

The Grouse House Gazette

Thoughts and Observations on Music, Nature, and **Politics**, from the Catskill Mountains

ISSUE #125 – FEBRUARY 18th, 2016 www.GHGAZETTE.com www.GILBERTHETHERWICK.com

THE GOP'S "BIG LIES" ABOUT OBAMA'S "FAILED" PRESIDENCY THEY HAVE USED "BIG LIES" FOR DECADES NOW... BUT IT'S OUT OF CONTROL WITH PRESIDENT OBAMA

"A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes."

Mark Twain

"If you tell a big enough lie... and tell it frequently enough... it will be believed."

Adolf Hitler

Telling "Big Lies" has basically been the "game plan" for the GOP for decades now.

The GOP (and their right-wing media) are GREAT at spinning fanciful "scandals".

These fake "scandals" race through the high-speed twenty-four hour news cycles at such a rate that no one ever notices when anything is proven later to be false... As by then they are off to THE NEXT "scandal".

But combined together they have a "snowball" effect... rolling forward and building into an OVERALL PERCEPTION of "failure" and "scandal" in a carefully calculated message to "prove" that our Democratic Presidents have ALL been dismal "scandalous" losing "failures".

But the Republicans have also become GREAT at building fictitious historical reconstructions of their OWN Presidents.

The most infamous easily being Grover Norquist's "Reagan Legacy Project"... through which Grover fabricated today's brilliantly executed Reagan mythology.

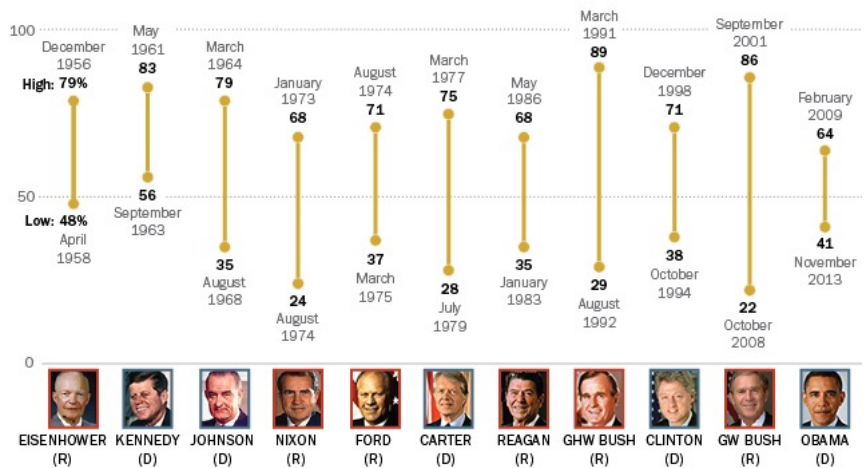
And it is upon this mythology that today's modern Republican conservatism is built.

They have been quite successful at taking a man whose overall public approval rating for his eight years in office fell below that of Kennedy, Clinton, Eisenhower, Johnson and George H.W. Bush and transformed him in a couple of decades to having the third highest presidential approval rating in modern times.

But still behind Clinton and Kennedy.

The highs and lows of presidential approval

% of public approving of president's job performance



Note: Obama's rating is as of Dec. 13, 2015. Numbers for George H.W. Bush and earlier are from Gallup.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

At the time that the Reagan administration got caught selling missiles to the terrorist nation of Iran in order to pay for an illegal war in Central America... nearly [one-third of Americans wanted Reagan to resign](#).

Under Reagan... unemployment spiked to over TWICE what it is today under Obama as his approval rating fell to 35%.

As you can see from the chart... this is a lot lower than President Obama's lowest 41%.

And [George W. Bush's](#) approval rating dropped to a staggering low of 22% on three separate occasions.

Reagan's lowest approval point wasn't even the time he cut his deal selling weapons to terrorists... as it was much earlier than that... after the 82 recession hit and unemployment soared to above 10%.

This deep recession followed Reagan's "brilliantly calculated" tax cut for the wealthiest Americans from 70% to 50%.

Which shot the deficit through the roof.

Along with the debt... due in large part to Reagan's enormous military buildup.

The Soviet Union paid cash while we "charged it" for the 1980s arms race that eventually bankrupted the Soviet Union.

For no logical reason at all Reagan RE-BUILT FOUR WWII battleships... which the Navy "mothballed" after he left office.

After learning his "tax cutting lesson" the hard way... Reagan then signed his "Tax Equity & Fiscal Responsibility Act".

Which was the [LARGEST PEACE TIME TAX INCREASE IN U.S. HISTORY!](#)

The "Reagan" that Republicans worship today is a Grover Norquist created myth.

Similar to their "Obama is the WORST President in History" myth that they have been building over the past eight years.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

All fabricated through “Big Lies”.

It is the Republican’s hostility to the entire concept of “government” and their rabid obstructionist policies that is doing the most damage to America today as they have worked hard to help our government fail... in order to prove their own theories of our government’s ineptitude.

And they have sunk to new lows in obstructionism against America’s first African American President.

Mitch McConnell clearly stated early on that his objective was to make the Obama Presidency a failure.

No matter what it cost America as a nation.

But NOTHING tops what is happening right now with the Supreme Court.

I loved seeing the Republicans all lining up to declare in unison that AMERICANS needed to help decide the next Supreme Court Justice in the coming election.

They seem to believe that Obama was elected for only a three year term!

And these people claim to be proud defenders of The Constitution. Which clearly gives President Obama this right.

And of course... Americans already decided whom they wanted to make their Supreme Court choices when they elected Obama in 2012 by over 5 MILLION votes!

And do they REALLY want to wait for DONALD TRUMP to make this decision?

Because that is who it could well be.

But don’t worry... Be happy...

Trump has indicated it could be his sister.

Unless Hillary or Bernie wins...

And with all indications being that the [Democrats could take back the Senate](#) in 2016... It could be smooth sailing ahead if Republicans block President Obama.

This is all part of the ongoing unspoken agreement among Republicans and conservatives today that Obama is somehow NOT our legitimate President.

Keep in mind that the GOP candidate in the coming election will be a “BIRTHER”!

The amount of disrespect has been disgraceful and it is obvious that a BIG part of it is racial. I’m sure that many Republicans must really hate the thought of

having their grandkids seeing President Obama’s picture in the hall of Presidents in the future. Keep in mind that [43% of Republicans STILL believe Obama to be a Muslim](#)... and therefore... A TERRORIST!

The GOP has shown their disrespect for President Obama from the start.

From Congressman Joe Wilson screaming that he was a “LIAR!” in a State of the Union Speech... to inviting the head of a FOREIGN COUNTRY to address the Congress to LOBBY AGAINST a sitting President of the United States of America!

And of course also blocking or stalling EVERY appointment... idea... bill... or ANYTHING... with the “Obama Stench”.

But it’s not like the majority of Americans support or agree with these initiatives.

[Congressional approval ratings reflect this.](#)

BUT BACK TO THE BIG LIES...

The Republican tactic of multiple rotating “scandals” began with Bill Clinton and the White Water “scandal”.

And even though the Clintons were never found guilty of anything involving the bad Arkansas land deal... Carly Fiorina recently brought it up as an example of a PREVIOUS Hillary Clinton “scandal”.

The BIG LIES seem to live on forever.

In fact... Bill Clinton was cleared of EVERYTHING other than lying about that blowjob in the White House.

The Republican witch-hunt at the time ran up a tab of [\\$70 MILLION DOLLARS](#) for an investigation that started with the land deal and eventually ended with Clinton lying about sex acts. They kept going until they found SOMETHING... to “use”.

After learning how to disgrace and publicly humiliate a sitting President through their sleazy actions against Clinton... the GOP went into hyper-drive against Obama.

Their first attempt was the infamous...

Fast & Furious “Scandal”...

This is probably the most misunderstood “scandal” of them all... and no one seems to know the truth.

However... the truth IS out there and it’s probably nothing near what you have come to believe after endless years of soundbites and half-baked manipulations of the facts.

I URGE people to read the terrific in depth piece in Fortune Magazine ([link here](#)) to learn the truth about “Fast & Furious”.

The truth is so far from the GOP “spin” that it is ridiculous... And a perfect example of just how twisted a BIG LIE can become.

But by the time the truth came out... they were already on to the NEXT SCANDAL!

Obama’s IRS targeted the Tea Party!

Many people seem to STILL believe that only right-wing groups were targeted and that President Obama was involved.

Check out this link for some “fun facts” on this “scandal” from [National Public Radio](#).

Again... the media burned through the story and had moved on by the time the whole thing unravelled. There was never any connection to The White House and progressive groups were targeted alongside conservative ones. There were simply a lot more conservative groups to target. All looking for shady tax dodges by claiming that they were not political organizations but rather “social welfare” operations.

AS IF!

BENGHAZI! BENGHAZI! BENGHAZI!

And then they dragged the country through Benghazi... with more vitriol and investigations than had occurred for the entire Iraq War... Despite the fact that Iraq was 125,000 times worse when you consider the “body counts” ([500,000](#) to 4).

The Benghazi investigations have now cost taxpayers [\\$20 MILLION](#)... SO FAR!

And [Republicans have openly admitted](#) that they have been USING the deaths of four Americans in a political vendetta against future candidate Hillary Clinton.

I actually watched THE ENTIRE eleven hour Hillary Clinton testimony... and the one thing I learned was that she was more than capable of handling the pressures of being the next President of the United States... AND... that she was vindicated.

[They GOT NOTHING!](#)

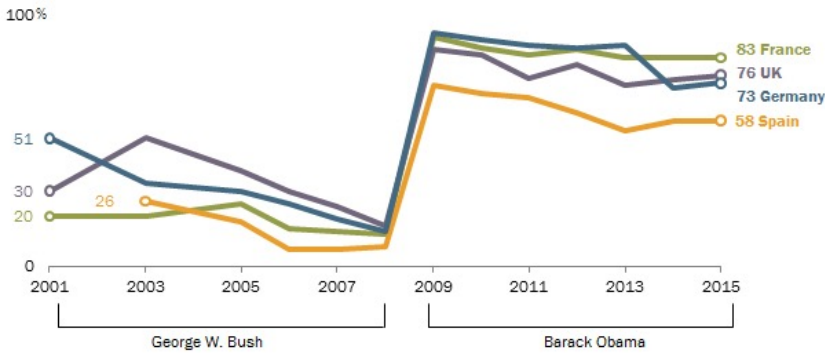
But despite no real evidence of wrong doing... people still believe that Hillary Clinton was responsible for the four deaths.

In the diner the other morning I overheard one of the regular right-wingers exclaim...

**“They asked for help... Hillary said ‘NO’
... AND THEY DIED!”**

Obama Still Popular in Western Europe

Confidence in U.S. president to do the right thing regarding world affairs



Source: Spring 2015 Global Attitudes survey.
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Obama has destroyed America's reputation for leadership in the world!

When the highly respected Pew Research Center polled populations around the world in 2015 as to whether or not they had confidence that President Obama would do the right thing regarding global affairs...

They found that [Obama had an approval rating](#) of 76% in Canada, 73% in Germany, 76% in the UK, 83% in France, 81% in Australia, 74% in India, 77% in Italy and 66% in Japan. Far higher than in the U.S.!

Check out the chart above showing the same polling of European opinions on both Obama and G. W. Bush. How can they say that the world has LOST confidence in American leadership after what other countries had believed under Bush?

Obama has destroyed our economy!

If you were only to watch Fox News... or read your crazy Uncle's ALL CAPS emails... you could easily believe that President Obama has totally destroyed the American economy.

When he has actually [GREATLY reduced the deficit](#) by 66%! (See chart on right.)

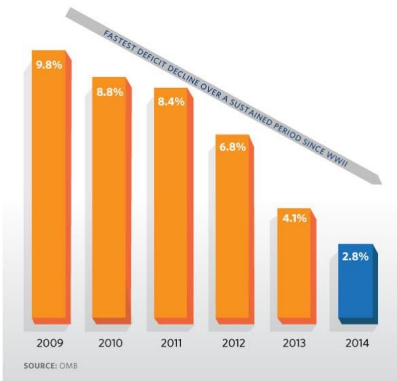
Unemployment has dropped from OVER 10% to UNDER 5% ([Romney had promised 6% for 2016](#))...

And the Dow Jones Industrial Average has climbed from under 8,000 to today's 16,500 (down from a high above 18,000).

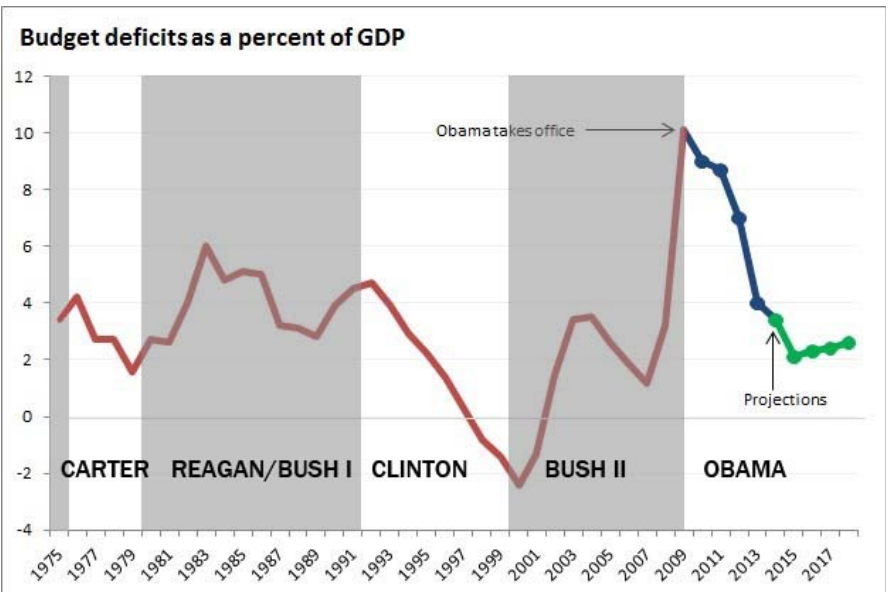
The ridiculous ads for gold and silver that rotate continuously on Fox News as the "bookends" to Fox's continuing prediction of economic doom and gloom are quite an impressive SCAM!

CHART OF THE WEEK

UNDER PRESIDENT OBAMA, THE DEFICIT HAS BEEN REDUCED BY TWO-THIRDS SINCE 2009
DEFICIT (% OF GDP)



Notice any deficit patterns below?



The misinformation is staggering...

[In 2010... only two years after the crash... 47% of Americans believed that Obama was the one that bailed out the banks.](#)

And YES... Wages still suck... AND we desperately NEED manufacturing jobs.

But that is really the fault of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush and their free trade agreements that shipped our manufacturing jobs elsewhere to the benefit of corporate contributors who then used tax loopholes to store their wealth outside of the country.

Trump actually said recently that he thought the unemployment rate was ["more likely 42%"](#)! Can you imagine what America would look like if that were true?

AND NOW... THEIR GREATEST HIT!

Obamacare has been a complete failure!

President Obama's statement about being able to keep your doctors and your insurance certainly wasn't accurate. As insurance policies that totally sucked and had inadequate coverage didn't fit the improved criteria of the new law. But those that got with the program soon found out that better plans were available at better rates with the new tax subsidies.

And those that don't believe in tax subsidies to help Americans should think carefully about their mortgage tax deductions as their belief system could be interpreted as them living in government subsidized housing. I'm just saying...

This early awkward statement... along with the initial website glitches... gave Republicans all of the ammunition they needed to build a "BIG LIE" about

Obamacare. Which turned out to be quite easy as most Americans get their insurance through their workplace and would never experience or understand the program.

BUT **18 MILLION** people have health insurance today due to the law as the uninsured rate has fallen from 20% to 13%.

And... I am one of those people.

I am also actually one of the people that lost their insurance because of it being a policy that didn't adhere to the new law.

When I lost my corporate gig nine years ago I was lucky to be able to find ANY insurance at all at the age of 54.

People have no idea how difficult it was before Obamacare to buy an individual policy (especially above the age of fifty).

I didn't realize mine was a bad policy until I had a relatively minor heart procedure in 2014 and ended up paying \$19,000 "out of pocket"... despite my having insurance.

WITHOUT insurance the cost for the operation would have been OVER \$80,000! And I only spent ONE NIGHT in the hospital as it was "out patient" surgery.

The organization through which I had bought my policy stopped offering coverage at the end of 2014 because it didn't meet the Obamacare standards.

So I went on the New York Exchange version of Obamacare... and at the age of 62... with a recent heart procedure... and various ailments common to people of my age... I was able to get a NEW policy.

My insurance before was with Empire Blue Cross and my insurance under Obamacare is STILL with Empire Blue Cross.

And... It is a FAR BETTER PLAN with many more options and better coverage.

AND... Despite the "horror stories" vomited forth from Republicans... My premium dropped by \$100 a month... My co-payments dropped... My deductible dropped from \$3500 to \$1200 a year... AND my "out of pocket maximum" dropped from \$18,000 to only \$5,500!

AND... drum roll please...

All of my doctors remained the same!

If I had been on Obamacare in 2014 I would have saved \$10,000!

So can someone explain to me why I should HATE this and how it has failed?

ALL of the GOP candidates scream about "repealing Obamacare"... with nothing to replace it except mumblings about buying insurance across state lines (which will eventually lead to two or three HUGE national insurance companies) or people setting up "health savings accounts".

Would a "health savings account" have covered my \$80,000? How about people with bills in the hundreds of thousands?

Obamacare is costing us jobs!

And all of the GOP candidates are STILL screaming that Obamacare has been a job killer when there is no proof of that.

Check out this chart of job growth from the Bush and Obama years... when we added Obamacare and jobs continued to grow.

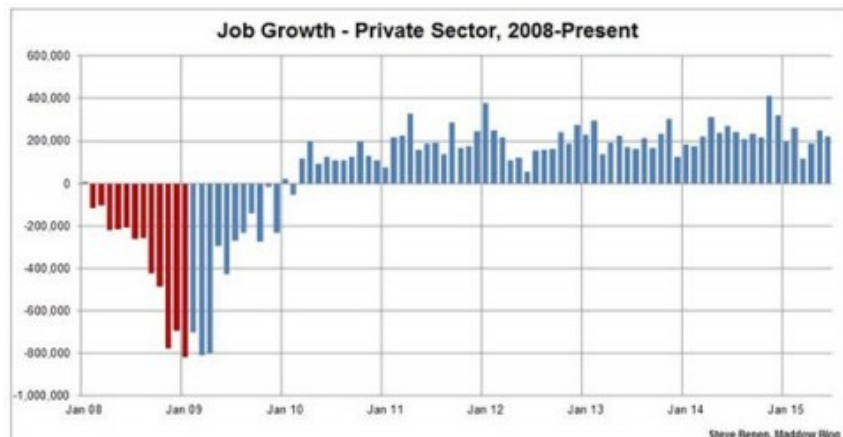
We would still be a lot better off with "single payer" and eliminating the insurance companies completely... but it's still a good start.

Why is it that every other industrialized country in the world can afford this but we can't? Could it be that we are picking up the defense tab for a lot of these other countries?

And if you STILL believe that Obamacare is a failure... here are two interesting links.

[THE NEW YORK TIMES](#)

[THE WASHINGTON POST](#)



Obama wants to make us like Europe!

For all of their talk about Obama wanting to make the United States "more like Europe"... it is an odd fact that Obama went with a stimulus plan to get us out of the Great Recession while Europe went the Republican route of AUSTERITY.

Which is probably the main reason that America's economy today is looking so much better than our allies in Europe. And anyone thinking that our economy today is in terrible shape should take a quick look around the rest of the world.

I am certainly not completely thrilled with Obama... Guantanamo is still open... And not nearly enough has been done for the environment. But then again... even the [Supreme Court has now come down on the side of destroying the planet!](#)

But considering the unprecedented GOP Congressional obstructionist opposition...

Obama actually hasn't done half bad.

Let's just hope that someone starts an "Obama Legacy Project" in 2017.

Not to spin myths... but to CORRECT the myths already spun by the GOP and the conservative media in the past eight years.

Gilbert Hetherwick

Write me if you wish to be added to or taken off my mailing list...

hetherwick@me.com

Back issues of the Gazette at... www.GHGAZETTE.com

[STREAM MY "LIVE SET" HERE!](#)

[A WEEKEND OF RELAXATION!](#)