

LARK HARBOUR

THE

YORK HARBOUR

BLOW·ME·DOWNER

OF THE OUTER BAY OF ISLANDS, NEWFOUNDLAND

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NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

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HEARTFELT THANKS

TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS IN OUR COMMUNITIES AND ALSO THOSE WHOSE DAILY WORK MAY PLACE THEIR LIVES AT RISK

Once more we are at the gateway of the New Year, when we should take a few moments to thank those who freely volunteer their time, often also their money, their personal convenience and their dignity, to make our lives safer, easier and better in so many ways.

They are not only the people who help briefly with what may be considered an extension of their regular activity. They include also those like the gas station attendant, Richard, who “went the extra mile” and came out from behind his counter to retrieve my credit card on a windy rainy chilly day in early Autumn. I had accidentally dropped it between the front car seats, and I was unable to retrieve it myself—it is hard to reach under those seats even for someone with normal mobility who is not a contortionist.

It was a very unpleasant day and, after seeing where the card had finally come to rest, Richard had to kneel in a puddle to reach it. It took him what seemed like a very long time as he positioned himself to get his arm under the seat, and when he finally stood up again, grasping the credit card triumphantly between his fingers, his pant legs were soaked from the knees down.

I thanked him and offered him a tip. He refused, so I asked him for his boss’s phone number to pass on my appreciation for going much more than a step further in his job. Later I called the boss who said Richard would receive a \$20 gift card from the company in recognition of his special effort to assist a customer. I trust he did, because he certainly deserved it for going “the extra mile”.

Below is a list—partial, because it is impossible to identify everyone who volunteers or helps. Good Samaritans do not announce their generous deeds. So if you are one of the apparently unrecognised, please understand that your effort was appreciated at the time.

We therefore offer our thanks and recognition to all those who by perhaps even a small unpaid act, or some much bigger one, have made a fellow human being’s life safer, easier, or happier. Inevitably, some will be missed from the list, so please then accept our apologies.

THANKS TO :-

- **first responders** — firefighters, police, coastguard members, rescue workers, ambulance staff and all who experience traumatic events when they place their own lives at risk, often beyond the call of duty, while performing their daily work
- food bank helpers
- school lunch helpers
- ACW members
- lay ministers
- collectors for charities
- town council members
- OBIEC members
- leaders of childrens’, seniors’, and other socially helpful groups
- unpaid volunteers who clean public meeting places
- people who help those of limited mobility in many ways: to open a door, to carry bags of groceries
- those who greet others with a cheerful word or two
- those who stop to help the driver of a stranded vehicle
- organisers of special community activities
- all who make a point of going a step or two further in their regular paid occupation
- the gas bar attendant who knelt in a puddle on a rainy day to retrieve a credit card dropped under the car
- the sales assistant who takes a little more time to help you select what will be best for you

*If your volunteer work does not appear on this list,
please accept our apologies*

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LH=Lark Harbour YH=York Harbour JB=John's Beach
 HC=Holy Communion MP=Morning Prayer EP=Evening Prayer
 P&P=Prayer & Praise HB=Baptism MHS=Mem Hymn Sing
 ● = Full Moon

The BMD is published on or before the first Friday of each month.

2018 JANUARY 2018

1st Mon ● Full Moon
 7th Sun No further information yet available
 14th Sun regarding services except for Jan 21st.
 21st Sun LH, 11:00am, HC (Rev David Taylor)
 28th Sun
 31st Wed ● Full Moon

2018 FEBRUARY 2018

1st Thur
 4th Sun
 11th Sun
 18th Sun
 25th Sun

2018 MARCH 2018

1st Thur ● Full Moon
 4th Sun
 11th Sun Daylight Saving begins - clocks ahead one hour
 18th Sun
 25th Sun
 31st Sat ● Full Moon

2018 ADVANCE DATES 2018

April 1st **EASTER SUNDAY**
 29th Sun ● Full Moon
 May 29th Tues ● Full Moon
 June 28th Thur ● Full Moon
 July 1st Sun **Canada Day**
 27th Fri ● Full Moon
 Aug 26th Sun ● Full Moon
 Sep 3rd Mon Labour Day
 24th Mon ● Full Moon
 Oct 24th Wed ● Full Moon
 Nov 4th Sat Daylight Saving ends - clocks back one hour
 23rd Fri ● Full Moon
 Dec 22nd Sat ● Full Moon
 25th Tues **Christmas Day**

If anyone would like a Christmas Cactus (see page 4) for Christmas 2018, contact me. I will prepare one for you in a plastic pot during Spring and Summer, and give it to you in the Fall as a free gift.

OUR QUEEN'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE



Every Christmas Day at 3:00pm GMT the Queen delivers a short message to all Commonwealth countries. It is always meaningful and topical. To see the video of the message, click on the picture above.

BUSINESS & ORGANISATION DIRECTORY

- **Byrne's Store, Main Street, York Harbour**
groceries, hardware, gas & diesel, souvenirs **681-2040**
wandastrickland@outlook.com
 ~~~~~
- **Captain Cook B&B & Cottages, York Harbour**  
 Email: [info@captaincookbb.ca](mailto:info@captaincookbb.ca) **681-2906; 1-877-681-2906**  
 ~~~~~
- **Captain Cook's Galley, 135 Little Port Rd, Lark Harbour**
 Restaurant - Seasonal - Call for information **681-2777**
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- **Creative Photography by Linda, 131 Main St, Lark Hr**  
 Email: [creativephotographybylinda9@gmail.com](mailto:creativephotographybylinda9@gmail.com)  
 131 Main St, Lark Harbour **709 681-2255**  
 ~~~~~
- **Curling ONE Stop Service Station, Corner Brook**
366 Curling Street, automotive repairs, servicing **785-2619**
 ~~~~~
- **Drop In Lounge, 23 Main Street, Lark Harbour**  
*entertainment, food, licenced* **681-2103**  
 ~~~~~
- **Eddie Joyce, MHA, Bay of Islands, Corner Brook**
Minister, House of Assembly, St John's. NL **634-7883**
 ~~~~~
- **Gudie Hutchings, MP, Long Range Mountains, NL**  
*Member of Parliament, Canada.* **709 637-4540**  
 ~~~~~
- **Marlaine's Tidewatcher Café, 59 Main Street, Lark Hr**
Enjoy a meal beside the Harbour **681-2140**
 ~~~~~
- **Sheppard's Clover Farm Store, Lark Harbour**  
*groceries, hardware, gas, marine supplies* **681-2160**  
 ~~~~~
- **The Roost, Gift Shop and Gallery, York Harbour**
sea glass, paintings, handmade glass beads **681-2341**
 ~~~~~



TWICE IN A  
**BLUE  
MOON**



EVERYONE HAS HEARD THE EXPRESSION “once in a Blue Moon”. But what about twice? However there is some confusion about the exact meaning. It has nothing to do with the colour of the moon. It simply means “a rare event”. But how rare? Not very, and anyway the length of our calendar months, while based on the lunar cycles, is really arbitrary, and has been altered several times.

In the first *three months* of this New Year 2018, January, February and March, we will see *four full moons* on four different nights: on January 1<sup>st</sup>, January 31<sup>st</sup>, March 1<sup>st</sup>, and March 31<sup>st</sup>. This year, February has no Full Moon at all, but that is not very rare, given that February has only 28 days most years, and the Moon cycle is about 29.5 days. The extra Full Moons of January and March are called Blue Moons, but they will still be the usual colour unless air pollution is bad on those nights. However if your beloved promises to marry you when there is a Blue Moon, this winter may be your best chance to pop the question!

Some people define a Blue Moon as *the SECOND full moon in one calendar month*. This is quite rare, but not exceptionally so. Full moons always occur at intervals of 29.53 days, so that February is *never* long enough for more than one single Full Moon, even in a Leap Year. But April, June, July and September, with 30 days each, can sometimes have *two* Full Moons, but they can only occur on each of the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 30<sup>th</sup>. The remaining seven months, January, March, May, July, August, October and December, with 31 days each, can have them more often in some years, since their Full Moons can occur on either 1<sup>st</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

It sounds complicated, and it does happen about every two and a half years. (See Harper & Stockman’s chart [Once in a Blue Moon - Blue Moon frequency by month](#).) These two moon watchers checked a period of 10,000 years, starting with 1600. They found that there had been 4,129 occurrences of Blue Moons over the 10,000 years, or an average of one in roughly every 28 months.

Another definition of a Blue Moon, sometimes referred to as a *Double Blue Moon*, is much more rare. This requires *four* Full Moons, two in January and two in March. They must be on either 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup> of January and March only, and February is the only month short enough to have no Full Moon at all in some years. 2018 is one of those years having Double Blue Moons.

If you can’t remember how many days in each month, this old rhyme helps :—

*Thirty days hath September,  
April, June and November.  
All the rest have thirty-one,  
Excepting February alone,  
Which has twenty-eight days clear,  
And twenty-nine in each Leap Year.*

A Leap Year occurs if the year number is *perfectly* divisible by four. Century Years are Leap Years *only* if they are divisible by 400. So Century Years 1700, 1800, and 1900 are not Leap Years, but 2000 is. The next Century Year to be also a Leap Year will be 2400.

*Good luck with your Moon Gazing!*

**FEDERAL BY-ELECTIONS**  
2017 DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup>

| Liberal      | Churence Rogers    | 8,717 | 69.2 % |
|--------------|--------------------|-------|--------|
| Conservative | Mike Windsor       | 2,878 | 22.9 % |
| NDP          | Tyler James Downey | 598   | 4.7 %  |
| Libertarian  | Shane Stapleton    | 262   | 2.1 %  |
| Green Party  | Tyler Colbourne    | 138   | 1.1 %  |

In the 2017 December 11<sup>th</sup> Federal By-Elections, Churence Rogers won Judy Foote’s old Riding of Bonavista-Burin-Trinity quite handily. Ms Foote had been extremely popular as MP and had secured 28,704 votes in the General Election of 2015, more than 3 times Mr Rogers’ score of 8717 in this 2017 by-election. But by-elections rarely attract a high voter turnout, unless some major issue is at stake. Ms Foote had earned herself a great name as an MP, so Mr Rogers has a large pair of shoes to fill. But his wide experience in municipal government will be useful to him.

In 2015 Ms Foote polled 81.8% of the 35,092 votes cast. In this 2018 by-election, Mr Rogers won 69.2% of the 12,593 votes cast, still a healthy number compared with Mike Windsor’s 2,878 votes or 22.9% of the total. ([Elections Canada Dec 11 Results](#))

The NDP did very poorly. The party has never recovered from their ill-advised [leadership coup of 2013](#) when several senior party members called for a review of Lorraine Michael’s leadership. It was a dirty bit of business, done secretly, almost like a political coup, while she was out of the Province on vacation, and it left a bad taste in the mouths of many voters, NDP and otherwise. Newfoundland politics has a reputation for being a bit dirty sometimes, but let this be a warning to all parties—we are a decent respectful electorate (most of the time) and we don’t like seeing a decent politician treated as they treated [Lorraine Michael](#).

In other by-elections on Dec 11 past, Liberals also won in **Scarborough-Agincourt**, where Jean Yip won 9,091 votes to the Conservatives 7,448, leaving only a meagre 1700 votes for the remaining five candidates to collect. The Conservatives had a healthy win in **Battlefords-Lloydminster** (Saskatchewan) with 6,965 votes to the NDP’s 1,698 and the Liberals 1,345 where the Liberals came last of the three major parties.

The Liberals made a gain in **South Surrey-White Rock** with 14,368 votes against the Conservatives 12,752, which would seem to indicate that the Justin Trudeau government, while perhaps not riding quite so high as it was after the 2015 vote, is still leading in the polls at least in eastern Canada, but as usual further west in the Prairies the Conservatives still hold sway. — SLH

*Wishing Everyone*

*a*

*Happy and Prosperous  
New Year*

## Obituary

**JOHN DAVID MEADE**

1942 September 04 - 2017 November 29  
*Bishop-Elect of Western Newfoundland*

IN HIS LIFE he worked to inspire all those with whom he interacted. By all accounts he met his goals successfully with great humility and an unwavering faith.

It was with great sadness that the family of The Venerable John David Meade (Bishop-Elect of the Anglican Diocese of Western Newfoundland) announced his passing on Wednesday, November 29, 2017 in Corner Brook at the age of 45 years.

Born in Port aux Basques on September 4<sup>th</sup> 1972, John was the youngest son of Helen (née Foote) and the late John Meade. He left to mourn with precious memories, his loving family: his beloved Kelly, wife of 15 years (daughter of Ron and the late Merella Walsh); his mother Helen, sisters Denise (Floyd) Francis, Kim (Trevor) Decker, brother Jim (Trudi) Meade, brother-in-law Andrew (Shelagh) Walsh; his nieces Allie, Mia, Sierra, Emily, Savanna and nephews Emil, William and Seamus. John also left behind a wide circle of family, friends and colleagues.

Visitation took place on Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup> at Fillatre's Funeral Home, St. Mark's Avenue, Corner Brook from 2-4 pm & 7-9 pm. A celebration of John's life took place at the Cathedral of St John the Evangelist, Main Street, Corner Brook on Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup> at 2:00pm, followed by interment at the Anglican Cemetery in Sally's Cove on Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11am. Flowers were welcome, and donations in memory of John could be made to the Cathedral of St John the Evangelist or to the Renal Dialysis Unit at Western Memorial Regional Hospital. The family guest book was signed by visiting [www.fillatre.ca](http://www.fillatre.ca).

*We offer our sincere condolences to  
 Bishop-Elect John's family and friends.*



## Obituary

**TRACY ANN SHEPPARD**

York Harbour, Newfoundland  
 1971 April 29 - 2017 December 04

IT WAS WITH sad and grieving hearts that the family of the late Tracy Ann Sheppard (née Vincent) announced her passing at the Western Memorial Regional Hospital on Monday 2017 December 4, at the age of 46 years.

Tracy was a courageous woman who fought a brave battle against cancer and left a great legacy of love which will live on in the hearts of her family and friends forever.

She was an inspiration to all who knew her and will be greatly missed by her devoted and loving husband Dean Sheppard and their two children Hailey and Travis. She also left to mourn her siblings Mary, Ellen (Derrick), Ruby (Bill), Art (Mary), Bonnie (Jerome), Roseanne (Floyd), Louise (Harold), Jim (Judy), Frank (Cynthia), Ted (Wanda), Nancy (Dan); father-in-law Gerald Sheppard, brother-in-law Terry Sheppard (Laura), and her sister-in-law Paula Kendell (Wilfred).

Mourning her loss was also a large number of nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends. She was predeceased by her parents Arthur and Christina Vincent, mother-in-law Margaret Sheppard and sister Elaine Park and brothers-in-law Eric Humber and William O'Keefe.

At Tracy's request, cremation has taken place. Visitation took place at Country Haven Funeral Home, 167 Country Road, on Thursday December 7, between the hours of 2 to 4 & 6 to 9pm from where a celebration of Tracy Ann Sheppard's life took place at 8pm from the Country Haven Funeral Home Chapel. Interment took place at a later date.

As expressions of sympathy, flowers were graciously accepted or memorial donations made to the Children's Wish Foundation. The family guestbook could be signed by visiting [www.country-haven.ca](http://www.country-haven.ca).

*We offer our sincere condolences to Tracy's family and friends.*

**Christmas Cactus Bloom**

*Schlumbergera*



*Schlumbergera* is one cactus genus of several whose members are known as "Christmas Cacti" blooming around Christmas. As I write, mine has produced a hundred or more flowers for a week or two and will soon be finished. Other cacti that look quite similar may bloom at other times of the year, for example, around Easter.

Blooming time can be controlled a little by specific watering, temperature and light intensity. The growing season is in summer.

(1) Water moderately until September as new green growth appears. (2) Then reduce water gradually until November, and move the plant to a cooler space, never in direct sunlight. New green growth will cease, but flower buds will appear on tips of the new growth. (3) When buds begin to open, the plant can be moved to a warmer room. Buds will enlarge and open quickly. (4) As blooming ends, water very sparingly to prevent complete drying of soil. This is the annual resting period which all plants need. (1) When new green growth appears, water moderately until September, as last year. Never water excessively, and never allow any Cactus to become waterlogged as it may cause rotting. If waterlogging occurs, check the drainage of the pot and repot the plant if necessary. Use a special cactus mixture or make your own with a mixture of equal parts gritty soil, well-rotted compost and coarse sand.

## NEWS, ADVERTISING, LIES AND PROPAGANDA

In this time of wide-open opportunity for anyone to express opinions or broadcast news using Internet facilities, it behoves us to treat the results that we read with great care.

Much of the news we receive in our homes from Internet, radio, or television may be of little value because it does not observe the cardinal rule of good journalism :— consistent concern for reliable truth. Literally everyone has personal opinions and preferences, and it is not easy to avoid their influence on what we speak or write. This applies to the most respected journalists as well as to those at the bottom end of the scale.

It is tempting to say, as Donald Trump seems to have said to himself many times, “The truth is what I believe”. This is almost a form of ‘[Humpty Dumptyism](#)’, as Lewis Carroll’s Humpty Dumpty in *Through the Looking Glass* “When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.” Unfortunately, if you believe this, like Donald Trump you may feel free to give yourself licence to invent any “pseudo-truth” you fancy.

Then there is **propaganda**. This is the material published by many governments and commercial advertisers for their products or services. Propagandists may disclaim any efforts to influence the reader, and argue that they are merely presenting the facts. But those ‘facts’ may often be extremely biased or even obvious lies.

However it is not easy to avoid personal bias in communication, no matter what claims are made. When we select one topic over another, we are making a choice based on our preferences, and that is by definition subjective. But it is not ‘propaganda’, even though we may wish others to agree with us.

Nazi Germany had its propaganda service run by the notorious [Dr Joseph Goebbels](#) and [Lord Haw-Haw](#), and Japan had [Tokyo Rose](#); but more recently there has been [Radio Moscow](#) from USSR; and [Voice of America](#). with its mission “to broadcast accurate, balanced, and comprehensive news and information to an international audience”. In its post WW2 days VOA’s output was regarded worldwide as American propaganda because it tried to show the superiority of American life and policy compared with that of other nations, particularly communist. As a result it was viewed inevitably as another propaganda machine.

Any news service directly sponsored by a government or commercial concern may be subject to some form of bias, and VOA was unquestionably pro-American. Even Canada’s CBC and Britain’s BBC are of course subject to influences, although they both generate some of the world’s best news reporting. As long as governments or commercial interests remain at arm’s length and do not use their financial influence to control the broadcaster, CBC and BBC will continue their good work. But if finance assumes priority, both those national broadcasting services will soon deteriorate and lose respect as they bend to the will of their financiers. Advertising, if too dominant, can be such a threat.

Few are aware that our own governments also put out actual propaganda, as when they place an advertisement to advise people of a new program they have introduced. Even a simple advertisement like the sign beside the road at the Lark Harbour town limits announcing joint funding of the Water & Sewer Project by the Provincial Government of Newfoundland and the Federal Government of Canada. Why would the governments erect such signs unless they are trying to gain thanks and credit from us for ‘giving’ us the money,

when all they are doing is giving back a little of what we have already paid in taxes? We have been royally treated to this kind of deceptive speech from Donald Trump almost every time he speaks on the media, but particularly when he called on Alabama people to vote for Roy Moore in the special election of 2017 December 12<sup>th</sup>.

It can often be difficult to distinguish propaganda from genuine news. For this reason, when a writer makes a surprising or controversial statement or references another writer or researcher, a note should be provided to enable the reader to check and credit the source. The entire document should be introduced as “opinion” or “editorial”, and the author’s identity included.

All writing, from fantasy fiction to even highly technical scientific reports, inevitably have elements, no matter how small, of writer subjectivity—perhaps no more than the subjectivity of the choice of topic—but influences are still present. Total objectivity can be found only in raw mathematics and some technical documents.

Therefore the best approach to reading or listening to any news or report is to become familiar with the writer or the publisher, and to recognise that they, like you, are subject to influences and beliefs of which they may not be aware, no matter how hard they may try. Most of my articles in the BMD are editorials in that they often present my own opinions to some degree, but I usually list some of the sources I have used and which have influenced my opinions. An important factor is that we tend to develop trust for the work of a specific writer (**See NOTE 1**). However, like everyone, my writings are based not only on reports and news items I have read or heard, but also on seventy-plus years experience of living and observing events and people.

Perhaps the only way to protect ourselves against the negative aspects of news coverage is to expose ourselves to a variety of different sources. Use several independent sources of news, with the big established journals, broadcast services and agencies of the free world being the most trustworthy. But keep in mind that many agencies that were once independently financed are now part of large financial empires whose editorial policies may be influenced by the owners who select staff to reflect their political views. (**See NOTE 2**). Beware of **sponsored** news which may be the sponsor’s means of pushing his own point of view or product, thus often making it merely another modern form of advertising.

There is a great divide between news coverage and advertising. Modern advertising also covers a spectrum from passive to active. Prior to radio, most advertising was **passive**, displayed on billboards, newspaper pages, or flyers in the mail, all of which you could ignore if you wished. The advent of radio and then television made advertising an unavoidable **active** presence in our lives. It is no longer a passive thing that can be ignored : it is now an active event, hard to ignore because it occupies 12 minutes or 20 percent of air time per hour, and may additionally include “promotion of Canadian programs, public service announcements, political ads, product placements within a TV program and virtual ads” within even longer limits as allowed by [CRTC](#).

Today’s advertising is therefore infinitely more persuasive and effective than in the past, requiring us to be far more critical and aware of the effect it can have on us. If we subject ourselves uncritically to it, we may find our lives almost dominated by it and moved in a direction in which we may not ideally wish to be driven.

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**NOTE 1** One such writer is [Fareed Zakaria](#) who writes for many important newspapers and good broadcast outlets. His insight and analysis of significant world events is impressive. His excellent news commentaries are available on CNN on Sundays at 11:30am NT/10:00am ET & 2:30pm NT/1:00pmET and also on Internet.

**NOTE 2**

Very few newspapers, tv or radio stations are independent now. But the large ones attract good writers and correspondents who have earned credentials for unbiased reporting.

Canada CBC, CTV, Globe & Mail, and various regional broadcasters and journals.

UK [BBC](#) and [The Guardian](#), and some local/regional sources. The BBC exists under a [Royal Charter](#) and is funded by an annual licence fee paid by everyone who uses tv receiving equipment.

The Guardian is owned by [Scott Trust](#), and is probably as close to an independent news journal as is possible today. Its online site solicits user donations, but remains open and free of charge.

USA [CNN](#) is owned by the Turner Broadcasting System, a division of Time Warner, therefore not independently financed, but it is the closest to an independent 24-hour news broadcaster available in America and worldwide. The *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* may be the best for print/online resources, but most now charge for internet access after a rather limited period of free use.

[Wikipedia](#) - Billed as “the free English language encyclopedia that anyone can edit”, it is free and open to all.

See [Wikipedia:Five Pillars](#) for a summary of its basic principles.

**CAUTIONARY NOTE** - There is no easy way to be sure of the quality of any material available publicly, whether broadcast, internet, or print. Listen or read critically, be aware that at least some of it is opinion, and that it may be sponsored. Then judge it according to what you know about the writer and the organisation behind it.

— SLH

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## A NOTE ABOUT SUBMITTING INFORMATION FOR PUBLICATION

Local groups are invited to provide information about their activities. Personal announcements also accepted. **All at no cost.**

Include dates, times, locations, etc, of the event, and *name & phone number* of person providing the information.

*The BMD is published on or before the first Friday of each month.*

To ensure timely publication, please submit information at least one week prior to the first day of the next month.

Call 681-2256 or email to [blowmedowner@gmail.com](mailto:blowmedowner@gmail.com)

EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO ENSURE ACCURACY, BUT THE EDITOR IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ERRORS EXCEPT TO CORRECT THEM IN A LATER ISSUE.

LETTERS AND ARTICLES BY READERS WILL BE PUBLISHED AT THE EDITOR'S DISCRETION, NAME WITHHELD IF REQUESTED.

ANONYMOUS INPUT WILL BE REJECTED.

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## TRUMPSPEAK

### TRUMP'S RESPONSE TO GEORGE ORWELL

I have long thought that the Trump Administration has more in common with the fictional state of Oceania in George Orwell's disturbing novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Now, 68 years since Orwell wrote his novel, Trump has fulfilled part of Orwell's prophecy.

The Trump Administration has followed the example of Orwell's imaginary Oceania and has presented US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with a list of **banned words**, a restriction sometimes used by totalitarian regimes.

In Oceania the language spoken is called *Newspeak*; in America they speak their own version of English, but it may be time for a new language there too, perhaps *TrumpSpeak*?. So far, TrumpSpeak has only seven banned words, but they are indicative of the Administration's thinking, and it is easy to imagine how the list might be expanded. So far it contains these words:

*evidence-based*

*science-based*

*diversity*

*vulnerable*

*transgender*

*entitlement*

*fetus*

These forbidden words relate to recently introduced controversial policies, reflecting the anxious fervour of the White House to prevent disaffected communication in certain Departments. It will be interesting to see if more words appear on the list, or if other Departments are required to comply. It will be even more interesting to see what action will be taken against the noncompliant. Will they merely be reprimanded, suspended with or without pay, fired, deported, jailed, tortured, or subjected to some more fiendish penalty yet to be invented by Trump's convoluted mind? Winston Smith, Orwell's character who ran afoul of the Newspeak rules and was eventually transformed into a model citizen.

Do you recall the furore caused by Stephen Harper when he had Canadian archeologist [Dr Patricia Sutherland](#) fired in 2012 for her stand on her research in the Arctic? Did Trump perhaps get his idea from Harper as his spiritual ancestor? But wherever the ideas originated, the Trump Administration is becoming more and more like the government Orwell imagined in his novel. What is happening in *the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave* ?

If you have never read Orwell's disquieting and now somewhat prophetic novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, get a copy from the Library. Even if politics is of no interest to you, it's still very entertaining. But it is also a disturbing story, with all the elements of a good novel : a fascinating plot with modern political relevance, sympathetic characterisation, excitement, and even a smattering of some of the favourite ingredients of soap operas and spy novels!

You may also like to read his other political novel, *Animal Farm*. It is much shorter and somewhat resembles a children's story, though there is always serious undercurrent as the narrative unfolds and the reader sees what Orwell really means.

— SLH

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