Opinion
News



by Michael Sean Winters

View Author Profile

Follow on Twitter at @michaelswinters

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

February 14, 2020
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

It is bad enough that we have a president who has no regard for the rule of law. As I have noted before, President Donald Trump's thinking is reptilian, with everything reduced to food or threat. But, that is who he is and always has been. How to explain the craven behavior of other Republican leaders? Their silence is deafening and damning. An independent judiciary is one of the hallmarks of a free society and attacks on that independence are what you expect from fascists, not from Republicans. We are moving into Genesis 28 territory here.

From Public Religion Research Institute, Diana Orcés analyzes the American Catholic experience based on the organization's 2019 American Values Survey. This is must reading for political reporters as the 2020 presidential race heads into states where religion does matter to voters more than was the case in New Hampshire. It will surprise no one that Latino Catholics tend to be more in tune with the themes of the current pontificate.

Wednesday, I said that turnout in the New Hampshire Democratic primary was flat. Turns out that was only half true. The raw total of voters exceeded the number of

votes cast in 2008, but the percentage was down with 26% of voters casting ballots Tuesday night compared to 29% in 2008. And at FiveThirtyEight.com, Nathaniel Rakich breaks down the demographics of each candidates' support.

In the Washington Post, apparently many people inside baseball knew that the Houston Astros were cheating, even if the rest of us were kept in the dark. So, the phenomenon of many people "knowing" about something but not having real proof and therefore not taking action is not unique to the Catholic hierarchy regarding Theodore McCarrick. I suspect similar sagas occur in the military and other organizations with strong corporate identities.

At TalkingPointsMemo, John Judis writes the obituary for the campaign of Sen. Elizabeth Warren. I agree with much of what he writes, especially about the failure of her campaign staff, but the obituary is a bit premature. Warren needs to own the debate stage next week in Las Vegas, and she did just that last summer. But, unless she does, Judis is correct.

Advertisement

If Sen. Bernie Sanders does become the nominee, it will be in spite of, not because of, the Bernie Bros. They have now picked a fight with the Culinary Workers in Nevada and it is difficult to see how such a fight will help his candidacy. Principled policy disagreements are one thing, but the Bros can get nasty which only makes the rest of us wonder how they would be emboldened by a Sanders' presidency. Politico has the story.

At Working-Class Perspectives blog, Christopher R. Martin debunks the myth that MSNBC and CNN serve an elite audience while Fox News is the cable channel for the working man. In fact, the key divisions have nothing to do with income or educational attainment. The key demarcation line? Race. Fox's audience is 94% white. MSNBC is watched by more African Americans than OWN, Oprah Winfrey's network.

[Michael Sean Winters covers the nexus of religion and politics for NCR.]

Editor's note: *Don't miss out on Michael Sean Winters' latest. Sign up and we'll let you know when he publishes new Distinctly Catholic columns.*