

Opinion: Opening up about depression

By Steven Petrow, New York Times

I have slogged through a number of difficult situations in recent months, among them the ongoing crises of my elderly parents' illnesses and the suicide of a friend. I never lost my appetite nor burst into tears, and I didn't suffer from any of the other typical symptoms of depression. Maybe I was more irritable than usual, a bit more prone to snap. And yes, I buried myself in my work. But I didn't think I'd tripped down into the rabbit hole of depression.

You would think I would have been more self-aware, both personally and professionally. As a health journalist, I have often used my own stories to write about difficult-to-discuss medical conditions, including learning I had testicular cancer at age 26 and my misdiagnosis with H.I.V./AIDS – back when it was a death sentence. But I had never written about suffering from depression, even though it's plagued me since I first put pen to paper, at age 11, when I started keeping a diary.

Still, I'm far from alone. At least six million men in the United States suffer from depression, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. The true number is likely to be even higher, said Dr. Matthew Rudorfer, the institute's associate director for treatment research, since men are less likely than women to report classic symptoms like low mood, sadness or crying, so they often go undiagnosed. Men, he told me, more often demonstrate "externalizing" symptoms like irritability, anger and aggressiveness, substance and alcohol abuse, risk-taking behaviors and "workaholism."

Read the whole story

Opinion: Debating California's water needs

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

Despite a wet winter, California's historic drought continues to spark fierce – even bitter – debate over how the state's water needs should be met in the future.



Dan Walters

The core issue is whether we should primarily rely on conservation of what may be a permanently diminished water supply, or make more energetic efforts to increase the supply with new dams and reservoirs, desalination plants, etc.

The two are not, of course, mutually exclusive, and both are certain to play some role, in the future, so it's really about their relative emphasis.

Read the whole story

Opinion: Should we name the animals we raise to eat?

By Laura Jean Schneider, High Country News

There's a taboo about naming the creatures you eat, but I'm guilty. "Twisty" was one of the first calves born last year, a red Angus heifer whose spine curved to the left. "Della" was one of our Gap 4 Natural Beeves who'd somehow severed a tendon in one of her front legs in the weaning pasture.

Twisty lived most of her life out on the range, walking a little to the left. Her growth was so stunted I knew she'd be destined for early slaughter. When Sam brought the calf that became Della into the corral, maggots had already taken over the wound. We walked her up to the squeeze chute where I could get a better look: Her left leg hung useless. After excavating the maggots, I cleaned the wound out and wrapped it.

I gave it my best shot. Several times a week I walked Della into the squeeze to doctor her leg. Soon, I had just to open the gates and she'd go in on her own. She would eat cottonseed cake from my fingertips after I finished wrapping her up, and come when I called. While she became more mobile, and the wound closed remarkably well for a tendon injury, it was clear that as she got larger, she would have a harder time navigating.

This fall, when we sorted and shipped the calves, Twisty stayed behind with Della. They had a big pen to themselves and all the alfalfa they could eat. I knew where this was headed.

Read the whole story

Opinion: It's in America's DNA to be 'divisive'

By Wesley Morris, New York Times

Let's face it: There are some things we just can't face. Life's too short. Somebody's too sensitive. And the subject – whatever it is, although lately it's been whatever – is too third-rail dangerous. Border walls, charter schools, closing Guantánamo, global warming, that Al Jazeera documentary claiming Peyton Manning used performance-enhancing drugs, Hillary Clinton, #OscarsSoWhite: Why bring any of this up? Why bring it up now? It's too fraught, too . . . divisive.

This used to be an easy word. In a generic sense, it means “causing disagreement or dissension.” There, “divisive” meets up with our more discursive selves. We like to argue, and what we're arguing about is that which leaves us on opposing sides of a divide. Last year, the world went bananas arguing over the color of a dress posted on Tumblr. Some people saw white and gold. Some people saw black and blue (although they're crazy). And that made the dress divisive. But that kind of divisive seems quaint.

The word is now used in a way that is both antirhetorical and opportunistic.

Read the whole story

Letter: Tahoe Best Friends

helps more than dogs

To the community,

Tahoe Best Friends owner Paige Rice has a big heart not only for all of the family pets that she and her team at Tahoe Best Friends train and care for, but also for those less fortunate members of our community who are in need of a helping hand.

On Feb. 1, Rice sponsored an Adopt A Day of Nourishment dinner held by Bread & Broth at St. Theresa Grace Hall. She brought Tahoe Best Friends' employees Allison Brilliant and Maureen Stuhlman, and friend and customer Judy Arnold to help at her sponsorship dinner.

"The smiles of both the guests and the volunteers brightened the day. It is a wonderful mix of people who share experiences at dinner," said Stuhlman. Complementing the B&B cooks, she added, "The taste of the food was restaurant quality and we all felt the gratitude for it."

The dinner guests agreed, with over half coming back for seconds of the evening's meatloaf, pasta with a mushroom sauce, sauté cauliflower and salad.

Bread & Broth would like to thank Rice and her sponsor crew for their kindness and helpfulness throughout their time at the dinner event. These four ladies kept busy working alongside the B&B volunteers and "enjoyed the wonderful experience." Taking the time to help others and provide the funding to help those struggling with hunger speaks volumes for Rice and her sponsor crew.

Carol Gerard, Bread & Broth

Opinion: The law matters little to EDC officials

By Larry Weitzman

El Dorado County has issues with law: either not understanding it, ignoring it or just plain flaunting it. Mostly it's at our highest levels in county government. But even former county public officials have this problem.

In a recent lawsuit filed by former county Supervisors Ron Briggs and Norma Santiago, and supported by former Chief Administrative Officer Terri Daly, Briggs and Santiago claim they are due back pay from a series of resolutions mostly passed during their terms of office. Daly filed a declaration under penalty of perjury in support of the plaintiffs, Briggs and Santiago.



Larry Weitzman

If I remember right, not only did Santiago praise the inept Daly as a champion of EDC employees (forget EDC residents) but supported paying Daly three times her contract severance pay which amounted to nine months salary or about \$153,000 when she became an embarrassment to the BOS and EDC.

Daly's declaration – under penalty of perjury – may prove to be her undoing.

But notwithstanding any possible quid pro quos, Briggs and

Santiago are suing for alleged back pay. They claim the county owes them because they never received any of the wage increases and benefits via a series of salary and benefit resolutions that other county officials received, maybe \$100,000 or more each. The county has rightly defended this lawsuit.

The Briggs and Santiago case has a fatal legal flaw (as well as factual flaws) and it is called the California Constitution Article XI, Sections 1 and 4. It revolves around how a board of supervisors' compensation is set for charter counties like El Dorado County. Section 1(b) of Article XI says, "Each governing body (BOS) shall prescribe by ordinance the compensation of its members..." It also repeats itself in Section 4 (b). Factual flaws in two declarations under penalty of perjury of Briggs and Daly is the claim that in June 2014 the elected department heads all received a 5 percent raise. Absolutely false, only appointed department heads received raises, such as Daly, then Assistant CAO Kim Kerr and Human Resources Director Pam Knorr, but none of the elected department heads received anything. Now the question becomes does that make Briggs and Daly perjurers?

Additionally, Daly's declaration may be a violation of her severance agreement (Transition Agreement And Release Of Claims, dated Nov. 4, 2014) in that Daly agreed in paragraph 4 (a) of that agreement to assist the "county in regards to matters in which she was involved during her employment including but not limited to assistance in connection with any actual or threatened claims, complaints, litigation or lawsuits in which the county and/or Daly, in her official capacity, are named as subjects or defendants..." The same paragraph further said, "In consideration of the foregoing, county will pay Daly a total of nine (9) months base salary... \$153,519." That amount plus management leave, vacation leave and float time, Cobra insurance, etc., was paid to Daly within the first week of January 2015. Daly's declaration – clearly

against the county – was executed less than 11 months later and violates her severance agreement. Why hasn't the county initiated a lawsuit against Daly for the return of their \$153,519 for Daly's clear violation of her written severance promises? It's a slam dunk!

The basis for Briggs-Santiago claim is a series of county ordinances, the last ordinance (4675) passed on July 12, 2005, which properly set the BOS annual salary as of Jan. 7, 2007, at \$76,875, but added a provision that said, "The salary, set forth above, and benefits of the BOS shall increase in the same proportion as increases in the salary and benefits to elected department heads with such changes becoming effective at the time any salary or benefit modifications for elected department heads become effective as allowed by law." In other words, if a later resolution gives an elected department head a cost of living increase or any other percentage raise, according to the ordinance passed in 2005, the BOS gets the same raise by that resolution.

But therein lies a problem. Salary and benefits of elected department heads and other county officials can be set by resolution and not by the more rigorous standards of an ordinance (an ordinance requires two hearings (readings) and published notice. A resolution can be passed at one hearing and does not require published notice. And as also stated in the California Constitution, Article XI, Section 1 an "ordinance prescribing such compensation shall be subject to referendum," a resolution is not.

Perhaps the BOS who passed those ordinances to allow later increases to the BOS compensation by resolutions for elected department heads thought they found a clever way to bypass the requirements of the California Constitution, but it appears not. The California Constitution clearly and unambiguously requires that only an ordinance can prescribe the BOS compensation. No exceptions.

The EDC BOS passed an ordinance that said BOS compensation can be changed by resolution which is why Briggs and Santiago say they are entitled to additional compensation. The California Constitution only an ordinance and not a resolution can be used to change BOS compensation. In such a conflict, the Constitution clearly trumps.

Santiago and Briggs were both on the BOS for at least eight years. Why did they wait nine years or more before filing this claim? Why didn't they do it seven years ago, five years ago, even two years ago? Maybe they both felt bound by the oath they swore to uphold the California Constitution during office? They are not that deep.

In their pleadings Briggs and Santiago are claiming that the above July 2005 ordinance granted them the later several cost of living raises received by elected department heads but were not done pursuant to an ordinance but were granted all by resolution to those elected department heads; to wit Resolution 323-2001 (Dec. 11, 2011), Resolution 247-2005 (Aug. 16, 2005) and Resolution 089-2014 (June 24, 2014). Therefore, BOS pay was not granted by ordinance, but by resolution which is a strict violation of the California Constitution that says compensation for members of a county BOS are set by ordinance, not by resolution.

This whole scheme is a subterfuge to directly violate the California Constitution and therefore is illegal on its face. It is illegal to pass an ordinance that allows the BOS to give themselves a raise by resolution. This is exactly what Briggs and Santiago claim.

"In looking for people to hire, you look for three qualities, integrity, intelligence and energy. And if they don't have the first, the other two will kill you." Warren Buffet, CEO Berkshire Hathaway.

Larry Weitzman is a resident of Rescue.

Opinion: Don't play 'gotcha' with the Great Emancipator

By Allen C. Guelzo

"If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong," Abraham Lincoln said in 1864. "I can not remember when I did not so think, and feel."

Yet, there has always been doubt about just how great an emancipator he really was. Why did he wait for two years into his presidency to issue his Emancipation Proclamation? And why didn't that proclamation free all the 3.9 million African-Americans then held in bondage?

The answers reset in Lincoln himself. But we know he thought of slavery primarily as an economic injustice rather than a racial one. It forced people into labor they had not chosen, and took from them what that labor produced. Lincoln could remember his own resentment at the easy way his father had rented him out to neighboring farmers and pocketed all his earnings. Lincoln would say later that the turning point of his life came when he was able to keep two silver half-dollars he had earned on the Ohio River for ferrying two strangers out to a passing steamboat. "It was a most important incident in my life. I could scarcely credit that I, a poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day... The world seemed wider and fairer before me."

Slavery, in Lincoln's mind, was any economic relationship based on force and confiscation, and in his experience, it was an offense that rose above questions of race. "I used to be a slave," he said in 1858, "and now I am so free that they let me practice law." He admitted that he had "no purpose to

introduce political and social equality between the white and the black races." But "in the right to eat the bread, without leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns," every African-American "is my equal and the equal of ... every living man."

The great question before the Civil War, however, was what to do about slavery, since it was protected by law in 15 states.

The wisest path to ending slavery, argued Lincoln, was to hem it into the states where it was then legal and admit no further slave states to the Union. But slaveholders had no intention of allowing themselves to be hemmed-in. When Lincoln was elected president in 1860, 11 of the slave-holding states organized themselves as the Confederate States of America, and civil war broke out between North and South. But even as president of the United States, Lincoln lacked any clear constitutional authority to undo state laws about slavery.

That left Lincoln only one other option, and it was the most risky of all—a proclamation of emancipation, freeing the slaves, issued not in his civilian authority as president but as a military necessity decreed in his capacity as commander-in-chief, relying on his presidential "war powers." No president had ever actually attempted to use these "war powers." But time and the opportunity to act against slavery were slipping away, and Lincoln "had about come to the conclusion that we must free the slaves or be ourselves subdued." On July 22, 1862, he submitted a draft emancipation proclamation to his cabinet, then issued it in preliminary form on Sept. 22, and finally signed it into law on Jan. 1, 1863.

The proclamation did not free slaves in the four slave states that had refused to join the rebels. A "war powers" proclamation could only operate on those who were at war with the government. Not until the 1864 congressional elections gave Lincoln an irrefutable mandate was he able to press

onward to a constitutional amendment that ended slavery everywhere in the nation.

We love the drama of the “gotcha” moment in politics, even though we know that the drama frequently tramples all over complexity. It’s no different in history. Understanding our history can’t be done by cherry picking “gotcha” phrases from Lincoln or smirking over the blemishes of the Founders. The study of history is like the rebuilding of disappeared cathedrals—it can’t be done by hurriedly putting up a tin shack and then complaining about how cheap the cathedral looks. It requires the patient reconstruction of the full world someone like Lincoln lived in, with all the options and all the obstructions as clearly in view to our eyes as they were to his.

Several years ago, speaking at a college in upstate New York, I laid out the legal niceties of Lincoln’s strategy for emancipation. But the niceties didn’t satisfy one questioner in the audience, who complained that it just “didn’t feel right” to say, “Lincoln freed the slaves.” He was afraid that Lincoln was being given credit he didn’t really deserve, while the role of everyone else—including the slaves—was neglected. It’s true that many hands pulled down the edifice of slavery. But Lincoln’s hands remain the most important; even if to some of us they seemed puzzlingly slow in doing their work. Without Lincoln’s attention to the legalities of emancipation, fugitive slaves would never be anything more than fugitives, and a civil war might have ended with federal courts still protecting slaveholding. Frederick Douglass, the African-American abolitionist, understood this when he said that, “viewed from the genuine abolition ground, Mr. Lincoln seemed tardy, cold, dull, and indifferent; but measuring him by the sentiment of his country, a sentiment he was bound as a statesman to consult, he was swift, zealous, radical, and determined.” Our understanding of our history, and of Abraham Lincoln, needs to be reminded of that.

Allen C. Guelzo is the Henry R. Luce professor of the Civil War era at Gettysburg College, and the author of "Redeeming the Great Emancipator". He wrote this for What It Means to Be American, a national conversation hosted by the Smithsonian and Zócalo Public Square.

Opinion: Takela, the true tale of the name

To the community,

How did Takela Drive in the city of South Lake Tahoe get its name? Only three people have the answer, and they aren't descendants of the Indian named Takela who sunbathed on Bijou's beach during the 1800s. He's dead, and dead men, especially mythical ones, tell no tales. But I can. I ain't dead yet, nor are the other two who give witness to this mundane bit of Tahoe lore. Put that Indian and other apocrypha aside. Here's the real deal.

A damnable property developer in the late 1950s had the outrageous idea of building a South Shore Safeway. The local press argued that there goes the neighborhood, but there wasn't any neighborhood. So, this developer, my father, proposed "progress" to the El Dorado County Planning Commission. The project lacked street names. Dad turned to child labor. "For every name the Planning Commission approves, you get a dollar." I took the challenge. Where does an unimaginative kid get ideas? From his limited world, of course. Mine was where I lived and the family power boat.

Here then is the answer. Takela was our boat's name and our pronunciation is in your margarita, tequila. My sister, a

private woman of few words, decodes for you: “Ta-Tav; Ke-Kevin; La-Laurie.” My boat savvy brother tells us that this “was an old, old way of naming boats, but not real popular ... not a big thing.” His recent email from San Rafael, goes on to say “people generally think that its pronunciation is tec-lell-ah and led to the assumption that it is an Indian name because the Washoe Indians made their way over the mountain to summer at South Tahoe from the Carson Valley. The most popular area they chose was from Bijou southward.” My brother signed his deposition, Chief Know It All.

Is there any additional evidence for the family connection to Takela and thus credibility for this striking revelation? We find it not far away by way of the winter address of family Mactavish during that period. Continue motoring to the end of Takela Drive from Lake Tahoe Boulevard in South Lake Tahoe. Note the Safeway as you pass, and after a short distance, what’s the street you meet? Remember, I wasn’t very imaginative. We lived on Treehaven Drive, but in San Rafael

Puzzle solved, witnesses deposed, story’s end, although a sunbathing Indian might be more colorful for credulous tourists. A new tale might dissuade anyone from changing the street’s name due to its prosaic origin. I offer to spin that tall one with the translation of Takela as Chief Know It All, sunbathing woman of few words.

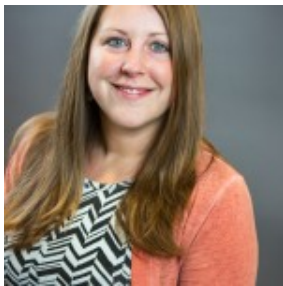
I earned \$9 that year for street naming, the following year \$5. The shortfall in earnings reflecting a growing interest in word-smithing in the back seat of the family car at the drive-in theatre down the road from Takela Drive. You know, experimenting with more advanced language tasks to expand the limitations of my world.

J.K. Mactavish, Italy

Opinion: The different meanings of love

By Kim Kilgore

According to psychologist Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, it is essential for people to feel love and belonging to reach optimal health and wellness. Valentine's Day, whether you celebrate the holiday or not, reminds us of love. The word "love" can be confusing and have different meanings for everyone.



Kim Kilgore

Gary Chapman, the author of "The Five Love Languages", writes that "some of my encounters with couples through the years that brought me to realize that what makes one person feel loved does not necessarily make another person feel loved. For a number of years, I have been helping couples in the counseling office discover what their spouse desired in order to feel loved. Eventually, I began to see a pattern in their responses. [...] Their answers fell into five categories. I later called them the five love languages."

So what is your love language? Below is a brief explanation of the five love languages. Take a few minutes and contemplate how you express love and how you like to be loved.

- Words of Affirmation Language: Love is expressed by simply telling one another positive aspects about each other. For example, words of affirmation can include statements such as, "You are a beautiful person," and "You are my best friend."
- Quality Time Language: Couples share their love for one another by spending quality time together. This aspect requires the individuals to focus their attention on one another in ways such as open communication, both listening and speaking, and spending time with one another doing activities that are enjoyed by both individuals.
- Receiving Gifts Language: Another language of love that individuals can share is the concept of receiving gifts. Some individuals see the act of providing one another with material objects, regardless of their cost, as an act of love. Without these acts of giving and receiving individuals who use this type of love language will feel deprived in their relationship.
- Acts of Service Language: Individuals who express love via the acts of service language are prone to seeing such tasks, like chores and various household tasks, as acts of love. In order for two individuals to experience the acts of service language together, both individuals need to be willing to step outside of their typical household routines and perform one another's tasks for the sole purpose of being kind to one another.
- Physical Touch Language: The physical touch language is simply the idea that individuals feel loved and comforted by being in close physical contact with one another in various ways, such as holding hands, hugging, kissing and sexual intercourse. Physical touch between couples can vary depending upon what each individual in the relationship is comfortable with.

You may notice you like to give and receive love in different ways. This Valentine's Day consider investing some energy into

giving and receiving love or developing a deeper understanding of your loved ones in order to increase your well-being and satisfaction within your relationships. If you are interested in finding out more about your love language, take a free assessment on Chapman's **website**.

Kim Kilgore is a medical social worker who sees patients with mild to moderate mental health issues at Barton Community Health Center and Barton Family Medicine.

Opinion: California needs to embrace the apocalypse

By Joe Mathews

Is California being governed by apocalyptic French philosophy?

Oui. But it's not the end of the world.



Joe Mathews

Indeed, apocalyptic French philosophy may finally provide a resolution to that age-old California mystery: What is the meaning of Jerry Brown?

In recent years, our governor's statements have taken an end-of-days turn, Jerry channeling Jeremiah, with the governor

warning of nuclear holocaust, apocalyptic wildfires, the collapse of Silicon Valley if his water plans aren't adopted, and Armageddon if we don't reduce carbon emissions.

Where is he getting all this angst? Here's one answer: Brown is a longtime friend of the French techno-philosopher Jean-Pierre Dupuy, who practices what is called "enlightened doomsaying" from perches at Stanford and Paris' École Polytechnique.

Dupuy's long-running conversations with Brown have become high profile, with Dupuy joining him at events in Paris during December's climate change talks.

I am neither French nor a philosopher. But I've been reading everything Dupuy has published in English. I'm glad I did.

Dupuy's work not only provides reassurance that there is a coherent philosophy behind our governor's ramblings. The work itself is irresistibly thought provoking, brilliantly connecting history, science, religion, economics, and art in an open spirit. I'd recommend that all Californians—as citizens of a global hub for apocalyptic and utopian thinking—read his most accessible book, "The Mark of the Sacred". It should be required for state workers.

Here's a summary: We are doomed to destroy ourselves because humanity has lost touch with its sacred origins—not just faith but rituals and traditions that remind us how many things are beyond human control.

This hubris creates two problems. First, we no longer understand our own limits, and recklessly reshape the world without anticipating the consequences. Second, without a respect for the sacred, we can't convert our knowledge about the threats we've created to our own existence—from nuclear weapons to climate change—into the visceral belief necessary to galvanize humanity to save itself.

"It is my profound belief that humanity is on a suicidal course, headed straight for catastrophe," Dupuy writes.

Dupuy's solution: "enlightened doomsaying." We must imagine ourselves in the unthinkable future, peering into the black hole of nonexistence so that we might understand our limits and sacred origins. "To believe in fate is to prevent it from happening," he writes.

That may sound awfully French, but he grounds his philosophy in a California classic: Alfred Hitchcock's film "Vertigo", a tale of humans falling, from the Golden Gate Bridge to Mission San Juan Bautista. Dupuy calls the film "the womb from which I am issued," and sees humanity's delusions in the fictions within that movie's fictions, particularly Jimmy Stewart's imposition of a false reality on Kim Novak's character.

So now—at the risk of repeating Jimmy Stewart's mistake—I will read Dupuy onto Gov. Brown.

Brown's famous skepticism of new programs makes sense if you believe, as Dupuy argues, that man is blind to the consequences of his own belief in progress. Brown's focus on avoiding catastrophes—from his rainy day fund to his prioritization of climate change—reflects Dupuy's "prophet-of-doom" calls to focus on postponing the apocalypse.

Brown's criticism of "desire" echoes Dupuy, who argues that as we lose our sense of the sacred, we fill the void with individual desires that produce conflict. Here's Brown in a recent speech: "California is so full of low-priority needs... First we get a desire; and then the desire is transmogrified into a need; and then we get a law; and then we get a right; and then we get a lawsuit."

Of course, Dupuy, as philosopher, poses questions you'll never hear on the stump in Stockton: Has Christianity obliterated it by replacing so many traditional religions and rituals? What are the virtues of scapegoating? And which would be worse: the

annihilation of the human race, or the totalitarianism that might be necessary to prevent said annihilation?

There are obvious objections to Brown, and to Dupuy. There is a dissonance between their respect for the unknown and the certainty with which they predict Armageddon. I find it unsettling to be governed by someone so focused on the apocalypse. (Of course, my anxiety may be the reaction doomsayers want).

But I'm also comforted that our governor's warnings have deep philosophical foundations. Dupuy writes that we should think in the "future perfect" tense—as in, by tomorrow, the apocalypse will have happened. From there, we work backward to find the limits that might save us.

While there are happier ways to confront the dangers ahead, there may not be a smarter one.

Joe Mathews writes the Connecting California column for Zócalo Public Square.