

"Open your mind before your mouth." ~ Aristophanes

# Planet Octogenarian

## 12 commandments for SENIORS

1

Talk to yourself. There are times you need expert advice

2

'In Style' are the clothes that still fit

3

You don't need anger management. You need people to stop pissing you off

4

Your people skills are just fine. It's your tolerance for idiots that needs work

5

The biggest lie you tell yourself is, 'I don't need to write that down... I'll remember it.'

6

'On time' is when you get there

7

Even duct tape can't fix stupid, but it sure does muffle the sound

8

It would be wonderful if we could put ourselves in the dryer for 10 minutes, then come out wrinkle-free and 3 sizes smaller

9

Lately, you've noticed people your age are so much older than you

10

Growing old should have taken longer

11

Aging has slowed you down, but it hasn't shut you up

12

You still haven't learned to act your age and hope you never will

...and one more  
'One for the road' means peeing before you leave the house.

"If you must curse, use your own name." ~ God



## Let's eat

**D**ESPERATE AFTER THREE BAD MONTHS OF sales at Kentucky Fried Chicken, the famous Colonel called up the Pope and asked him for a favor. "What can I do for you?" said the Pope. "Holy father, I need you to change the daily prayer from, 'Give us this day our daily bread' to 'Give us this day our daily chicken.' If you do that, I swear I will donate \$10 million to the Vatican."

The Pope replied, "I am very sorry, but that is the Lord's prayer, and it isn't something I can just change." But after another month of bad sales, the Colonel panicked, and called again.

"Listen your Excellency. I'll donate \$50 million dollars if you change the words of the prayer to 'Give us this day our daily chicken.'" And the Pope responded, "The church could do a lot of good with that much money. It would help us to support many charities. But, again, I must decline. It is the Lord's prayer, and I can't change the words."

After two more months of terrible sales, the Colonel got desperate. "This is my final offer, your Excellency. If you change the words to 'Give us this day our daily chicken' I will donate \$100 million to the Vatican", and the Pope replied, "Let me get back to you."

So, the next day, the Pope called together all of his bishops and said, "I have some good news and I have some bad news. The good news is that KFC is going to donate \$100 million to the Vatican, and the bad news is that we lost the Wonder Bread account."

"Human intelligence may just be the stupidest thing that has ever happened." ~ Biologist **Justin Gregg**

## You can't get there from here

**W**ASHINGTON, D.C., WAS DESIGNED AS OUR National Capitol by a Frenchman who knew exactly what he was doing. His name was **L'Enfant**, which in English is "the infant" – and that was superbly appropriate, because infants are the only ones who see the world as it is. As **Mark Twain** once remarked, "we learn to swear before we can talk."

L'Enfant began by laying out a grid of streets – North, South, East and West – square and perfectly logical, because he believed that good government can only come from logical thinking. But he overlaid on this grid a series of circular roads, because he suspected that in trying to make decisions, and persuade others to agree, government officials would find themselves going around and around. And then he added roads radiating out from each circle to all points of the compass, because he realized the inhabitants of this city would be shooting off their mouths in all directions.

THROUGHOUT THE 'PLANET,' CLICKING **DARK RED TYPE** OPENS A RELATED INTERNET LINK.

Since then, others have polished and perfected his design, designating various streets as "one way" in different directions, putting up concrete barriers to block roads in key places, and installing a subway system.

The result is the ideal city for American government, because no matter where you want to go, you can't get there from here....unless you go underground.

"The truth will set you free, but first it will piss you off." ~ **Gloria Steinem**

## A fart on you, John Proctor

**I**N 1953, ARTHUR MILLER'S PLAY ABOUT THE Salem Witch Trials essentially became *the* story about **Proctor**. If you want to know about that terrible epoch in history, you need go no further than that play. It is widely read in the United States, typically during 11th grade since 11th grade ELA typically focuses on American literature.

Except... here's the thing. Arthur Miller sold us five hours (that's how long the play felt when I last watched it) of lies and libel. Those who know the play often believe that it is essentially a bio-pic. After all, the characters in it are real people. Eighty-one-year-old **Giles Corey**, as an example, really did die while asking for "more weight" like a true badass.

John Proctor was 60 when he died. **Abigail Williams**

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was only 11. Any student can look this up, and many of them do. English teachers typically aren't also very knowledgeable about history, so... you then get students freaking out saying, "OH MY GOD! A 60-year-old doing it with an 11-year-old?!" English teachers will often then say, "Yeah, but that's not the point of the play" or "Yeah, but it was the 17th Century." But here's the problem:

As far as we know, Proctor never cheated on his wife with Abigail or anyone else. As far as I know, Proctor didn't even know Abigail Williams. According to Miller, "*The Crucible* is taken from history. No character is in the play who did not take a similar role in Salem, 1692." That's a bald-faced lie. Now... imagine this:

Out of nowhere, your community decides that there are witches living among you. Your neighbors decide to use this rumor as a way to leverage your property out from under you and destroy your life. You stick to your guns, do the right thing, and resist confessing to a lie. Then you're hanged.

But it isn't over yet. Two and a half centuries later, some guy permanently brands you as a pedophile and most schoolchildren learn about you and that lie. That guy was author, Miller. ...

"The deepest sin against humankind is to believe things without evidence."  
~ Aldous Huxley

## Hat's off to them

**I**N AN ARTICLE FROM THE LA TIMES ON THE spreading unrest in Iran, the death in the hands of the Morality Police of a young woman caught in public with her head not properly covered by a sac f or hijab, prompted an expert on Iran named **Azadeh Akbari** at the University of Twente in the Netherlands to observe:

"If every woman decides to take off the hijab, then how many police officers will be needed to control that?"

The Dictatorial Theocracy seems determined to subdue the protests – often with lethal means, instead of addressing their grievances.

"We don't want our lives ruled by the ideologies of old men," added a student at a highly respected Teheran University... or as **Craig Ferguson** asks: Sound familiar? "

"What is reality anyway? nothing but a collective hunch."  
~ Lily Tomlin/Jane Wagner

## Murray's Mores

**M**URRAY LANGSTON ONCE REVEALED SOME things "you might not know about me:"

Before coffee, I hate everyone. After coffee. I enjoy hating everyone. I once went 12 years without sex... then I turned 13. My family was so poor that when I was born, my dad handed out cigarette butts. – ne time I had my IQ checked;



my test results came back Negative. People tell me that that I'm "wishy washy". Well, maybe I am but then maybe I'm not. People think I suffer from insanity, but the truth is I sort of enjoy it.

It is difficult to free fools from the chains they reverse." ~Voltaire

## Everything You Know is Wrong

**S**TATISTICALLY SPEAKING, THE NUMBER of humans who have traveled into space is insignificant. But the experience of leaving our home planet and venturing into the great beyond is incredibly

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significant for the individuals who have actually done it.

One of those fortunate humans is actor **William Shatner**, who spent three years pretending to hurtle through space in his iconic role as Captain James T. Kirk on the original “Star Trek” series.



But then, as he looked in the direction opposite Earth, “there was no mystery, no majestic awe to behold,” he wrote in his new book,

***Boldly Go: Reflections on a Life of Awe and Wonder.***

“All I saw was death. I saw a cold, dark, black emptiness. It was unlike any blackness you can see or feel on Earth. It

was deep, enveloping, all-encompassing.” As he turned back toward “the light of home, he saw the opposite. “I could see the curvature of Earth, the beige of the desert, the white of the clouds and the blue of the sky. It was life. Nurturing, sustaining, life. Mother Earth. Gaia. And I was leaving her.” Then he had a stunning revelation: “Everything I had thought was wrong. Everything I had expected to see was wrong.”

“It was among the strongest feelings of grief I have ever encountered,” he continued. “The contrast between the vicious coldness of space and the warm nurturing of Earth below filled me with overwhelming sadness. Every day, we are confronted with the knowledge of further destruction of Earth at our hands, the extinction of animal species, of flora and fauna . . . things that took five billion years to evolve, and suddenly we will never see them again because of the interference of mankind. It filled me with dread. My trip to space was supposed to be a celebration; instead, it felt like a funeral.”

Shatner explained how this “sense of the planet’s fragility

takes hold in an ineffable, instinctive manner” for many astronauts when they view Earth from orbit. It’s part of the “overview effect” – the profound shift in perspective that comes with seeing our collective home from a distance. With no visible borders between nations or peoples, leaving Shatner with renewed conviction to focus on what we share in common.

“It reinforced tenfold my own view on the power of our beautiful, mysterious collective human entanglement,” he writes, “and eventually, it returned a feeling of hope to my heart. In this insignificance we share, we have one gift that other species perhaps do not: we are aware – not only of our insignificance, but the grandeur around us that makes us insignificant. That allows us perhaps a chance to rededicate ourselves to our planet, to each other, to life and love all around us. If we seize that chance.” Beam me up, Scotty!

*“What is reality anyway? nothing but a collective hunch.” ~ Lily Tomlin/Jane Wagner*

## The eyes have it

**D** ID YOU KNOW THAT IN 1929, POPEYE’S character was created for a campaign in defense of Marijuana?

At that time, there was a raging debate going on over penalizing it, but it was enjoyed by many, and one of the popular slang names for pot was “spinach,” since it is also edible, and it was rumored that ingesting it could make one strong.

It’s also no coincidence that pop-eye means “jumpy eye” or “sleepy eye,” and furthermore, there was one comic strip where Popeye travels to Paraguay and Bolivia because they had the best “spinach” there!

Thus, Popeye became an icon for the defense of the herb, then and forevermore.

Toot, Toot!

*The future is already here - it’s just not very evenly distributed.” ~ William Gibson*

## Another Yale passes

**M**Y DEAR FRIEND, ALEX GARVIN, WHOM I’VE known since high school, and who became a popular professor at Yale, has died at 81.

Recently his friends and family hosted three events to celebrate his life as a teacher, urbanist, planner, artist,

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photographer and friend. These provided opportunities to reconnect with fellow Garvinistas whose lives, careers, and communities were influenced by Alex and his teachings. Later, a walking tour of Lower Manhattan and the World Trade Center emphasized Alex's role in the planning and redevelopment of the site.

I will miss his ready smile, sprightly wit and keen intelligence – not to mention singing together as members of the Yale Russian Chorus. In fact, while at Yale, it was Alex who drafted me to direct one of Chekhov's silly one-act plays – in Russian! прощай, дорогой друг

"The government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian Religion."  
~ George Washington

## VENDORS

MARIA  
SEXY BILL  
RINGO  
DOGONES  
McCARTHY  
JUST TOKING  
WHERE?  
REPS

and I can't wait to host them again at the premiere of *Psycho Ape 2*.

"Please do not touch yourself!  
Let us help you to try out."  
~ Korean sign

## Members

**R**ichard Fish, Kenneth Wilhite, Jr., Nick Oliva, Jamie Alcroft, The Upworthiest, and Happy Birthday to my wonderful artistic co-captain, **Cristofer Gross!**

And farewell to **Angela Lansbury**, **Robbie Coltrane** and **Dan Sullivan** (with whom **Melinda** travelled to Russia in 1988), and saddest of all, our voice-over buddy, the kind and

## And another passes through

**I**NDEED! YET ANOTHER OF MY Y62 CLASSMATES, the multi-talented **Bill Weeden**, of Finkle and Weeden fame, has surprisingly become a horror icon to a legion of cult **Troma** film fans, at 82! We recently housed him and his talented wife, **Dolores**, in our guest dungeon as they were here for the LA premiere of his latest flick, **The Once and Future Smash**, a mockumentary also featuring our classmate **Victor Miller** (who wrote *Friday the Thirteenth*), called *Smashmouth* – based on a cannibalistic murder with a broken jaw from a fictional slasher movie called *End Zone*, both of which were presented as part of the *Screamfest* at Grauman's Chinese.

It was a horrible evening and terrible time was endured by all,



funny **Jan Rabson**, who passed away of a heart attack on the same Canadian cross-country train trip Melinda and I enjoyed a few years ago. Love to his widow, **Cindy** and their beloved boys.

And as happens so often when I assemble the Planet late in the month, there is yet another death I have to add, and in this case it's beloved character actor **Ron Masak**,

whose career I've admired and with whom I got to play in Palm Springs doing recreations of old-time radio shows to raise money for the **Dezarts Theatre Company** where we bonded performing a house-rousing recreation of Abbott and Costello's legendary "Who's On First" skit.

I and so many others loved you, Ron. You were truly many of a kind.

"I needed a password eight characters long, so I picked 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarves.'  
~ Nick Helm



**HERE AND THERE**  
Ron and I, above;  
Bill and Dolores, below left

"If God wanted us to vote, he would have given us candidates.\* ~ Jay Leno

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