

Last Week This Week 9-25-16

Wrath /ræθ/ *noun*

1: strong vengeful anger or indignation
(chiefly used for humorous or rhetorical effect)

2: retributory punishment for an offense or a crime: divine chastisement

On WBT

David's review of Mark Thompson's *The White War* and the [particular stupidity](#) of the Italian front in World War One.

With the murders of unarmed black men by police happening over and over and over, with no apparent consequences, it's time to revisit Matt's [Letter to America](#) from one year ago, which specifically addresses the murder of young boy Tamir Rice, but is sadly still relevant.

Editor's Recommendations

American Politics

Whatever your views on Barack Obama, it is hard to argue that he has been one of our most dignified, thoughtful, and well-read presidents. [This interview](#) with the historian Doris Kearns Goodwin shows why.

Yet another metaphor for the Donald Trump rolling fiasco: it's like a low-brow piece of [punk rock-inspired](#) performance art.

World Politics

Professor Timothy Snyder writes about the long-dead [Russian fascist](#) ideologue who provides Vladimir Putin's favorite

bedtime reading, and how this relates to the undermining of democracy around the world as Putin's main aim. This involves Trump, obviously.

Alex Tabbarok in *The Atlantic* makes the strong case for the [moral failure](#) of the current system of closed international borders.

War and Art

[According to Bryan Doerries](#), the founder of *Theatre of War*, Greek tragedies "Don't mean anything. They do something." Is he right? Should returning veterans privilege the emotional over the intellectual?

Free Speech

David Bromwich with an [illuminating](#), original and exhaustive take on the problem of innocence and censorship (a topic often discussed at WBT).

Punk! Last Week This Week: 9/11 Music Edition

On 9/11—Punk, Protest, and Witness: WBT Editors Choose Their Jams

There was a chance, in 1991, for the US to take a responsible role in leading the world into the 21st century. Rather than do this, we worked instead to profit from former enemies'

weakness. In doing so, in prioritizing our own interests over those of others, we lost an unusual opportunity to build a peaceful world based on trust and collaboration. Ten years later, with America atop an increasingly conspicuous global pyramid scheme, we breathed a collective sigh of relief when we were granted a reprieve from judgment. Rather than face the consequences of our behavior, we doubled down—and, on 9/11/2001, decided to assign blame outside our national borders.

On this, the fifteenth anniversary of our collective moral cowardice, a national giving in to neurotic fear of cultural or individual weakness unbecoming of exponentially the most powerful nation on earth, we recommend listening to the following songs and albums. On your way to work, during lunch, returning home from a profitable (or unprofitable) day at the grind.

Don't worry, an admission of guilt isn't weakness—it's evidence of strength. Like your 2nd grade teacher said, correctly, and many adults seem to have forgotten.

Adrian Bonenberger's Selections

Before 9/11—We saw it coming: Bad Religion [Recipe for Hate](#) (1993)

After 9/11: Green Day [American Idiot](#) (2004)

Matthew Hefti's Selections

The last solid album release before a generation of teens all lost our innocence still takes me right back to that summer before 9/11, those few carefree months between high school and college. They changed the album and song name after 9/11, but it seems almost prescient: Jimmy Eat World [Bleed American](#)

(2001)

Whether it be the wars, our apathy towards our nation's poor, or our xenophobia toward refugees, Rise Against is post-9/11 protest punk that comes closest to perfection. Rise Against [Appeal to Reason](#) (2008)

Drew Pham's Selections:

After 9/11, Sage Francis lamented the bigotry of our newfound nationalism, and presaged the longest war in American history: [Makeshift Patriot](#) (2002)

Himanshu Kumar Suri, otherwise known as Heems, was a student at Stuyvesant High School on 9/11. In [Patriot Act](#) (2015), he recounts that day, and the racially charged days that followed.

Mike Carson's Selections:

James McMurty's 2005 ["We Can't Make it Here"](#) pretty much sums up the anger of much of middle America over the last fifteen years and does much to explain our current election.

And, though this might be cheating, I always think of David Bowie's 1997 ["I'm Afraid of Americans"](#) and Warren Zevon's 1978 ["Lawyers, Guns and Money"](#) this time of year.

<https://youtu.be/u7APmRkatEU>

<https://youtu.be/lP5Xv70qXiM>

Last Week This Week 8-28-16

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On WBT

Adrian writes about how deep [war memories](#) go in today's Eastern Europe, especially Ukraine

Another one by Adrian discussing the legacy of the British [retreat at Dunkirk](#) and its possible modern corollary—Brexit

Editor's Recommendations

American Politics

Charles R. Pruitt writes on how politics is gutting the [equalizing institutions](#) that at one point made the American Dream seem more than a myth: public Ivies

Big brother [watches Baltimore](#) and Big Business reaps the bounty, reported in Bloomberg

World Politics

Piece by Anne Applebaum in New Republic that [bears revisiting](#) on Ukraine

Wired peers inside the clandestine world of [Soviet cartography](#)

A deeper look into Russia's well-oiled [propaganda machine](#)

Military

SEAL Team six and [a man left for dead](#)

History

The story of the [East India Company](#), the original corporate raiders and a private empire unto itself

Sports and Politics

[Old but good](#) during run-up to NFL season and a propos patriotism and the Colin Kaepernick pseudo-scandal

Yuppies

A [viral video](#) of yuppie privilege becomes a Chicago neighborhood walking tour

Last Week This Week 6-7-16

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On WBT

In case you missed it the first time, check out Drew Pham's fascinating essay [Every Soldier a Thread](#).

Mike Carson wrote about why the nation's capital does not need [another war memorial](#).

Editor's Recommendations

Fiction

Matt Gallagher has a [new short story](#) out in Playboy this month.

Politics

Graham Allison and Niall Ferguson [propose](#) a President's Historical Council, which is actually a fantastic idea, as long as Niall Ferguson is not one of the historians.

What is wrong with people who use their children as a mouthpiece for politic opinions? Sam Kriss tells us [here](#).

From Occupy Wall Street to Bernie Sanders, there has been a growing public recognition of the defects of our brand of late American capitalism. But what could replace it? One little part of the answer may be [local cooperatives](#), whose success in Italy is a great model of bottom-up economic solutions. (One of the editors of this website is a member of this Italian coop and can attest to how well it works).

Film

Most reviews of new superhero film Suicide Squad are negative, but they missed the main point: its all about [families and divorce](#).

Last Week This Week 7-24-16: Donald Trump Edition

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On WBT

David James discussed [Plato's Republic](#) and how it relates to Donald Trump—namely, what kind of leader and democracy do we really want?

Adrian Bonenberger writes [live from Ukraine](#), where an expected Russian Orthodox Church "March for Peace" might turn out to be something straight out of the Russian dictator's playbook.

Editor's Recommendations

Trump and Foreign Relations

Speaking of Putin, distinguished historian and expert in Eastern Europe, Timothy Snyder, has written [a fascinating, and](#)

[scary, article](#) about how Putin is an ideal model for Trump.

[Franklin Foer at Slate](#): "Vladimir Putin has a plan for destroying the West, and it looks a lot like Trump." Lots of research and detail here.

The same author earlier this year [profiled Trump's new campaign manager](#), a certain Paul Manafort. The man has apparently worked for two dozen dictators in a long career which is almost unbelievably devoid of humanity or morality of any kind.

Trump as the Republican Party's Frankenstein's Monster

Norm Ornstein and Thomas Mann [detail in great depth](#) how the Republican Party laid the groundwork for a no-nothing populist demagogue by waging war on government itself for three decades.

Trump, The Sociopath

Trump's [ghostwriter](#) regrets his part in painting a myth shrouding a deeply troubled man.

Trump's Character

There is not enough time in the day to list all the ways Trump is a flawed candidate, but [this article](#) does a great job summarizing how much he has faked out the Republican Party for his own egotistical ends.

Matt Taibbi at Rolling Stone with a laugh-out-loud, over-the-top [annihilation](#) of everything Trump is and represents.

Trump Satire

Remember that Christmas classic cartoon, How the Grinch Stole Christmas? It taken't take much changes by [College Humor](#) to rework the orange Trump monster into something scarier than the Grinch.

The office of American President is too much power and work for a single person. Donald Trump does not want to do any work but wants to be a figure-head. [This ingenious article](#) shows how we can kill two birds with one stone by reforming the American political system. All hail, King Trump!

Last Week This Week: 7-17-16

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On WBT

Drew Pham's essay [Each Soldier a Thread](#) meditates on the Orlando massacre and how violence effects soldiers long after coming home.

David James reviewed two more [recent science books](#) that attempt to answer some of the biggest questions of life, just like the title of Paul Gauguin's masterpiece: Where Do We Come From? Who are We? Where are We Going?

Editor's Recommendations

Military

General Petraeus is too busy to talk to Nick Turse.

Turse [wonders](#): How do generals who lose wars get so busy?

For some reason, War on the Rocks is becoming the publication without peer for delivering skeptical reports on NATO's efficacy, as well as why people won't participate in it. The [latest installment](#) in their series *how to bias people against NATO*

Politics and American History

John Quincy Adams was the only person to return to Congress after being President. [This article](#) shows how his knowledge of history and deeply held sense of morality made him into an effective leader and someone today's politicians could learn something from.

Bush Jr. has been hesitant to leave his beloved ranch and show his face in public life since his term ended. He insists, however, that history will judge him differently. [One recent biography](#) shows why that is probably not the case.

Politics and French History

"[The Other Paris](#)" by George Packer. French Muslims struggle to place themselves in a society that seems to reserve liberty, equality, and brotherhood only for its White, native-born citizens. Packer asks the question, are Paris' suburbs incubators for terrorism?

Just because you are a scam artist like Trump, doesn't mean you have to advocate inhumanity like Trump. Roger Pearson at *Lapham's Quarterly* [reveals](#) that the iconoclast and champion of liberty Voltaire would flourish on Wall Street today.

Literary Parody

A Zambian woman [writes about](#) her frightening gap year in Cornwall.

Last Week This Week: 6-26-16 (Brexit and Michael Herr)

Since the last time we conducted a wrapup, the following has occurred: NATO finished the largest joint exercises in over a decade, England voted to leave the EU, personal hero to all WBTERS (and creative non-fiction pioneer) Michael Herr passed away, and Bernie Sanders pledged to vote for Hillary Clinton, which some had feared would not be the case. For your reading edification:

Michael Carson's essay about Michael Herr, published first in 2014: <https://www.wrath-bearingtree.com/2014/02/michael-herrs-teenage-wasteland/>

Adrian Bonenberger's final dispatch from Dragoon Ride and Anaconda, the US military's slice of the joint NATO exercises—sadly pro-EU and pro-NATO (given England's decision to exit the agreement): <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/21/dragon-ride-6-what-eastern-europeans-say-as-they-watch-the-u-s-and-german-militaries-head-toward-russia/>

Brexit: a tragic split that undermines decades of progress in erasing the national rivalries between European powers, nearly culminating in the end of the world during World War II (which was concluded with the detonation of atomic weapons). Persepective from The Economist, a magazine that has spent years vilifying the EU and deriding the Euro as a viable currency and now, now that it's really happened, seems to be feeling slightly differently about things <http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21701265-how-mini-mise-damage-britains-senseless-self-inflicted-blow-tragic->

split

Is a simple majority a high enough bar for important decisions in democracies, such as the Brexit vote? This article argues not, especially considering that low voter turnout means that only a third or so of voters generally decide things for the whole

country. <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/brexit-democratic-failure-for-uk-by-kenneth-rogooff-2016-06>

As if the Brexit vote wasn't bad enough for political reasons, it also empowers the type of "leader" who think protecting the environment and addressing climate change is a waste of time. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/damian-carrington-blog/2016/jun/24/uks-out-vote-is-a-red-alert-for-the-environment>

Is the Brexit victory a good sign for Trump? Probably not. http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/politics/2016/06/embattled_whiteness_gave_us_brexit_it_won_t_give_us_president_trump.html

Last Week This Week 6-5-16

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On WBT

Drew Pham [writes](#) about the burn pit registry, Afganistan and cancer. Make sure to give it a read if you didn't get a chance already.



WBT Friends

Nate Bethea [does not care](#) whether veterans support Trump only that Trump supports veterans.

Editor's Recommendations

Military

Glossing a young Ernst Jünger, Vietnam veteran Karl Marlantes [argues](#) that some people love war. Jünger also loved bugs too, like a lot. Not sure what that means for Marlantes' argument.

Economic Zeitgeist

The good news is that experts are [finally admitting](#) that neoliberalism actually exists as an ideology, and that it is most likely dying. The bad news is that we don't know if the system that replaces it will be better or worse.

[The living wage](#), or universal basic income: a fantastic idea that is finally being implemented in some European countries, some local jurisdictions in the US, and one major charity organization. Let's hope that the obvious success these

experiments have will help the UBI to catch on everywhere else.

Literature

Why do people not read Henry Miller [anymore](#)? Have we become prudes?

Last Week This Week 5-29-16

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On WBT

Two articles for Memorial Day: [The first](#) is in memory of some good soldiers who died in Mosul (and an extended attack on Christopher Hitchens). [The second](#) is an eloquent argument for reason over passion in dangerous times (with an extended discussion of the writings of Tiziano Terzani).



Editor's Recommendations

Memorial Day

Benjamin Fountain [goes off](#) on chickenhawks and channels his inner-Bitter Bierce in this Memorial Day fusillade.

Turkey

Erdogan is [drunk on power](#). If interested, check out WBT's [take](#) on the problem of Erdogan and free speech.

Retribution and Remorse

"Richard Weisman, a sociologist at York University in Toronto, says that in his research of different legal systems, he frequently encountered the view that "remorse is weakness." Expecting a defendant to show remorse, he says, amounts to ["a ritual of humiliation."](#)

The NY Review of Books [looks at](#) how our judges have failed us.

"Thus, a gap seems to exist between what we as victims want and what third parties decide for us. When we have been slighted, we tend to our own needs rather than pursuing punishment, but when we make decisions on behalf of someone else, [we prefer an eye-for-an-eye strategy](#). This finding calls into question our reliance on the putative impartiality of juries and judges."

"[Restorative justice can be a noble goal](#), but it does not speak to...anguish, which could not be assuaged by public apologies or rectified by community service. Nor can this approach take the place of punishment for most criminals. In fact, restorative-justice programs actually increase the power of the state by adding yet more layers to an already crowded and overworked judicial bureaucracy, subjecting those in trouble with the law to extraordinary levels of social control."

Sentencing [without Remorse](#)

Technology

Coders are increasingly becoming like dog trainers, and less like gods, as programs become smarter. Unrelated news, Adrian began hyperventilating and sweating about 1/3 of the way [through this article](#).

Last Week This Week 5-22-16

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On WBT

[Adrian](#) on Paraguay, the racial utopia that wasn't and America's bloodiest war.



Editor's Recommendations

Politics

Trump is not a Fascist. He is the first American version of the quintessential [Latin-American caudillo](#).

[An interview](#) about American exceptionalism with the always interesting Andrew Bacevich.

Military

Band of Brothers? [Sex crimes and cover-up](#) in the 101 Airborne.

The Afghan who saved Marcus Luttrell has been left high and dry by the "Lone Survivor," and now [claims](#) things went down differently than in the book.

A new book from [Sebastian Junger](#). We have let veterans down, he argues, because we hate ourselves.

Modernity

Two very different articles about different sides of the world detailing a similar sad movement toward [extremism](#) and [violence](#).

Fiction

A [nice essay](#) on the superb Annie Dillard and returning to the books we love.

Last Week This Week 5-15-16

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On WBT

Adrian [argues](#) that you shouldn't stop talking to people just because they like Trump.



WBT Friends

Adrian's 2nd [piece](#) about enduring Ranger School for Task and Purpose.

Editor's Recommendations

Military

The Afghan who saved Marcus Luttrell has been left high and dry by the "Lone Survivor," and now [claims](#) things went down differently than in the book—this is long but must-read.

[Suicides](#) linked to SEAL training.

Humanities

Why is philosophy important in schools? These two articles demonstrate why we need more than STEM education from K-12 and beyond.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/is-this-on-the-exam-the-pressing-need-for-philosophy-in-schools-1.2627951>

<http://bigthink.com/paul-ratner/teaching-students-philosophy-will-improve-their-academic-performance-shows-study>

Revisiting an old controversy with Irving Howe's [1991 essay](#) on The Value of the Canon, and what constitutes aesthetic value in the arts.

Politics

President Obama has belatedly [come down in support](#) of an idea that will make our elections, and our democracy, stronger and more open: Election Day as a Federal Holiday.

Slate's Rebecca Onion [discovered](#) Reiff

Last Week This Week 5-8-16

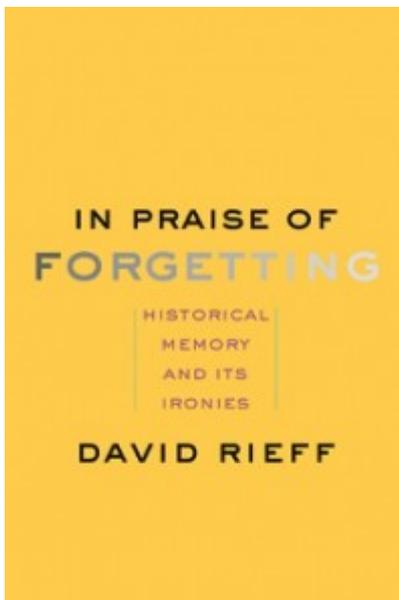
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On WBT

Carson [reviews](#) David Rieff's *In Praise of Forgetting*—find out why it might be worthwhile to think about the merits of forgetting.



WBT Friends

Peter Molin at Time Now [reviews](#) Matt Hefti's *A Hard and Heavy Thing*.

Editor's Recommendations

Advocacy

Pennsylvania courts and a Philadelphia jury did [something bold and rare](#), and if others would follow suit, maybe our police forces would be less corrupt.

All Art is Propaganda

Why be an artist and write short stories no one reads when you can write short stories that shape how an entire country thinks? An [essay](#) at the Times wonders at how the gutting of news agencies has made us susceptible to not only Trump but pretty much anything. This [response](#) at the Post calls BS on the piece's literary and journalistic tropes and says there's nothing interesting or new to see here.

Fascinating [interview](#) with Adonis, the celebrated Syrian poet, about the Syrian Civil War, Daesh, East vs. West, and the Holocaust.

Robots

An AI “robo-investor” that [takes](#) annoying human meddling (and ethics!) out the stock market – surely a *profitable* advance to humankind (published March 31, discovered and read this week)

Politics

Trump has become the Republican nominee, short some kind of convention fuckery, or him striking a cynical deal with party leadership—and Don Cheney [says](#) he's got the Trump-man's back (Donald, don't go hunting with him!).

A great [look](#) at how the Democratic Party could really fail against Trump.

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On WBT

Many people enjoyed watching a video of ISIS fighters getting blown up this last week. If this enthusiastic voyeurism made you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, you might be interested in this [essay](#) which wonders at the definition of barbaric.



Editor's Recommendations

Advocacy

Want to know how your police can avoid lawsuits and avoid admissions of guilt in the wake of an unlawful shooting of a

young black man? It would appear your city just needs to fork over \$6 million, the current going [rate](#).

Rev. Daniel J. Berrigan [dies](#) at 94. In an age where Ted Cruz is often mistaken for the voice of U.S. religion, take the time to reflect on a poet and a priest who saw things differently.

Masculinity

Behind every good man is a better woman: An unsigned feature essay [written](#) by Harper Lee on the murder of the Clutter family in Kansas recently surfaced in a publication written for FBI professionals. Truman Capote would later use her material in his book IN COLD BLOOD, only later to say Harper Lee was a mere research assistant.

It's now apparently okay for U.S. presidential candidates to make fun of a woman for being a woman. That means it's time to dust off Klaus Theweleit's [Male Fantasies](#).

Race

“Whatever white people do not know about Negroes reveals, precisely and inexorably, what they do not know about themselves”—people often [forget](#) that what James Baldwin had to say about white people was just as important if not more important than what he had to say about black people.

An intuitive and depressing series of [revelations](#) about company diversity initiatives and how they don't work well.

Politics

Can whomever wrote this deeply misguided [piece](#) be fired twice?

Do you know who Trump's new campaign manager is? If not, don't worry, half the world's would-be [dictators](#) have only good things to say about him.

The Ultimate Nature of Reality

A very difficult [read](#) about reality that will require you to channel your inner Berkeley.

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On WBT

David James [weighs](#) in on the German government's decision to prosecute comedian Jan Böhmermann and tells us why it's perfectly okay to mock a dictator.



WBT Friends

Matthew Komatsu [reviews](#) Brian Castner's new book, [All the Ways to Kill and Die](#). My favorite line: "If there is risk inherent

to the structure of *All the Ways We Kill and Die*, it is that its polygamous marriage of imagination, memoir, and reportage runs the risk of throwing off a genre-monogamous reader." Based off of the rest of the review, this is a risk I'm willing to take.

Adrian Bonenberger [writes](#) for Forbes on Ukrainian pilot Nadiya Savchenko and Putin's latest mistake.

Editor's Recommendations

Advocacy

Congratulations to The Marshall Project, for their recent [Pulitzer Prize](#). If you are at all interested in racial and criminal justice, subscribing to their daily Opening Statement newsletter is a necessity.

Politics

An article [decrying](#) how smug and condescending liberals have become, and if we're honest in our introspection, the editors at WBT can't claim innocence of the same vice at times.

Bill Moyers [discusses](#) the problem of stone-age brains trying to figure out democracy (and perhaps proves the point of the above Vox link—you decide).

The New York Times on how Clinton could win the nomination and lose the [election](#).

Masculinity

Remember the God-awful Tucker Max? Well, supposedly he's moved on from humiliating women and now wants to raise a family. [Read](#) Amber A'Lee Frost at the Baffler to find out whether "Dick-Lit" has truly changed its ways.

A former professor of Adrian's [writes](#) about class fragility in America, and the comment section is BRUTAL.

Birthdays

Friday was Shakespeare's birthday. [Read](#) our favorite Shakespeare scholar, Stephen Greenblatt, on why Shakespeare's "cakes and ale" were always subversive and how Shakespeare's plays have become an unlikely weapon against the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Fiction

Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Sympathizer* [wins](#) the Pulitzer Prize! Check out WBT's [take](#) on the *The Sympathizer*'s literary and historical importance (with respect to war literature) and then buy the [book](#).

Prince

Prince passed away. In his honor, grab some pancakes and check out Prince's favorite Dave Chapelle [skit](#).

Last Week This Week 4-17-16

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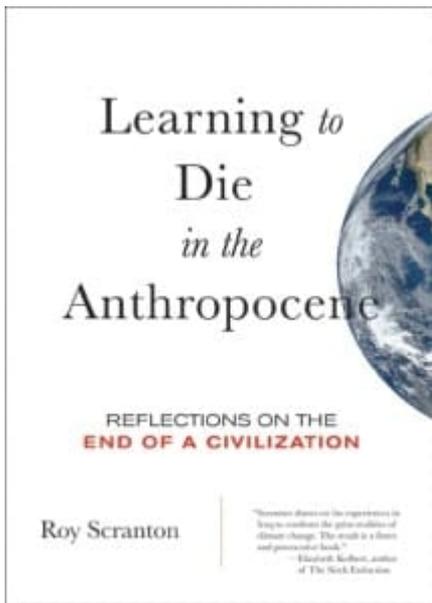
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On WBT

David James [reviews](#) Roy Scranton's Learning to Die in the

Anthropocene and Adrian Bonenberger [argues](#) memorizing policy does not magically make you a good leader.



Editor's Recommendations

Advocacy

538 comes in with the numbers to show that government transparency does more than hold public officials [accountable](#). The release of the Laquan McDonald video finally inspired the citizens of Chicago to get rid of one of America's worst prosecutors, but it also seems to have decreased gun violence in the short term. WBT's Matt Hefti [wrote](#) about our shared guilt for Laquan McDonald's death last year.

Aviva Stahl's ["Why Young Sex Criminals Get Locked Up Forever"](#) explains the bizarre and ineffective world of civil commitments for sex offenders.

Politics

With Bernie Sanders and Britain's Jeremy Corbyn leading a growing socialist zeitgeist (or at least a massive reappraisal of the social contract), George Monbiot at The Guardian has [written](#) a lengthy and informative article on the history and pervasive worldwide influence of Neoliberalism, quite possibly

the source of all our current problems.

[A piece](#) at Slate, possibly influenced by David's recent piece on [Alexander Hamilton](#), discussing how the popularity of the Hamilton musical might affect changes to the proposal of putting a woman on the \$10 bill. For some reason, the proposal is only to put a woman on the back, and it's not clear why Andrew Jackson is still occupying our money.

Excerpt in *Foreign Policy* from a book by David Rieff examining American culture. This chapter discusses [kitsch in the Holocaust Museum](#). Amazing.

Technology

The most famous and controversial Utilitarian philosopher, Peter Singer, [discusses](#) the ethical problems presented by Artificial Intelligence.

Fiction

Fascinating article in [The Paris Review](#) by a man who has actually created an online version of Borges' Library of Babel, and a discussion of the many interesting consequences which still spring from this kind of short stories.

Last Week This Week 4-10-16

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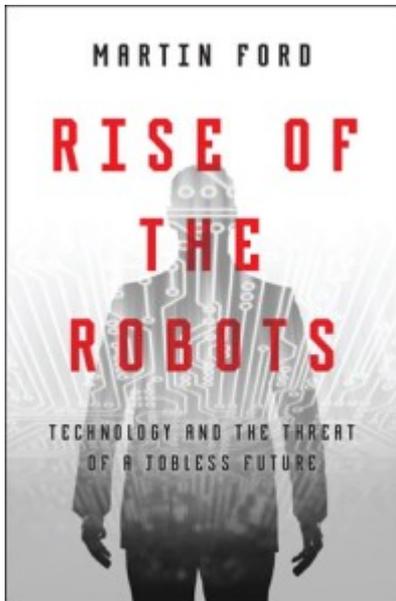
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On WBT

Adrian Bonenberger [reviews](#) Martin Ford's *Rise of the Robots*.



WBT Friends:

AWP '16 has come and gone, with no less than eleven events focused on war writing. Peter Molin at Time Now (and moderator of two of these events) put together a [list](#) beforehand. See what you missed.

Editor's Recommendations

Criticism

Old but [intriguing story](#) by Edward Said about his invitation to discuss Israel and Palestine with Sartre, Beauvoir, and Foucault. It did not go as he expected.

“The bogus populism of the commodity—its warm-hearted refusal to rank, exclude, and discriminate—is based on a blank indifference to absolutely everyone.” [A spirited critique](#) of a society without criticism from everyone's favorite

Christian Marxist, Terry Eagleton.

Journalism

The largest and most consequential leak of *private* information ever—a peek behind the curtain of the ultra-wealthy who rule our world, and an eloquent counterargument to people who say the wealthy are effective at [self-regulation](#).

Is a Cashless Society an Observed [Society](#)?

Military

[Longform reporting](#) by Sam Laird on veterans growing medical marijuana to help their fellow vets.

An ex-Ranger multiple combat tour vet takes a long look at military recruiting in schools, and doesn't like what he [sees](#).

Is Marine Maj. Mark Thompson guilty of sexual assault or not? *The Washington Post* talks to the man [himself](#).

Advocacy

95-year-old attorney Elaine Fischel [explains](#) why she helped defend Japanese war criminals in court after World War Two: “We sent our lawyers there to defend the enemy and I don’t think any other country would do that. To me, it was an example of the United States at its best.”

Fiction

A short story by Margaret Atwood, [“Death by Landscape”](#)

Week in Review 4-3-16

Wrath /ræθ/

noun

1: strong vengeful anger or indignation
(chiefly used for humorous or rhetorical effect)

2: retributory punishment for an offense or a crime: divine chastisement

On WBT

[Michael Carson on Hamlet and History](#)



WBT Friends:

One of our own editors, Matthew Hefti, wrote a novel called [A Hard and Heavy Thing](#), which is structured as a fictional suicide letter. If you haven't read it yet, you're missing out.

Novelist, MFA Professor, and sometimes blues musician Garry Craig Powell with [a very fascinating broad survey](#) of how famous writers have incorporated philosophy into their fiction, and a comparison of American and British writers.

Editor's Recommendations

Criticism

On *Literary Hub* this last week, Dustin Illingsworth [wrote a risky essay](#) about actual suicide letters as a literary genre to be analyzed, studied, and even enjoyed. Is he bold and ultimately correct? Or does the essay go too far in its

voyeurism and exploitation of writers who suffered from depression or mental illness?

[An excellent review](#) of what appears to be another great book on the burgeoning zeitgeist field of the intersection between capitalism, human extinction, and the Anthropocene, with mentions of similar books by Naomi Klein, Elizabeth Kolbert, and Roy Scranton, and the obligatory Gilgamesh reference.

Politics

What if the presidential primary were a [history exam](#)?

Mohamed Amin Chaib is a Belgian, and he also happens to come from a moderate Muslim family. Growing up, his older brother was always there for him and “wouldn’t hurt a fly.” Now, if Mohamed wants to see his older brother, his only chance is to watch horrifying propaganda videos of his older brother brutally murdering innocent people for ISIS or praising the recent terrorist attacks in Belgium. Mohamed can’t bring himself to watch the videos, but he can bring himself [to publicly denounce](#) a member of his own family and the radical beliefs his brother has embraced.

Advocacy

Just last week, the United States 5th Circuit Court of Appeals granted a last-minute stay of execution to John Battaglia, whose attorney had abandoned him on competency claims. The federal court of appeals ruled that all the Texas courts were wrong in denying Battaglia relief, and that he is entitled to new counsel and a hearing to evaluate what the federal court called “colorable claims of incompetency.” With its ruling coming after Battaglia had exhausted appeals in Texas and all petitions for pardon or clemency, [Battaglia’s eleventh-hour reprieve demonstrates](#) we’re still all-too-ready to execute the mentally ill without providing them adequate representation.

The ACLU is currently suing the Louisiana Public Defender's Office for failing to provide adequate representation to indigent defendants, and the Louisiana Public Defender's Office is welcoming and assisting with the lawsuit brought against them. As Louisiana continues to abdicate its responsibility to protect its citizens' Sixth Amendment rights under the Constitution, they continue to try to execute those same citizens. The whole system is in a crisis. Since 2000, 54 new inmates have been sentenced to death row, but 58 inmates have had their cases overturned. When more people have been freed from death row because of wrongful convictions or sentences than have been put on, [it's time to acknowledge](#) our obsession with death results in anything but justice.

Fiction

R.I.P. Jim Harrison, a unique American storyteller. Here's a great interview with him in [the Paris Review](#).

Baseball

With Opening Day (yes THE Opening Day) arriving this week (FINALLY!), *The Isthmus* out of Madison, [WI profiled](#) Commissioner Emeritus Bud Selig, who has returned to his home state of to teach some lucky students at the University of Wisconsin's flagship campus.

Wrath-Bearing Tree Review

3/27/16

"But I have always held that, if he who bases his hopes on human nature is a fool, he who gives up in the face of circumstances is a coward. And henceforth, the only honorable

course will be to stake everything on a formidable gamble: that words are more powerful than munitions."

This Week on WBT:

Adrian Bonenberger on Bernie Bros and American Privilege:

<https://www.wrath-bearingtree.com/2016/03/our-american-privilege/>



The Bernie Bro?

WBT Friends:

Carson on Trump and neocons at Salon:
http://www.salon.com/2016/03/12/trump_would_be_as_bad_as_bush_a_commander_in_chief_who_respects_the_military_does_not_order_soldiers_to_commit_war_crimes/

Editor's Recommendations

Cultural Criticism

Trump is
Loki: <http://thebaffler.com/blog/donald-trump-trickster-god>

We are Patrick
Bateman: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/27/theater/in-hindsight-an-american-psycho-looks-a-lot-like-us.html>

Advocacy

Life in solitary with a homicidal cellmate: <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2016/03/24/the-deadly-consequences-of-solitary-with-a-cellmate?ref=hp-1-122#.o7ZedJ5Kq>

On Georgia's new felony driving law: <https://theintercept.com/2016/03/23/georgias-felony-driving-law-targets-blacks-latinos-undocumented-immigrants/>

Politics

Why the kids aren't all right with Clinton: <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/why-young-people-are-right-about-hillary-clinton-20160325>

Fiction

John McCain is a communist sympathizer: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/25/opinion/john-mccain-salute-to-a-communist.html>

Supposedly a good war story is a fascist-killing war story: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bernardhenri-levy/writers-and-war_b_9547584.html