

O P I N I O N



**Welcome, Sisters
Glory Daze Car Show
Participants and
Patrons!**

Sisters Glory Daze Car Show | Sat., July 20, 2019, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.



**Jonah
Goldberg**

Conservatives talk a lot about how we don't like identity politics. But it's not always clear what people mean by it. Academics and intellectuals tend to mean one thing, while politicians and activists often have something slightly different in mind.

Democratic politicians who engage in identity politics often mean something like "ethnic politics," by which members of a community organize in their collective interest. Conservatives sometimes use "identity politics" to describe simple ethnic politics, but only when it's ethnic politics they don't like. What they leave out is that this form of political engagement is as old as the country itself, because it's as old as politics itself. From the Pennsylvania Dutch (who were actually Germans) to the Irish of Boston and New York, to the Scandinavians of the Midwest, various European ethnic groups engaged in politics in much the same way later waves of Vietnamese, Chinese, Hmong, Arabs and Hispanics have, never mind the most obvious example of African Americans.

One doesn't have to support everything done in the name of identity politics to understand that it's not the grave threat to democracy and "e pluribus unum" that some make it out to be.

My core problem with identity politics has little to do with this sort of thing. So rather than use the term and have to deal with the baggage that comes with it, let's use something else. My problem is with categorical politics, or reductionist politics. What I mean by that is the tendency to talk about blacks, whites, Hispanics, gays, women, etc., as if they're all interchangeable and reducible simply to the color of their skin or their sex or their sexual orientation.

The notion that all you need to know about a person is the color of their skin still strikes me as close to the definition of racism, whether you're talking about black people or white people or people of

some other hue. If you think you know what a woman is going to say before she says a word simply because you believe all women think a certain way, you're a sexist.

There are other problems with this kind of categorical thinking. The two most important: It's not true, and it's lazy.

The Democrats running for president talk about abortion as if all women are in lockstep agreement on the issue, even though historically, men have tended to be slightly more pro-choice than women. Are pro-life women not women?

The laziness of this kind of rhetoric is a sign of the dumbness of our politics these days. Politicians have forgotten how to make arguments, perhaps because voters are dismayingly impatient with things that run counter to what they already believe. Also, political consultants have figured out that on certain issues, if you speak categorically about groups, you can garner a majority of support from those groups even if significant minorities within those groups disagree.

Republican sound bites on Israel often make it sound as if all Jews think alike on the subject. They don't. Democratic sound bites on affirmative action imply African Americans are monolithic on the topic. They aren't. Not all Hispanics, even recent immigrants, want to decriminalize illegal immigration.

Identity politics always ends up being an appeal to a kind of group loyalty. "Real" blacks or women or Jews or gays believe X, and if you don't believe X, you're some kind of traitor to your tribe.

One of the worst possible consequences of this kind of thinking isn't that members of the group will be browbeaten into toeing the party line, but that other groups will buy into it. And that does make the country more bigoted, because the message is that individual members of various groups or categories can't think for themselves.

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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:

Motoring through downtown Sisters on Cascade Avenue is somewhat frustrating. Traffic moves slowly with frequent stops due to pedestrians crossing the roadway. With further population growth in Sisters, the drive through downtown would be a nightmare.

One solution is to build a highway around the Sisters downtown area. I know the truckers and the motoring population to destinations beyond Sisters would be delighted. However, highway construction would be costly and the local vendors would be dismayed by the potential drop in revenue.

An alternative to this dilemma is to build three or four pedestrian bridgeways over Cascade Avenue. I suspect the local vendors would be pleased and the motoring public with a special interest in Sisters would be satisfied. The cost would be somewhat modest relative to building a new highway.

Scott Hawke



To the Editor:

My June letter missed *The Nugget*, so let's get caught up. The Board adopted a budget for next year, they approved the new staff that we are hiring and we celebrated some student success.

We had several state champions to celebrate. In track, Skyler Larson won the high jump and Brody Anderson placed first in the 400-meter. Our equestrian, or "OHSET," team had a great year that concluded with Savanna Salisbury, Bailey Knirk, and Sidney Sillers taking first in Team Penning. And last, but not least, our Jazz Band were named state champs after a great performance at the 4A Festival.

I would also like to remind families that we are moving our start time for school back by 30 minutes. This move more closely matches the sleep patterns of teens and has been seen to have a positive impact on their physical and mental health. Our high school students

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Sisters Weather Forecast
Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Partly Cloudy 78/53	Partly Cloudy 77/44	Sunny 79/46	Sunny 83/50	Mostly Sunny 89/54	Mostly Sunny 88/54

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