News



Cokie Roberts in 2017 (Wikimedia Commons/LBJ Library/Jay Godwin)



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From The New York Times, a review of the new book *Susan, Linda, Nina and Cokie: The Extraordinary Story of the Founding Mothers of NPR.* When you grow up in rural America, you grow up with the radio. That meant Robert J. Lurtsema and classical music in the morning and Susan Stamberg, Linda Wertheimer, Nina Totenberg and Cokie Roberts in the afternoon. I realize that mine is the first generation for which it was entirely natural to hear intelligent women reporters from a young age. And what a privilege.

Speaking of public broadcasting, Masterpiece on PBS is running a great mini-series called "Atlantic Crossing" and it is largely, but not entirely, based on the true story of the Norwegian royal family fleeing to the United States during World War II. Want to know what is factual and what is fiction? This primer gives the lowdown on when artistic embellishment occurs and when the plot sticks close to the factual record. The acting is superb.

The police officer who pepper-sprayed Army Lieutenant Caron Lazario and ordered him out of his car, all accompanied by threats, has been fired. AP has the story. In addition to seeing justice done in courtrooms, sometimes it really helps to change the culture when justice is delivered immediately. Firing the police officer was entirely just.

The Hill reports that a group of academics are furious that U.S. Rep. Nydia Velazquez is offering a bill on Puerto Rican self-determination that allows Puerto Ricans to keep the mixed sovereignty status they currently have. I suppose it does not fit their neat categories. But it is what half the people on the island regularly register as their desire, not because it is a great option but because they prefer it to becoming a state or becoming an independent nation. Who died and left some ivory tower academics to determine what options the Puerto Rican people should have?

Politico's "Playbook" looks at the 10 "moderate" Republican senators who drove policy in the closing months of the Trump presidency but have been sidelined so far by Biden's desire to move quickly on major legislation. I will feel more sympathy for them when they demonstrate a willingness to break with Minority Leader Sen. Mitch McConnell.

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From My Modern Met, a look at postmodernist architecture. I remember when many of the buildings highlighted in the article were built, the Portland, Oregon, Municipal Services Building by Michael Graves and the Piazza d'Italia in New Orleans by Charles Moore in particular. And I loved them. Then I grew up. I make an exception for some of Frank Gehry's work, but by and large, early postmodern buildings just do not wear well. What seemed playful then seems sophomoric now. But at least the postmodernists deserve credit for breaking the stranglehold of modernism, so two cheers for postmodernism. Now, if we could only demand that architects focus on making beautiful buildings ...

There is nothing postmodern about this chorale prelude by Johann Sebastian Bach: "Erbarm Dich Mein, O Herre Gott - BWV 721," here played by a very young Gert van Hoef on the Moreau organ at St. John's church in Gouda, Netherlands. How did I never hear this exquisite piece of music until last weekend?

Gert van Hoef plays "Erbarm Dich Mein, O Herre Gott - BWV 721" on a video posted to his YouTube channel on July 2, 2010.