



# Functionally Dead

MAY 3, 2021//  
VOL. V, ISSUE 3



## May Day! May Day!



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//PRIYA PATEL

# PSAKI: CAN WE MOVE PAST NOT TALKING ABOUT CHILDREN IN CAGES SO WE CAN SPEND TIME NOT ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE?

//JAMES DWYER

WASHINGTON, D.C. – White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki made an emotional appeal to the White House press corps at her daily briefing yesterday afternoon. After being asked by *The Washington Post's* Anne Gearan if the White House is planning legislation to tackle the inhumane treatment of migrant children in border detention camps, Jen Psaki teared up and said, “Every day I come to this briefing, and every day you ask me questions about the border crisis. Has no one considered how that makes me feel?! I would love to not answer that question, Anne, and so I will not! Instead, I ask something of each of you: can we move past not talking about children in cages so we can spend time not addressing climate change?”

The stunned and visibly emotional White House press corps seemed all too eager to

oblige, as the next question from *The New York Times* was, “will you be offering us the recipe for the delicious cookies your mother-in-law baked for us last week?” On the topic of her mother-in-law’s cookies, Jen had this to say: “Absolutely. She’s been making those cookies for decades. It’s ingredient-for-ingredient based on a Cheesecake Factory recipe. I’ll have that for everyone first thing tomorrow.”

As everyone nodded in unison, CNN’s Jim Acosta pushed back, “I’m sorry Jen, just one last follow up. The border crisis continues to grow as the Biden administration shows no signs of keeping their campaign promise to end the detention of migrant children in cages. On top of that, the administration’s plans regarding the looming catastrophes associated with climate change appear to simply be another opportunity to kick the can down the road

another ten years, as most of his initiatives will not come to fruition until then, virtually guaranteeing Republicans will overturn everything this administration has done, which is already woefully insufficient next to the policy recommendations made by climate scientists, when they inevitably take back control. Does the Biden administration care to comment on the fact that these actions all fall short of the expectations they set out themselves before the election?”

Jen did not respond directly to Acosta, but had this to say before ending the press conference: “I can see that some men do not listen to or respect women when they make a fair and honest request. I appreciate those of you who understand that I need some space. Nobody gets the cookie recipe anymore.” 🍪



# ***ANTI*****FA** ***Member***

***of***

***the***

**HOT DOGS FOR ALL!!!**

# ***MONTH!***



# I'VE DECIDED TO ADD UNEMPLOYMENT TO MY RESUME...

## *...and It's Actually Been Really Good for Me!*

//BRADY O'CALLAHAN

IF YOU'RE ANYTHING LIKE ME, you've spent the past year applying for hundreds of jobs to no avail. As time passes and my savings dwindle, that gap year on my resume becomes abundantly glaring. Sure, a global pandemic caused me to lose my job of 10 years and stall hiring nation-wide, but you can't expect hiring managers to keep that in mind! I don't want any future employer to assume that I've spent the entire past year lazing about, so I've decided to add unemployment to my resume. If the massive uptick in interviews I've received since are any indication, it's actually been really good for me.

### Professional Experience

#### Unemployment – *Unemployed*

New York, New York [June 2020 – Present]

- Liaise with New York Department of Labor to ensure unemployment payroll is processed punctually and accurately, repeatedly communicating any pertinent issues with process and experience with other unemployed associates via direct text communication and proper social channels
- Directly manage the daily feeding, cleaning, and playing of direct department head: the household kitten
- Balance multiple time-sensitive creative projects including monthly music newsletter, biweekly comedy and culture zine, and novelty fashion Twitter and Instagram account in a highly competitive field of content creators, all of whom are much younger than me
- Ownership of quality control measures and process improvement regarding in-house mixology initiatives
- Undertake new challenges like sewing, baking, and playing guitar while maintaining the flexibility to abandon them after a week of cursory benefit assessment
- Frequently recognized for positive attitude, teamwork, and negotiation skills in weekly virtual movie club
- Oversee the creation, development, and launch of successful weekly workout regimen
- Adapt to new technologies to aid in continued virtual communication, including Zoom, Google Hangouts, Discord, TikTok, and others as various tech startups pop up and fizzle out
- Facilitate the wearing of real clothes on a flexible as-needed basis
- Maintain a positive, community-forward attitude in a fast-paced, high-stress, unloving world 🤖



//MATTHEW BRIAN COHEN

# Landlordfellas

LandlordFellas: The Real Life Story of My Real Life As A  
Real Life Landlord

Written by

Henry Hudd, a great landlord and an even greater guy

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SELECT SCENES FOR ANGETS AND MANAGERS EYES"S ONLY!

Contact  
Constellation Property Management LLC or if I'm not there  
Terra Nova Investments LLC or if I'm not there The Gemrock  
Group and ask for Frank Coriander

INT. SHITTY APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

HENRY, our heroic and handsome landlord (NOT a slumlord), is strutting through a run down apartment building, doing an inspection before a tenant moves out. He's accompanied by his fellow landlords, TOMMY, a short hothead, and JIMMY, a taller hothead. A terrified TENANT (always paid rent on time, never a problem) watches.

Tommy bends down and looks at a tiny SCRATCH on the living room floor.

TOMMY  
The floors are scuffed.

TENANT  
(confused)  
That?! That's just normal wear and tear.

Tommy gets up.

TOMMY  
You realize we're gonna have to redo all the floors now.

TENANT  
All of them?

TOMMY  
You can't just replace one. It's gotta be the whole thing.

JIMMY  
Hardwood floor boards like this... they don't come cheap, y'know.

TENANT  
I think they just snap on, man! Look, it's literally scratching as you walk on it. I don't even wear shoes in here.

Tommy looks down and sees a scratch in the floor. He can't believe this tenant, after all he's done for him, would try to weasel out of this damage.

TOMMY  
You talking back to me?

TENANT  
No, I'm just trying to get my security deposit back.

2.

JIMMY  
Your security deposit?!  
(motioning to his  
crotch)  
The balls on this prick!

TOMMY  
You're lucky I'm just charging you  
for the floors and not the disgusting  
mess you left in the fridge!

TENANT  
I cleaned the fridge! I swear!

Tommy walks over to the kitchen (it's right next to the  
living room - it's a REALLY small apartment) and opens the  
fridge. It's spotless. Tommy thinks.

TOMMY  
Something's off with the vegetable  
crisper.

TENANT  
You're kidding.

Jimmy goes over the fridge and checks.

JIMMY  
Mmmmm. Nothing's staying crisp in  
there.

TENANT  
This is insane!

Henry writes something on his legal pad.

HENRY  
It's not personal, it's business. You  
owe us five hundred twenty-eight  
dollars on top of the security  
deposit.

Henry hands the tenant an invoice. FREEZE FRAME on Henry's  
beautiful mug.

HENRY (V.O.)  
As far back as I remember, I always  
wanted to be a landlord.

Tony Bennett's "Rags to Riches" PLAYS.



3.

EXT. STREETS - YEARS EARLIER

A much younger (but still strikingly handsome) Henry pulls  
up next to one of his apartment buildings in his gorgeous  
Toyota Highlander.

CHYRON: "Brooklyn - 2019."

HENRY (V.O.)  
To me, being a landlord was better  
than being President of the United  
States. You could charge whatever you  
wanted. It was like you were  
President of the United States of an  
entire building. Or maybe the  
President was like the landlord of  
America. Who the fuck knows?!

Henry gets out of the car and walks into the building.

It's a single tracking shot - no cuts, baby!

Henry passes the LANDSCAPER (who he kindly pays in cash  
under the table) trimming the only palm tree in Brooklyn.

He opens the front door with his huge ring of keys (very  
professional!).

He walks by the mailbox. DAVEY, a dopey tenant who sucks, is  
checking their mail. Davey's drenched in sweat.

DAVEY  
Hey Mr. Hill, my AC's been out all  
summer. Can you fix it?

He palms Henry twenty dollars in cash.

HENRY  
I'll look into it.

DAVEY  
Thank you. 'Cause this is like the  
sixth time I-

Henry keeps walking up the stairs. He sees MRS. KIM, a  
tenant with a small, yappy dog, leaving her apartment.

HENRY  
How's it going, Mrs. Kim?

She nods, and tries to go by. Henry puts his arm up on the  
wall to stop her.

Continued on p. 16...



# EXCLUSIVE: WE'VE OBTAINED THE POEM THAT GOT HUNTER BIDEN INTO YALE

//DIANA KOLSKY

IN FIRST SON HUNTER BIDEN'S latest memoir, *Beautiful Things*, he shares the secret that secured his entry into the elite temple of academia that is Yale University. While one may assume being the well-endowed progeny of a famous U.S. Senator had some bearing on the admissions process, Hunter confides that it was, in fact, an unsolicited poem he included in his application that sealed his Ivy League fate. Biden doesn't print the poetic text in his book, but *Functionally Dead* has illegally obtained a copy, which we have illegally transcribed here.

## I'm Horny (For Knowledge)

BY ROBERT HUNTER BIDEN

Learning is fun;  
I do it in the sun.  
On Spring Break, man—  
In between keg stands.  
I hit the books...  
With broads who look:  
Like fuck dolls.  
(They lick my balls.)

(C  
O  
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I've traveled the world,  
Studying girls—  
With National Geographic titties,  
It's truly a pity...  
That I, son of Joe,  
Cannot do blow  
With  
Them

All.  
It makes me feel... s m a l l.

When I tell them, "Mom's Dead,"  
While they're giving me head.  
They kiss my tears—  
I do a beer  
Bong.  
We roll around in cash,  
I eat their ass.  
In my Delaware mansion—  
It's credit-card fashioned.  
Not just built on poors' debt,  
But like I literally sex  
On a bed of black Amex.  
I am god  
When I whip out my hog.  
Even as The Clap burns,  
I never forget  
To  
Learn.

Please admit me—  
I'll make history.  
My dick in the co-eds,  
My nose in a book;  
Orgies protected by Feds,  
Virginities took.  
Dad will donate a library,  
And I'll visit the stacks.  
Doing thesis research\*

\*free-basing crack. 🧠



# I WOULD LIKE TO APOLOGIZE FOR MY PAST BEHAVIOR (by Duke Nukem)

//NATHAN KAMAL GUEST CONTRIBUTOR



//MAX KNOBLAUCH

THERE COMES A TIME in every man's life when he takes a long, hard look at himself and thinks: am I who I want to be? For me, Duke Nukem, that time is now. The current environment has been a wake-up call to men like me. When governors, Congressmen, and other important figures are being accused of willful misconduct, the uber-macho action hero community needs to pay attention. It is imperative that we take stock of our past mistakes and think about how we may have abused the privilege that comes with being a cishet white man.

And I can tell you that I, Duke Nukem, have a lot to apologize for.

First of all, my endless slaughter of aliens, Techbots, and random bystanders. Nothing can excuse this. I have murdered hundreds, possibly even thousands, of people, often while making quips. Quips that I will fully admit are not even that good. Sometimes I just repeat lines from movies I've seen, which is not at all clever or creative.

At the time, I felt the violence I inflicted on others was justified. I felt that I had the right to hurt others because of how powerful it made me feel, how it made me think I was in charge, and because of Dr. Proton's imminent plans to conquer Earth. Nothing could be further from the truth. I mean, do any of you even *remember* Dr. Proton?

Those deaths are on my hands, and I take full responsibility. >>



>> Secondly, I would like to address my treatment of women. Across all my adventures on Earth, through space and even time itself, I have viewed women as objects rather than autonomous characters with their own thoughts, goals, and plot-lines. This is unacceptable.

Too much of my time has been spent in strip clubs (which can be a valid expression of female sexual agency, but not the ones I went to), watching non-feminist pornography, and leering at the Holsom Twins before they exploded, giving birth to hideous Octabrain.

I take full responsibility for this and would like to apologize to all citizens of the Land of Babes.

(And to be clear, I do *not* take responsibility for the Octabrain, which were spawn of the Cycloid Emperor.)

But more than anything, I need to address the abuse of my un-earned status. As a person who has almost unlimited privilege in society, I have used it—and the almost unlimited ammo that tends to just be lying around for the taking—and abused it to indulge myself in the most toxic of ways.

I threw money at women to make them expose their breasts.

I have long-held regressive and hostile attitudes towards illegal aliens, though I feel I must make it clear that I am referring to actual extraterrestrials and not human immigrants. But to be fair, I haven't really been on the right side of the immigration debate, either.

Even when I was literally saving the world, I have to admit it had far more to do with my fragile male ego than nobly standing up to pig cops (again, to be clear, I am referring to the actual humanoid boars wearing police uniforms, not officers of the law. As one of the largest individual donors to police unions, I was on the wrong side of history again).

Accountability is a difficult task, and I recognize that there is a hard journey ahead of me.

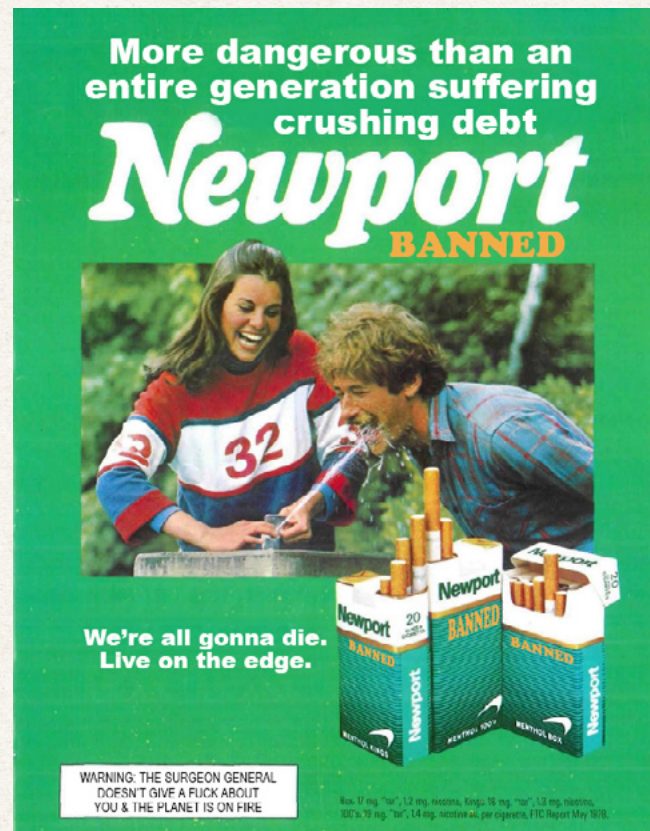
It takes a lot to acknowledge your past behavior. It takes even more to ask forgiveness.

But in light of the many, many current allegations and lawsuits against me, I can only earnestly ask for it. And really, at this point, I feel like you're obligated to give it to me. I deserve it. If you don't, you're really being just awful and unfair. C'mon, I said I was sorry. If anything, you're the one that should be apologizing for that kind of behavior.

By the way, I also apologize for tearing that dude's head off and shitting down his neck. Good enough? What more do you want from me? 🤖

---

*Nathan Kamal is a writer and comic performer based in Chicago, IL. For more information, go to [nathankamalwriting.com](http://nathankamalwriting.com) or look to the stars in wonder. Instagram: @nathankamal*





# Centrist Slogan Generator

Ever wondered how you'd fare as a neoliberal shill running for office in today's day and age? Only one way to find out!

"I'm YOUR NAME, and I'm running to (Birth Month) (Birth Day) because (First Letter of First Name)."

## Birth Month: *Verb*

Jan - bring dignity back to  
Feb - ask the hard questions about  
Mar - finally give a voice to  
Apr - fight, fight, fight for  
May - build back  
Jun - remind the average Joe about the importance of  
Jul - reimagine  
Aug - uplift  
Sep - reach across the aisle on  
Oct - demand decency on  
Nov - make good on  
Dec - breathe life into

## Birth Day: *Noun*

1 - immigrant detention centers  
2 - access to for-profit health insurance  
3 - Moscow Mitch  
4 - America's police  
5 - pharmaceutical CEO's  
6 - climate change  
7 - traditional family values  
8 - the next generation of Kennedys  
9 - the soul of this great nation  
10 - the middle ground  
11 - America's infrastructure  
12 - private health insurance  
13 - mavericks  
14 - bipartisanship

15 - the Supreme Court  
16 - John McCain's Ghost  
17 - this rich American tapestry  
18 - our future  
19 - fracking  
20 - the normalization of Cryptocurrency  
21 - factory farming  
22 - money in politics  
23 - eating hot dogs on the campaign trail  
24 - net neutrality  
25 - school choice  
26 - the military-industrial complex  
27 - the upper-middle class  
28 - the children  
29 - trickle-down economics  
30 - privatized climate solutions  
31 - corporate-backed lobbyists

## First Letter of First Name: *Platform Running On*

A - this country was founded on the principle of compromise.  
B - my father and his father before him did the same.  
C - I'm sick and tired of these extremists on both sides.  
D - we all have a responsibility to use our platforms.  
E - I can, and you can too.  
F - I said so.

G - that's the way America does it.  
H - last time I checked, we don't live in China.  
I - our diversity is our greatest strength.  
J - when we put our minds to it, there's nothing America can't do.  
K - it's time for a change, and our best hope at change... is hope.  
L - I need a career.  
M - I need an 'in' to finding a publisher.  
N - we need to root out Terrorism and Socialism (which are the same exact thing).  
O - meat and potatoes are my favorite food.  
P - there is nowhere else to work in DC.  
Q - we need to nip Green New Deal in the bud.  
R - we gotta get rid of the bad apples.  
S - John McCain's ghost spoke to me in the nude and told me this was my calling.  
T - I got bored being a CEO.  
U - Russia (Nero) is playing their fiddle as Washington (Rome) burns.  
V - Barack Obama would want it that way.  
W - if I don't do it, who will?  
X - the other guy is worse than me and that is simply enough, my friends.  
Y - someone somewhere might have weapons of mass destruction maybe.  
Z - six corporations run all the media! 💀



# BEWARE, THE UNHOUSED MENACE!

//MATTHEW BRIAN COHEN

“HOMELESS PEOPLE...THREATEN THE  
SENSE OF SAFETY OF COMMUNITIES.”

—Michel Moore, LOS ANGELES CHIEF OF POLICE



They're everywhere.

In our public parks, on our sidewalks... their cars are even parked on our roads!

I'm talking of course about... *the unhoused menace!*

As police chief Moore said, there is no greater threat to Los Angeles than the unhoused—not even Black people. Their degenerate lifestyle of not being able to afford a home threatens to tear apart the fabric of our fair city. Not because the measure of a society's health is its treatment of its most vulnerable, but simply because the unhoused use their poverty to dominate normal, *housed* Angelinos. Together with the socialist Left, the unhoused use their lack of political influence to bully well-meaning Americans into caring about their plight, using advanced propaganda tactics such as “existing,” “telling their story,” and “appealing to our common human decency.”

Right under our noses, the unhoused are infiltrating public spac-

es, spreading their insidious message that it's cool to live in a tent in the middle of Echo Park with all your earthly possessions. Sounds silly? It might to an intelligent center-right voting homeowner like yourself, but what about your children? They don't have the media savvy you have from decades of watching MSNBC, CNN, and Fox. Who knows? Maybe your little Jimmy or Sally are talking to an unhoused person right now? Maybe they're thinking about giving up YOUR Silver Lake home you rightfully inherited from your grandparents and becoming unhoused, too? It's enough to send a shiver up your cozy spine.

That's why it's vital to keep an eye out for unhoused people and their underhanded attempts to improve their own living situation. Sure, they might seem innocent when they ask us to allocate some of our abundant resources to providing them shelter, food, and water, but what basic human right will they demand next?! Healthcare? Education? The right to vote? Pretty soon they'll be sitting on a jury deciding the fate of yet another police shooting (in LA, we're averaging one a day)! >>



>> The fact is, the unhoused aren't just looking to be treated "humanely"—they're looking to pillage our three billion dollar police budget for all its worth. If this unhoused scourge is left unchecked, these street dwellers will systematically fill every last one of our city's unaffordable and terminally empty luxury apartment buildings. With this newfound stability, the unhoused might even be able to fully reintegrate into society. We cannot allow this to happen!

## WHAT CAN I DO?

If someone who appears to have no wealth or social capital approaches you, stay on guard. Odds are, they might be an unhoused person looking to convert you to their dangerous house-free ideology.

**DON'T:** See Them As People. They may look like you or I, and they might be able to convince you that, with a few bad breaks, you could easily become one of them. But they're not like you at all—they're crazy, and possibly on drugs! They don't deserve your sympathy. Make sure to remind them of that as you continue on your way to your psychiatrist appointment or to purchase a thirty-rack of beer and some pre-rolled joints to enjoy in a park.

**DO:** Stop Activists From Handing Them Water Bottles. On the surface, it might seem that handing out cold water on a hot day is an unequivocal good deed. But what unhoused people and the powerful humanitarian interests that back them never tell you is that it never stops with just one water bottle. Did you know that unhoused people need more water every day, sometimes multiple times per day? We're talking upwards of three, even five dollars! And that number will only go up as climate change destroys our access to clean drinking water. Is this really how we want to allocate our precious H<sub>2</sub>O, especially as Beverly Hills is in the midst of an epidemic of mildly dry lawns?

**DO:** Report Them To The Police. If there's one thing we've learned over the past few years, it's that any situation is made safer by calling the police. If an unhoused person has the gall to exist in the same plane of reality as you, let a police officer know.

The cop will kindly rid the unhoused person of their possessions, documentation, and life.

Armed with these helpful tips, YOU can help us rid the city of the menace that is people simply trying to survive. And once we've done that, finally we can enjoy that brand new small park that's only open to the public three hours a day and was created as a compromise to allow the developers to build a 35-story luxury spa tower. Finally! 🧐



//GUEST CONTRIBUTOR @mahoganyhands



functionally dead

# Left Feel'd



hosted by  
matthew brian  
cohen

with  
special guest  
**SLAVOJ  
ŽIŽEK!**

A lot happened  
this week—  
Let's see how  
the *Left Feel'd*  
about it.

Topic of  
the week:  
**PRO ACT & THE  
FILLIBUSTER**

Hey, while you're reading this, you could be listening to  
*Functionally Dead's* new podcast, available to our \$5 tier  
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**OUR PATREON**





# CLIMATE SCIENTISTS WARN WHITE BOY SUMMER COULD LAST UNTIL WHITE BOY WINTER

//BRIAN KELLEY GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

IN THE WAKE OF DECADES of recording one summer hotter and whiter than the preceding one, climate experts agree: we could be in for an abnormally long, hot white boy period.

Leading scientific expert and brand ambassador for Lids, Mr. Chet Hanks, took to social media this past month to proclaim a primary warning to the general public about the adverse effects that this prolonged white boy period could have on our planet and what that means for prevention moving forward. Translated from the original Jamaican, Hanks said, “There is no greater threat to the long term health and biodiversity of our planet than the climate catastrophe of longer and hotter white boy summers. Ya heard? If societies across the globe don’t take aggressive action, the damage could be too severe to repair, turning our planet into a **white boy world**—literally, as well as in the sense Robin DiAngelo means it.”

The novel science of white boy summers makes research very developmental at this point. What can be known are the findings of the Berkley report on Ecological effects of White Boy Summer (known as B.E.W.B.S.) that catalogue an exhaustive database on an exhausting climate phenomenon. The report finds that a failure to curb the destructive effects of white boy summer will lead to a whitening of the ice caps, mass shooting of endangered species, and bubbling, almost seltzer-like, lakes and oceans; conditions which would render the planet uninhabitable for millions of humans without privilege.

B.E.W.B.S. went on to recommend stringent caps on “white boy emissions” including grease splatters, oil spills, milk squirts, angsty rock, late night monologues, threatening manifestos, self-hating social media posts, soul patch shavings, mayonnaise stains, leftover take-out containers, screenplays, podcasts, Monster

Energy cyclones, and re-runs of *Antiques Roadshow*. “The damage from white boy weather,” the report maintains, “hits our environment like a gamer hits drywall.” Meteorological sources forecast white boy winters severe enough to register a “Didn’t want to date that skank anyways” on the Rodger scale.

Washington has taken forceful and swift action on combating the existential crisis of a white boy weather catastrophe. President Biden announced this past Friday at a press conference that he is already opening a look into a thought about a wish upon a dream of a committee that can open an inquiry into an investigation. The President went on to urge the American people not to “riot and loot, especially at great places like P.C. Richard and Son’s,” before displaying a line of Panasonic handy cams, which he went on to espouse would be great for documenting the inevitable destruction of Earth at the hands of white boy seasons.

Consumers across the globe will have to make the personal choice of whether to believe in science or white boys. Research has illustrated the point that if nations don’t put forward every non-binding contract possible to stunt white boy destruction, the next white boy winter could be deadly and paid. 🙄

---

Go get more Brian Kelley -  
IG: @briankelleywastaken  
Twitter: @abriankelley





# YANG: MY DOE WILL TEACH ALL NYC CHILDREN A SOLID MAGIC: THE GATHERING DRAFT STRATEGY BY AGE SEVEN

//JAMES DWYER

ANDREW YANG UNVEILED HIS VISION for the Department of Education this weekend at a campaign stop in front of the *Magic: the Gathering* display at the Atlantic Center Target in Downtown Brooklyn.

“After a long year spent social-distancing, the city’s children have been missing out on foundational, early-development skills, such as learning how to socialize with others, sharing, and developing a strong draft strategy for *Magic: the Gathering* pre-release events,” Yang said at the event. He then picked up a starter deck and pointed to the display behind him, “Strixhaven’s release has come and gone, and 68% of the city’s six year olds couldn’t tell you what a mana curve even is.” A visibly frustrated Yang threw the starter deck, hitting a Target employee in the shin. It was at this point that the store manager asked the Yang campaign to leave. Yang laid out the rest of his vision just outside of the GameStop on the first floor of the Atlantic Center Mall.

“If you elect me as the next mayor of New York City, I vow to reinvest in early-childhood development. I will hire *Magic the* >>



>> *Gathering* pros like Jon Finkel and Kai Budde to the Department of Education on day one as part of a ‘Young Planeswalkers’ pilot program to give our kids the mulligan that standard M:TG rules promise them. My DOE will bring live tournaments back and work with the Parks Department to fast-track the permitting of outdoor pre-release events in city parks, giving them special priority over community events and protests. This pandemic has been hard on our children and has left them woefully behind. No child should find themselves in a scenario where they are entering the first grade and unable to recognize that they’ve drafted too many 5-7 drops with no strategy for getting creatures on the board early.”

When questioned on how this would help bridge the year of virtual learning at home that has left many young New Yorkers at a deficit, Yang opened a box of booster packs and screamed “Magic cards for everyone!” before throwing them into the small crowd, hitting one child in the shin. He ended the stop by cracking open a booster pack of Time Spiral Remastered and yelling “Woah! A foil Thoughtseize! I already bought five of these—who wants it?” 🍷



# HOW TO CHOKER ON POTATO SALAD AND DIE WHILE YOUR AUNT IS DEFENDING THE POLICE

//DIANA KOLSKY

YOU FEEL HER. SHE’S COMING. You can smell her peach body lotion. She’s here. Aunt Tammy is standing directly next to you.

The cornhole court is full. You’ve already made the rounds. There’s nowhere to go. You clear your throat under your mask, smiling with your eyes. You must look at her. It’s time.

“Tammy, hi! I love your... shirt.”

“It’s a tunic,” she sneers. “I found it in a catalog and bought it in seven colors. This is supposed to be magenta, but I think it’s more purple.” She has ketchup on her heaving bosom. She’s not wearing a mask, even though your mom promised everyone would be.

“Yeah. I like it.” You look down at the styrofoam plate you’re holding. This bit of disposable flatware will exist on Earth for three thousand years longer than you will. It’s loaded up with a mayonnaise-forward potato salad. A cousin screamed earlier that it was “too spicy” and spit some out on the patio. What happened to your fork? You must have dropped it near the Miller Lite cooler...

Aunt Tammy leans in. There’s lip gloss on her teeth: “What do you think of Barb’s potato salad?” >>



>> “It’s good,” you say immediately, though it’s obvious from your collapsing plate and lack of utensil that you haven’t taken a bite.

“I think it’s too spicy, gross, not for me,” she says. “But maybe you’ll like it.”

“Yeah.” Your eyes dart around the yard. Kids screaming, meat grilling, men looking at grass. You start to sweat. Finally, your gaze rests on a ‘Back the Blue’ yard sign. You try to course-correct, but it’s too late. Tammy is looking at it, too. No no no no no no...

“I don’t know why they have to make it so political,” she says.

It’s happening. What now—play dumb? Go there? It’s so hot all of a sudden. You finally look up. She’s staring at you. Did she get closer?

“The police,” she continues. “Why is that even a political conversation?” You freeze. Is she serious? The plate is so heavy. The children’s screams are so shrill— “Ya know?” And just like that, she jostles you with her purple elbow.

“Um, well, it’s very political, I think. The police are, um, the militia of the ruling class,” you stammer. Why are you talking? The words keep coming out from you. “They’re literally murdering people, just mowing them down. And there’s no accountability.

It’s terrifying.” Should you continue? No. Yet you continue: “They terrorize Black communities. The best neighborhoods are under-policed and overfunded, so I mean, we don’t even need cops at all, I don’t think...”

Deep breath. You look up. Tammy’s glare is a brick shithouse. Did the screaming stop? It’s 110°.

“OK *Diana*.” She says your name like it’s a curse word or a piece of Barb’s unctuous potato salad she is trying to dislodge from her soul. “Then who is an old lady going to call when she’s getting *raped* by a gang?”

You laugh-cough. You’re blinded by sweat. Your mask is so tight. “Um, well. Have you ever actually heard of that ever happening?

Like, ever?”

Tammy’s rosacea is angry, pulsating—

You can’t look away. You can’t stop: “And if you have, have you ever heard of cops actually helping a victim, or solving a rape?”

Suddenly you have the feeling of being alone on stage at the end of a tunnel. You break eye contact with Aunt Tammy and look around. Everyone has stopped what they’re doing and is staring at you. The Dingleberries still sway on the ladder bars; the hot-dogs are burning on the grill.

Tammy takes a step towards you. You can feel her boiling hot breath on your mask.

You slowly lift the 200-pound plate of potato salad to your chin and inhale. You feel warm congealed chunks of starch vacuum into your open throat. There is no taste, only texture. You do not chew. You wait till your dry mouth is completely full and attempt to swallow. You can’t. You can’t? No, you really can’t. Are you choking? Yes, you think, as you double over and cough uselessly, you’re choking. You’re choking! Thank God in heaven, you’re choking! You’re free. 🤖



//ROSIE WALEN



4.

HENRY (cont'd)  
I'm gonna need my pet deposit.

MRS. KIM  
You got it when I moved in.

HENRY  
That was for your old dog that ran in front of my Highlander. How do I know this new dog's not gonna chew up the blinds?

Mrs. Kim reluctantly gives Henry an envelope marked "Grandson college." Henry keeps walking down the hall.

HENRY (V.O.)  
Best of all, because housing is a basic human right, you could charge tenants anything you wanted. There was no regulation. It's like a license to steal. It's a license to do anything.

INT. ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT - DAY - OK WE STOPPED DOING THE TRACKING SHOT NOW

Henry with a SINGLE MOTHER. She's holding an infant while several toddlers run around screaming. Henry's got his handsome hand out, waiting for the rent.

HENRY (V.O.)  
If I'm your landlord, you gotta pay me rent every month no matter what. Lost your job? Fuck you, pay me. Surprise hospital bills? Fuck you, pay me. Did a sewer main break and now shit water is coming out of the shower drain? I'll get back to you about it on Monday.

EXT. HENRY'S HOUSE - DAY

Henry's home in Sheepshead Bay. Tommy and Jimmy are drinking beer and grilling by the pool. Henry is lounging around the pool on a float with his shirt open, looking like an Adonis.

HENRY (V.O.)  
Me and Tommy and Jimmy, we always called each other Landlordfellas. Like you said to somebody, "you're gonna like this guy, he's alright, he's a Landlordfella. He's one of us."  
(MORE)

5.

HENRY (V.O.) (cont'd)  
A landlord. You understand?" But Jimmy and I could never be made because we had Irish blood and bad credit. To become a landlord, they had to trace all your relatives back to the old country, and you had to have enough money to buy a piece of property. To be a landlord was the highest honor they could give you. It means nobody could fuck around with you. It also meant you had a passive income and you could fuck around and do nothing all day. It was a license to steal. It was a license to do anything.

INT. HENRY'S BATHROOM - MORNING

Henry is in the shower. His wet body is nothing short of erotic. A shower radio plays a news report.

REPORTER (V.O.)  
Despite the fact that it's not safe to work during a global pandemic, the United States government refuses to offer rent forgiveness.

Henry is elated. He pounds the shower tile in pure jubilation.

HENRY  
Jimmy! He did it!

INT. SMALL CLAIMS COURT - MORNING

Henry is in small claims court. He's on the witness stand. It's not a 100% analog to the scene at the end of Goodfellas where Henry goes into witness protection, but a rock solid stud like Henry would NEVER rat on his friends.

HENRY (V.O.)  
If a tenant came after us, it was easy to disappear. The buildings were owned by a shell company that was in my mother-in-law's name. I never voted, except against rent control. I never paid taxes, that's for damn sure. My birth certificate and my giant ring of keys, that's all you'd ever have to know I was alive.





LAWYER

Mr. Hill, do you see your former tenant in the courtroom today?

HENRY

Yes.

LAWYER

Can you please point him out for the members of the jury?

Henry points at DAVEY.

LAWYER (cont'd)

And you're claiming that you aren't responsible for Mr. Scantino's unit collapsing due to termite infestation in the load bearing drywall?

HENRY

The building in question was owned by a separate limited liability corporation, and I am not legally liable for upkeep or repairs. It's all in the lease.

HENRY (V.O.)

See, the hardest thing for me was leaving the life. We had it all. I had paper bags filled with rent checks stashed in the kitchen. I had a caulking gun under the mattress. I had a sugar bowl full of coke next to the bed. Oh yeah, I forgot to mention, I did a lot of cocaine.

Henry gets up and talks to the camera. The viewer is incredibly turned on.

HENRY

Didn't matter. It didn't mean anything. When I was broke, I'd throw my tenants out on the street, sell the building, and use the profits to buy another one. Real estate prices kept going up, and when the market crashed, I got subsidies and tax breaks from the government. We ran everything. We paid off cops. We paid off lawyers. We paid off judges. Everybody had their hands out. Everything was for the taking. And now it's all over.

EXT. HENRY'S HOME IN ARIZONA - MORNING

Henry outside in his bathroom. He's picking up the paper.

HENRY

Wait, sorry, it's not over. I'm still a landlord! I just live in Arizona now. Pretty sweet, huh? I even found a cool restaurant that will make you egg noodles with ketchup. My favorite! Yum yum!

FADE TO BLACK.

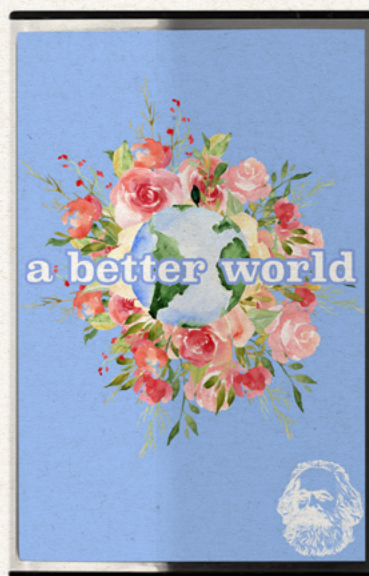


# A Better World: A May Day Mixtape

//BRADY O'CALLAHAN & SEAN O'REILLY

This mixtape is part of a monthly series by Brady O'Callahan. For fresh tunes like this in your inbox every month, check out [A Show Sometime](#).

[Listen on Spotify](#)



//TAPE ART BY BRADY O'CALLAHAN

## Something Better, Something Beautiful

I'M A SOCIALIST. That does mean something to me. There's an ideology, a morality, and a history there. I'm proud of the tradition of struggle, hope, fury, despair, and love of humanity that label entails. All of these currents are reflected in this mix in some way. All these songs are, however, about one thing: liberation. The liberation of humanity and the unleashing of the will to create something better, something beautiful. I hate the capitalist system for the same reasons as Barabara Dane, in addition to the fact that humanity can never truly flourish in the conditions of the world as they are today. Everything we buy, consume, watch, wear is all the result of someone else's suffering and exists only for the profit of someone else. This inhibits us all, it stagnates us as a species, and the labor which we all exploit is the work of people.

These songs, from different times, places, and (in some cases) languages other than my own all express that suffering. Express the experience of it or the solidarity required to end it. And I hope

these are things that this mix inspires in you. I hope Ab-Soul makes you mad. I hope Nina Simone touches your heart and mind and helps you realize you too do not know what freedom would actually feel like. I hope Phil Ochs makes you laugh at the exact type of person we're all in danger of becoming when we stop empathizing and we lose that solidarity. I hope Kendrick Lamar gives you a glimpse of what America actually is. And I hope Todd Snider helps you realize they need you more than you fucking need them. This mix is fun, there are bangers, and I hope you listen to the words. A better world IS possible, and I hope you see that. And that's all we have: hope in the possibility that we can make this world flourish. I'll end on a quote from Irish Socialist and rebel James Connolly that I think simply states what I have taken two paragraphs to almost express: "For our demands most moderate are, We only want the earth."

Good Luck, Comrades. —Sean O'Reilly



# I READ THIS ZINE, AND INDIA IS STILL IN CRISIS

## What Do I Do Now?

//PRIYA PATEL

**GIVE INDIA** Give India is one of the largest platforms for donating to COVID relief, housing other organizations and their initiatives as well. You can choose to donate to a variety of COVID relief fundraising efforts by Give India itself including supplying oxygen, food security, and supporting families of those who lost their life to COVID. Separately, you can also donate to smaller more specialized organizations by scrolling down to the bottom of the donation page.

**FEEDING FROM FAR** Your donation would contribute to efforts relieving COVID related food insecurity and hunger to those living in the Govandi slum in Mumbai. Feeding from Far supplies a nonperishable kit of pantry staples to households with the aim of feeding 200,000 meals to over 7,000 people.

**GOONJ - RAHAT COVID** GOONJ focuses on daily wagers and migrant workers providing them with family essential kits for those who are struck by COVID in both cities and rural areas. They believe in restoring livelihoods and dignity for those impacted during COVID, while also keeping goals to sustain these relief efforts during the aftermath of COVID. They also have long term initiatives including menstrual hygiene and education that you can also contribute to. Their site lists donations in rupees, however, if you don't feel like converting currencies, you can scroll down and choose another site that hosts their fundraising efforts where you can donate in USD.

**MAZDOOR KITCHEN** This volunteer run community kitchen that serves North Delhi not only provides food and rations, but also plans to offer employment opportunities as they expand their efforts to making masks, employment through the kitchen itself, and supporting small food businesses.

**PINT NETWORK** Founded by a 24 year old doctor, this organization helps COVID patients in need of convalescent plasma. So far, they have helped save the lives of over 700 people, assisted the care of over 8,000 patients across 12 cities. Your donation contributes to their efforts to replenish depleted blood banks, help frontline workers, support families of COVID-19 patients, and administer antibody testing.

**KHANNA CHAHIYA** After realizing during COVID that Mumbai needed a functional crisis management infrastructure during economic shutdown, this organization created the Hunger Map Project which improves the efficiency of systems already in place to accurately determine those communities in need of urgent attention. They provide meals, grocery/essentials kits, and coveted Parle G biscuits (seriously) to those in need.

Peruse more issues of Functionally Dead [here](#) and if you're interested in contributing, [check this out](#).



IN THE NEXT ISSUE: PELOSI'S KENTE CLOTH SACRIFICES ITSELF TO VOLCANO



I heard you were dead.

FOLKS TO BLOCK:

//ANDY BUSTILLOS//MATTHEW BRIAN COHEN//JAMES DWYER//PATRICK KEENE//MAX KNOBLAUCH//DIANA KOLSKY//DAN LOPRETO//  
//TIM MAHONEY//CATHRYN MUDON//BRADY O'CALLAHAN//SEAN O'REILLY//PRIYA PATEL//ROSIE WHALEN//LIZ WIEST//