Opinion
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Kirkjufellsfoss, Iceland (Unsplash/Koushik Chowdavarapu)



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An astute reader challenged my essay on Friday, specifically the reference to Jonathan Haidt's book *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*. His concern was that I suggested — or that the authors of the survey report suggested and I repeated — the idea that conservatives embrace some of the six moral intuitions (care, fairness, liberty, loyalty, authority and sanctity) that Haidt argued are foundational to all moral systems while liberals embrace others. Haidt's argument is, as the reader pointed out, less evenhanded. As William Saletan wrote in a brilliant New York Times review at the time:

> Faith, patriotism, valor, chastity, law and order — these Republican themes touch all six moral foundations, whereas Democrats, in Haidt's analysis, focus almost entirely on care and fighting oppression. This is Haidt's startling message to the left: When it comes to morality, conservatives are more broad-minded than liberals. They serve a more varied diet.

I can't speak for the authors of the survey, but I disagree with Haidt here and think the distribution of moral intuitions between left and right is more balanced. But I should have made it clear that that is my view, not Haidt's. I regret the confusion and thank the reader for the correction.

Today, the bishops will vote on their inadequate document on the Eucharist and most everyone hopes it will pass simply to get the issue behind us. But how is that the chair of the Doctrine Committee, Bishop Kevin Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, produced such a lackluster document when just down the road University of Notre Dame theology professor John Cavadini was writing an exquisite article about the church being "a sacrament of the preferential option for the poor."

Former Donald Trump adviser Gen. Michael Flynn thinks he knows what America needs. He wants the country to have one religion. Does this man know anything about American history or America today? The wars of religion ended in the 17th century, didn't they? Daniel Politi at Slate has the story.

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In The Washington Post, E.J. Dionne makes the argument that Democrats need to stop getting dragged into debates about the issues Republicans want to discuss and, instead, defend the policies that are actually in the infrastructure and Build Back Better bills, policies that will help America's families:

> But such families won't even know what's on offer if supporters of Build Back Better don't (1) get it through both houses; and (2) put the same energy into explaining and defending it that conservatives have invested in making "critical race theory" three of the most popular words in political commentary.

The president signs the infrastructure bill into law today. Since it passed the House two weeks ago, Republicans have been at each others' throats. That is how Democrats claw their way back into the midterms. Make the GOP respond to them.

At Politico, Holly Otterbein looks at some key Republican gains in the suburbs of Philadelphia. It was the suburbs that delivered the all-important swing state to Joe Biden in 2020, where he consistently overperformed Hillary Clinton. Republicans did not mention Trump during the campaign, but the GOP base came out anyway. Democrats need to figure out how to run against Republicans again, not just against Trump.

At Sapientia, the online journal of Fordham University's Center on Religion and Culture, Christopher Bellitto writes about history making us humble. He includes a wonderful observation from C.S. Lewis with which I was not familiar. Reflecting on the First World War, Lewis observed: "From seeing this, one passes to the realization that our own age is also 'a period,' and certainly has, like all periods, its own characteristic illusions. They are likeliest to lurk in those widespread assumptions which are so ingrained in the age that no one dares to attack or feels it necessary to defend them." What a splendid, trenchant invitation to intellectual humility!

I can't stop laughing every time I watch this send-up of Mark Zuckerberg's "Metaverse" announcement, created by the Iceland tourism bureau, the "Icelandverse." The line that kills me every time is "water that is wet."