turned in-house Defense Department intellectual, was asked to offer his thoughts for the Quadrennial Defense Review.

Here's an extended excerpt:

- If you had been a security policy-maker in the world's greatest power in 1900, you would have been a Brit, looking warily at your age-old enemy, France.

- By 1910, you would be allied with France and your enemy would be Germany.

- By 1920, World War I would have been fought and won, and you'd be engaged in a naval arms race with your erstwhile allies, the U.S. and Japan.

- By 1930, naval arms limitation treaties were in effect, the Great Depression was underway, and the defense planning standard said "no war for ten years."

- Nine years later World War II had begun.

At any period in our lives, even modest predictions about the future are very unreliable. Outside theoretical physics, time moves in a linear, arithmetic progression: i.e., one day at a time. Life works differently. I can predict what the date will be 100 years from now with perfect accuracy, but I can't begin to tell you what life will be like.

And yet, many people make straight-line projections about politics, technology and all manner of things. "Trend X has been going in this direction for the last few years," people say, "so trend X will continue inexorably into the future." Intellectuals are often guilty of this kind of thinking, partly because they make a living looking for patterns and trends.

Writing in 1946, George Orwell argued that reflexive belief in the "continuation of the thing that is happening" amounts to a kind of "power worship." At various times, everyone was sure the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, or the Ottoman and the Roman empires would endure forever, because no one could imagine beyond the bars of the iron cage of the moment. Similarly, every era has been infested with business gurus who couldn't

foresee the demise or decline of Standard Oil or IBM or, these days, Amazon or Google.

Sometimes people put their faith less in the idea of power and more in the power of an idea, convincing themselves that there is an unseen algorithm guiding events. Marxism was a classic version of this. The impersonal forces of the universe guaranteed that utopian communism was the last exit of history.

But other ideas have similar power. When Orwell wrote "1984," it was widely believed that the state — Big Brother — would use technology to oppress people. Later, people became convinced that technology would keep Big Brother at bay by liberating people. With the rise of the Internet, this idea has taken hold in much of the West. The truth is that neither proposition is an iron law. Technology helped spread the Arab Spring, but it is also helping China throttle freedom. (And how did the Arab Spring turn out?)

Speaking of China, it was also widely believed that market forces, once unleashed, would unwind authoritarianism. Why? Because that's how it worked in the past. That's not what's happening in China, which is why President Xi Jinping is fast on his way to becoming president for life.

Shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union, Francis Fukuyama heralded the "End of History" because liberal democracy had proven itself the only legitimate form of government. Since then, authoritarianism has had something of a renaissance around the globe.

When he founded *National Review*, Bill Buckley wrote that part of its mission would be to "stand athwart history, yelling Stop."

The passage, widely misunderstood, contained a powerful insight: We cannot outsource life to the clockwork of the universe. There is no teleology, no "right side of history." We make the world we want to live in, and we have a responsibility to do that work.

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