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Where was Kitzhaber?

And how about Oracle's low behavior?

Explosive is a good word for Nick Budnick's Tuesday story about internal emails at software giant Oracle.

The emails reveal a corporate culture that was happy to take Oregon's money while pursuing development of health software it knew to be fatally flawed. One email refers to "raping" Oregon, which appears to be a typo for raping Oregon.

A Marion County judge will decide whether to unseal the emails in Oregon's lawsuit against Oracle.

The environment evoked by the emails includes an apparently naive Oregon state government and a company unwilling to save that state from a gigantic mistake while taking its money.

At issue was whether there would be a systems integrator, to oversee Oracle, and whether Oregon or Oracle would control that position.

Oregon voters elected John Kitzhaber to a fourth term as governor in 2014, despite the gigantic failure of Cover Oregon, whose software was a bust. Even then, it was clear that Kitzhaber had failed to create effective oversight of the project. And now we realize that Oracle didn't want Oregon to have that oversight.

This seems to have been a perfect storm involving a rapacious contractor and a customer who was less than vigilant. The product was a very expensive product that didn't work.

Beyond the outcome of Oregon's legal claim against Oracle, the only question is whether the Oregon Legislature has learned anything from the Cover Oregon misadventure.

Sanders hits a snag in Nevada

By CHARLES M. BLOW
New York Times News Service

Bernie Sanders' loss in the Nevada caucuses, 47 percent to 53 percent, reveals a very real weakness of his insurgent challenge to Hillary Clinton.

According to entrance polls — which may have had some problems of their own, problems that we'll discuss shortly — Sanders' appeal is not broad enough among key groups that traditionally make up the base of the Democratic Party.

He lost among women, blacks, non-whites, and self-described Democrats. But the loss was even more troubling for his camp than that. He also lost highly educated caucusgoers with postgraduate degrees, both the poorest and wealthiest groups, and moderates. He lost those who saw health care and the economy as the most important issues of the election, even though those are key parts of Sanders' platform and issues on which he is most eloquent and persuasive.

And perhaps most interestingly, he lost overwhelmingly among people who wanted a candidate who could win in November. Good for him though, only 18 percent of those polled thought electability was the top quality a candidate needed to possess. You only have to look at the Republican winner in South Carolina to understand that this is not an electability cycle, this is an anti-establishment, point-making cycle.

The map going forward has states that look a lot more like Nevada than those that look like Iowa and New Hampshire, where Sanders performed well. Indeed, there are many states like South Carolina, which will hold its Democratic primary Saturday, that look even worse for Sanders than Nevada.

That is because of the narrowness of Sanders' winning demographics, as demonstrated in Nevada. Let's explore some of the positives for Sanders, the groups among which he won. He won liberals, of which there were many, and independents, of which there were few. He won people under 40, particularly those under 24, and whites with no college degree. He also won people who said their most important issue was income inequality



Charles Blow



Jae C. Hong/AP Photo

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., arrives for rally on the day of the Nevada Democratic caucus, Saturday, in Las Vegas.

and believed that the most important quality was having a candidate who cares about people like them or who was honest and trustworthy.

According to the entrance poll, Sanders also won the Hispanic vote, but this is where some prominent poll watchers took exception to the poll's accuracy.

The New York Times's Nate Cohn tweeted:

"Based on the results in Clark, the precincts in ELV, and the overall entrance poll error, I do not believe Sanders won the Hispanic vote."

ELV, or East Las Vegas, is the largely Hispanic part of Clark County, by far the most populous county in the state, where actual results showed Clinton winning handily.

Nate Silver tweeted support for Cohn's analysis:

"We share @nate cohn skepticism about entrance poll finding that Clinton lost Hispanics in Nevada."

It is true that Sanders' message may have more resonance with Hispanic voters than with other nonwhite groups, because Hispanic voters skew younger.

According to a Pew Research Center report published in January:

"Hispanic millennials will account for nearly half (44 percent) of the record 27.3 million Hispanic eligible voters projected for 2016 — a share greater than any other racial or ethnic group of voters, according to a new Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data."

But young black voters are not yet "feeling the Bern" to the same degree that other millennials are, as a poll published last week in *The Washington Post* pointed out. According to the accompanying article:

Young black voters are not yet 'feeling the Bern.'

"Much has been made of Sanders' popularity with younger voters, and Clinton's struggles to connect with millennials. Among black voters age 18-29, the gap between Sanders and Clinton is indeed narrower. But younger black voters still rate Clinton more favorably than Sanders."

But the poll points out an even bigger problem for Sanders among black voters than millennials, and that's his lack of support among black women who "comprise a disproportionate segment of the black electorate."

As the *Post* pointed out in no uncertain terms:

"A Democratic victory in the general election requires enthusiastic support from black women, and black women are significantly more enthusiastic about Clinton than Sanders."

It is very hard to see how Sanders wins the nomination without winning the black and Hispanic vote in the Southern and Western states, not to mention New York and Michigan.

Lastly, the political revolution on which Sanders has hinged his ability to accomplish his ambitious plan keeps failing to materialize. This year's Democratic caucus participation was down nearly a third from 2008, and in Iowa and New Hampshire there were more voters — or caucusgoers — making choices in the Republican contest than in the Democratic one.

As Sanders told "Meet the Press" about the Nevada loss: "We did not do as good a job as I had wanted to bring out a large turnout."

That doesn't sound like a political revolution to me.

Steelhead genetics will affect policy

An Oregon State University study finds that wild and hatchery steelhead have hundreds of genetic differences, a result that will surely generate parallel research on salmon and also spawn many discussions among Pacific Northwest people.

OSU scientists observed changes in the operations of more than 700 genes after a single generation of artificial propagation of steelhead. Affected genes were especially involved in functions like wound healing, immunity and metabolism. The researchers said this would be the result that could be expected when fish or other animals are adapting to highly crowded conditions like those of hatcheries and feedlots.

All this is a matter of high interest for many in the Columbia estuary and adjacent coast. For decades, the common assumption has been that a fish is a fish — that hatchery salmon may take a while to adjust to finding food and avoiding predators, but ultimately are indistinguishable from naturally spawning members of their species. Early genetic studies tended to back this up.

The science of genetics has come a very long way in

recent years. It's now possible to better assess how the same genes may operate differently in individuals, depending on nuances in upbringing and environment. Changes on this "epigenetic" level help explain, for example, how well-fed and nurtured children can be so distinct from parents who didn't enjoy the same advantages.

The OSU study will doubtless become ammunition in arguments about maintaining hatchery production versus restoring watersheds to more natural spawning conditions. In Washington, even before these study results, habitat managers had started a process designating some rivers for natural steelhead.

It will be important, however, to maintain hatchery production in recognition of the importance these fish have to the economies and cultures of communities on the Columbia and beyond. Results of this study can help identify ways to improve hatchery fish.

None of this will make a difference unless we continue to work on habitat, climate and water temperatures, predation and the host of other issues that confront both hatchery and naturally spawned fish.

The forgetful devil in Ted Cruz

By FRANK BRUNI
New York Times News Service

When Ted Cruz announced this week that he was firing his campaign's communications director for circulating a false insinuation that Marco Rubio had belittled the Bible, he told reporters, "Even if it was true, we are not a campaign that is going to question the faith of another candidate."

Really? Huh. Then I must have been hallucinating last month at a Cruz event in Iowa where several of his hand-picked supporters, who spoke just before him, mocked and dismissed Donald Trump's professed Christianity.

They marveled at a past comment of Trump's about never asking God for forgiveness. One of them chose a bizarre, religiously coded analogy for a boast Trump had just made about how much voters loved him, saying that the billionaire's bragging was an echo of John Lennon's infamous claim — an outrage to American Christians in the 1960s — that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus.

But no, Cruz's campaign would never question the faith of another candidate.

The Texas senator is some piece of double-talking, disingenuous work. While the so-called dirty tricks that he and his lieutenants have been charged with aren't all that shocking by the standards of bruising presidential campaigns, they really do stand out in the context of Cruz's flaboyant claims of rectitude and righteousness.

He directs you to his halo as he surreptitiously grabs a pitchfork. His rivals aren't so diabolically hypocritical.

At a town hall in South Carolina that CNN televised, he answered a

question about his miserable relations with fellow lawmakers in Washington by assuring voters that "it's not that I speak with a lack of civility or respect."

"The Bible talks about if someone treats you unkindly, repay them with kindness," he added. "That has been the standard I've tried to follow. That's how I've approached it in the Senate. So I have not attacked or insulted my colleagues in the Senate, Democrat or Republican."

Is he suffering from delusions? Amnesia? On the Senate floor he called Mitch McConnell, the Republican majority leader, a liar. He also likened Senate Republicans who recognized the impossibility of defunding Obamacare to Nazi appeasers.

Where was his vaunted "civility or respect" when, on the heels of his election to the Senate in November 2012, he derided Mitt Romney's failed presidential bid — to an audience including Romney supporters — by saying that during one presidential debate, "I'm pretty certain Mitt Romney actually French-kissed Barack Obama."

And where was that "civility or respect" during subsequent Senate hearings to confirm Chuck Hagel as the secretary of defense? Cruz's repeated suggestions that Hagel had been corrupted by money from America's enemies were so out of bounds that senators from both parties were appalled.

Cruz continues to congratulate his campaign for its high-mindedness even though his allies and operatives spread an erroneous report, during the Iowa caucuses, that Ben Carson was dropping out of the race. And they had the niftiest bit of counsel for Carson voters. Switch to Cruz!

Then, in South Carolina, Cruz operatives doctored a photograph so



Frank Bruni

that it showed Rubio shaking hands with Obama in front of the U.S. Capitol.

These shenanigans profoundly contradict the godly styling of a candidate who was the first ever to announce a presidential campaign at Liberty University, the largest Christian university in the world, and who incessantly invokes the Bible, Jesus and morality.

And they surely reflect the campaign culture that Cruz has created. Political allies and aides tend to behave in a manner largely consistent with their boss' directives and understood values.

Or they're brought aboard a campaign because they behave that way. As Matt Flegenheimer reported in *The Times* this week, Cruz hired a campaign manager, Jeff Roe, who is widely known for destructive gossip, for malicious tactics — and for winning.

Cruz's hypocrisy may be catching up with him. In Iowa, he drew more evangelical Christian voters than his rivals did, but in South Carolina, Trump beat him among those voters, and Rubio wasn't far behind. Some of them told reporters, including me, that they'd been turned off by behavior of Cruz's that they deemed un-Christian.

This dynamic could cripple him in the Southern states that vote in the first half of March, and his strategy hinges on those states.

With their evangelical voters in mind, he frames himself as the candidate truest to Scripture and fiercest in the battle against such scourges (in his estimation) as gay marriage. That framing implicitly questions rivals' devotion.

And his onetime proclamation that "any president who doesn't begin every day on his knees isn't fit to be commander-in-chief" is a summons to rivals to prove their faith. He should focus instead on conduct that proves his own.

Is he suffering from delusions? Amnesia?