

# Squid's Ink: A few modest proposals

*We sent most of our hackers off to fight Russian and Chinese hackers, so this month, we're relying on a coffee cabinet of optimism and outrage.*

## A Votive Candle for Democracy

You may have heard that democracy is in trouble (it is), that government is corrupt (sometimes) and that our nation is divided (it always has been). But...

### **Vote anyway.**

Both Trump and Biden grabbed office with nail-bitingly thin margins. In Rhode Island a few hundred voters can tip the balance. (Which is why, for years and years, thick necked guys have driven to senior citizens' homes and rounded-up mail-in ballots.)

It would be nice to think that there's a benevolent and enlightened dictator who will solve climate change, reduce crime, improve education, lower taxes and preserve your right to bear arms (or arm bears), but that fine upstanding non-gender-specific candidate has been in hiding for years.

We squid have a saying: Didn't vote? Don't complain.

So preserve your right to bitch and moan by taking the 15 minutes to cast your ballot. Even if it's raining! They won't dunk your thumb in purple ink, but you'll get a cool sticker.

Election day is TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8.

## The Abortion Abortion

*Roe V. Wade* is dead. So millions of women and children are being forced by law to bring unwanted children into existence. We squid don't have either birth control or abortion. If we did, there's no way that RI would be able to harvest enough of us to keep calamari as its state appetizer. It's hard enough to raise children when they are wanted.

**Here's our solution:** Anyone who votes for a candidate who won't support a woman's right to choose will be required to adopt two children. What? You don't want those kids either?

## Governor Groans

If she wasn't a secretive unknown, we might consider voting for **Ashley "The Louis Vuitton Carpetbagger" Kalus**. Her jabs at Governor **Dan "Dozing Dan" McKee** have been devastating. Education scores delayed? Pow! Energy prices up? Bam! FBI Investigation? Biff!

BUT...

- Kalus won't clearly say whether she's pro-choice or anti-abortion. This is code for, "I'm a politician looking out for myself."
- Kalus also won't denounce Trump or the January 6 insurrection. ("Vote for me, I'm ok with tearing

it all down...")

- Kalus "loaned" her campaign \$3.7 million dollars, which is all the number-crunching media needed to dub her a "viable" candidate. If this isn't buying an election, we don't know what is.
- And then there's the lawsuit in Chicago against Kalus and her husband. Whether the suit has any merit, reading the account in the *Journal*, shows that Kalus screwed a friend in a business deal and then walked away.

THAT SAID...

- Dozing Dan McKee needs to wake up and actually lead, rather than sit in the passenger seat wondering, "Where's Gina?" Fewer than a third of primary voters thought you were worth a damn. If you get reelected, prove us wrong.

## **Public Education is Killing It!**

Fuggetabout Rhode Island, how's education in the US going?

Well, the recent **school shooting in St. Louis** was number 40 for the year with a bullet.

Simultaneously, the US Department of Education reports steep declines in test scores. Two-thirds of fourth grade students are not proficient in reading. We're shocked! You mean that after a two-year pandemic, kids performed worse on standardized tests? Outrageous! But dig a tiny bit deeper and you'll learn that in 2019, the percentage of fourth-graders who couldn't read was 60%!

Public policy seems to be designed to punish children and teachers for not meeting learning objectives that they weren't meeting before the pandemic. And to keep things spicy, we'll make sure we keep assault rifles on the street and spend money turning schools into hardened locked down prisons.

**Here's our radical proposal:** stop telling our children that they're behind. They're not. They are where they are. Stop doggedly teaching to tests that prove everyone is failing. Restore funding to the things that make school worth going to - art, music, creative play, sports, and reading for fun. Yes, it's hard to believe, but reading can be fun.

And stop making teachers responsible for everything. Parents, you need to get involved. You need to put down your phone and read with your kids. Or read to your kids on your phone. If you care about your kids, spend the time.

BUT... What do we do about the kids whose parents don't care? (Remember when you voted to eliminate a woman's right to choose?) Or the ones who do care, but don't have the time because they're working two or three jobs to survive?

Put all children in schools that are bright and open and fun to attend. Extend the day and increase tutoring. Ban assault rifles and teach young people self-defense.

Demonstrate the value of education by learning from the mistakes of the past and implementing change - even if it does mean that testing companies and curriculum publishers go bankrupt.

## Satire?

Our editor just whacked us upside the head with a two-by-four and asked, "What happened to the satire?" First of all, that hurts. Picture a poor defenseless squid being pre-assaulted by a rampaging rhinoceros and... OW!

# Bike Lane Bombs and RIPTA Retread

By now you've heard about the **Great Hope Street Urban Trail Trial Debacle** and **RIPTA's** cancellation of Providence high school student bus runs. The Trail ran for its scheduled week, and then vanished in a flurry of online surveys and partisan posting on Instagram and NextDoor. For its part, RIPTA keeps trying to hire bus drivers, is rerouting some regular bus service, all while considering giving free fares to the homeless. And as of press time, First Student school bus drivers were contemplating a strike, complaining about poor wages, low hours, and the twin threats of COVID, and rabid parents.

[Editor: We're still waiting for the satire...]

**We've got a simple solution** - hire the homeless to drive the buses and let them sleep in them at the end of the day. Yes, keeping the newly dubbed "Bus Bums" scent-free would require installing showers in bus parking lots, but that's less expensive than either building affordable housing or giving the Superman building undeserved tax breaks.

[Editor: What about the bike lane?]

And, since the Bus Bums don't have either commercial licenses or training, those little white pylons won't protect anybody in the bike lanes, so the whole thing is moot.

[Editor: Have you been inhaling from school bus tail pipes this month?]

## Sophomoric and Graveyard Humor

- You know those sponsorship ads on **The Public's Radio (NPR)**, the ones that aren't commercials? We recently heard that Providence's **Swan Point** is "a full service cemetery."

We hacked their computers and learned that not only will they burn or bury your dead, they'll also wash your car while you're at the funeral, and if nobody wants to take care of Grandma's yappy dog, Kibble, they'll euthanize the puppy and put him in the casket with Grandma.

[Editor's note: no real dogs were killed to make this sick joke, but two grandmothers did expire in the testing phase.]

- A bunch of students are suing **Brown University** for "pre-assault." From what we understand, they're accusing the Ivy League Institution of failing to make its campus safe from violent miscreants who want to - and did - rape students.

Our hackers discovered that Brown is considering: banning burlesque, mini skirts, and theater with sexual content, arming its rent-a-cops with semi-automatic weapons, installing surveillance cameras with facial recognition on campus trees, and putting estrogen and saltpeter into the drinking water to

put a damper on non-consensual encounters.

- We also learned of another lawsuit accusing Brown's dining services of "failing to make its meal plans fitness safe." Chubby plaintiffs blamed Brown for their "freshman fifteen" pounds of weight gain and claimed that the University should have told them that eating pizza and cheesecake without exercising was unhealthy.

[Editor's note: Sexual assault is no joke. Nor is obesity. For that matter, politics really isn't funny either. Maybe we need to rethink this whole satire thing...]