

# Introducing the candidates that you've never heard of

BY ROBERT GRANADER  
New York Times

Headlines call this year's presidential field "historically large," focusing on the 24 "top tier" Democrats. But most have ignored the 739 others vying for a slice of the spotlight.

If you look deep enough into this mosh pit of first-time - and long-time - candidates, you'll find a bevy of Bushes and Washingtons, two Kennedys and a Carter.

There's a Karen Deez Nutz, not to be confused with a Kanye Deez Nutz

West, along with a Pravda and a Baruch, a St. Louis and a Cleveland, a Disney and a Fox, a Brown, a Black, a Gray, a Green and a Greene.

There is a candidate already named President Boddie and a man named Sexy Vegan. Two animals - Seven the Dog and Seymour Cats - are running.

Seymour has the better tag line: "If you want to run with the big dogs, you've got to vote for a cat."

The requirements to be president of the United States have nothing to do with how many do-

nors you have or who supports you in which states. The Constitution simply requires that the candidate be a natural-born citizen of the United States, a resident for 14 years and at least 35 years old. (So I suppose Seven the Dog and Seymour Cats are already out of the running. Unless dog/cat years count.)

Who are these candidates who can't be found at a CNN town hall and whose Sunday mornings are free from news-show invites?

They are driven by a policy, a position, a point

of view, a feeling that they can do better. That America can do better. And it's clear that whatever criteria the parties or the news media use to declare a top-tier candidate, it doesn't ensure that the most interesting candidates get the attention.

Sexy Vegan, running as an independent, will not be topping any polls, although he would have a distinct advantage on a crowded debate stage since his name is tattooed on his face.

Others stand out with a good website, a clever tag line, a catchy email

address. Dan Behrman leads the "Taxation Is Theft" movement and has a website that he runs from Cancun, Mexico. He calls for eliminating the Internal Revenue Service, ending the Federal Reserve and legalizing pineapple pizza.

Some offer email addresses as their only contact point. Keyshawn Dwayne Varnado's campaign lists youthsport-sicon@gmail.com as the way to reach him.

Billy Rubin is particularly hampered, since whenever you search his name you are sent to a page defining bilirubin, the "orange to yellow bile pigment."

Pamela Rocker, a transgender woman running on a "One Human Race" platform focused on LGBTQ rights, is campaigning on a "free car" initiative, to

ensure that all Americans have a vehicle to get to and from work.

And while many have controversial points of view, Chomi Prag contends that zero minus 50 does not equal -50. Her campaign literature says, "Negative numbers do not exist, contrary to the flawed human system, social conditioning as well as the a (sic) calculator."

And so they run, for the most part, within the requirements set out in the Constitution in 1787: citizenship, residency and age. As Tench Coxe, a member of the Continental Congress, put it, a president "cannot be an idiot, probably not a knave or a tyrant, for those whom nature makes so, discover it before the age of 35. ..."

# Globalization goes on without the United States

BY ANDRES OPPENHEIMER  
Miami Herald

There is a new global phenomenon that may have a big impact in the future: Call it "globalization of the rest of the world" - or "globalization without the United States."

While President Trump has withdrawn from some of the world's biggest agreements - such as the 12-nation Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal and the 195-country Paris Climate Accord - and has announced tariffs on European, Canadian and Mexican goods, the rest of the world is signing major agreements that bypass the United States:

- On June 28, the 28-country European Union signed a historic free-trade agreement with South America's Mercosur bloc - made up of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay - that had been under negotiation for the past 20 years.

The agreement will affect more than 780 million people and, by most measures, will be the largest trade agreement ever signed by both blocs, officials said. Under the deal, which will have to be approved by the legislatures of all signatory countries, import duties will be lowered by a combined \$4.5 billion a year. The two sides will aim to remove the majority of export tariffs between them.

Ironically, the United States had tried to sign a hemisphere-wide Free Trade Agreement of the Americas for two decades since the 1994 Summit of the Americas in Miami. But Argentina rejected the plan in 2005, and it has been shelved ever since. The Trump administration has not even raised the idea of a regional U.S. trade deal with South America.

- On May 30, a total of 55 African countries kicked off the African Free Trade Treaty, which is expected to go into effect this month. It will include the trade of

goods and services for 1.2 billion people and had been negotiated for the past six years. The deal calls for eliminating tariffs on 90 percent on most consumer goods, which is expected to drive up inter-African trade by 52.3 percent. It has been already signed by 23 African countries' lawmaking bodies, which is enough to set it in motion.

- Last year, after Trump's withdrawal from the TPP - which had created the world's largest trade bloc and was conceived by the Obama administration as a little-disguised effort to counter China's growing economic clout in Asia and Latin America - the remaining signatory countries, including Japan, Australia, Vietnam, Singapore, Mexico, Chile and Peru, then signed the so-called TPP-11, without the United States.

- China and India are negotiating a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) with 14 other Asian nations that could result in the world's biggest trade bloc. The proposed RCEP negotiations include Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam.

It won't be long until Americans realize that Trump's protectionism will badly hurt the United States. For the time being, Trump has been able to mask the negative impact of his trade policies by subsidizing U.S. farmers and other exporters who have suffered from other countries' retaliatory measures.

But that will only worsen the monumental U.S. budget deficit. In the long run, Trump's tariff wars will elicit more retaliatory measures from abroad, cripple international commerce, hurt U.S. exporters and make American consumers pay more for most products they buy.



# From plague to parrot fever, history shows inequity of medical care. Don't let it continue



BY KEVIN KAVANAGH

In the 1980's many of us witnessed the near lack of concern and urgency in the AIDS epidemic because it was initially perceived that it affected only a small minority group whom many disliked and who were easy to discriminate against. The affluent and government officials view themselves as unaffected and often did not wish to commit the needed resources to reverse the epidemic.

The same was true in the 1925 outbreak of the bubonic plague. At that time the plague was 90% fatal and emerged in a Los Angeles, Mexican community, a disparate population with meager resources and social status. From the start the outbreak was framed as a Hispanic problem with publishing the names of the afflicted published in the newspaper. A quarantine of five Mexican urban districts was enacted. However, only two had verified cases.

More recently, the book, "The Deadly River," describes the killing of almost 9,000 defenseless, mostly poor souls

in Haiti by a largely treatable and preventable disease, cholera. Despite being caused by the U.N. relief workers, the interests of wealthy nations took precedence over the defenseless by not promptly implementing preventive strategies such as vaccinations, environmental cleaning and proper sewage disposal.

Most recently, an editorial in the New York Times reassured readers regarding the United States' epidemic of deadly antibiotic resistant bacteria.(4) It was asserted that readers "almost certainly don't need to worry about any of this." And reassurances were given by describing practices in the best hospitals. The statement appears to ignore the socioeconomically disadvantaged, many of whom may not have access to the described high-quality care.

Those responsible for the epidemic and impacted financially will often deny responsibility and lobby government leaders to let them continue business as usual. However, when epidemics affect the affluent and elected officials, action rapidly takes place. This happened in the United States parrot fever epidemic of 1930.

Epidemiologists had all but proven that California parrot farms were

acting as the reservoir and were the source of the disease. California enacted a ban on sales, but parrot farmers lobbied the governor for relief. The embargo was lifted. A year later, the wife of Utah Senator William Borah contracted parrot fever, barely escaping death. Senator Borah persuaded President Hoover to reinstate the embargo, and the epidemic was finally brought under control.

These are just micro-examples of the inequities in healthcare and in our society as a whole, but unfortunately for those of privilege, resistant bacteria do not discriminate and will eventually wreak havoc on all of society, including those who view pandemics as someone else's problem.

Obviously, mankind has a long history of ignoring and not investing resources in disadvantaged "disparate" populations. But what needs to be done? Should we risk-adjust these reports and mathematically lower the devastation of these epidemics as reported to the public and recorded in history?

Unfortunately, that is a major initiative that the United States government has directed toward the National Quality Forum, the non-profit organization under con-

tract for recommending standardized quality measurements which are used by government agencies. An initiative which will "correct" or mathematically adjust the reported poorer outcomes seen in socio-economic disadvantaged disparate populations, under the guise of "promoting equal treatment of all patients who enter the healthcare system".

Frontline facilities do not wish to be penalized for poorer outcomes, when these outcomes are associated with a disparate population. However, this association may be due to quality problems caused by reduced healthcare access and the underfunding of Medicaid and frontline facilities. The end result may cause the reported quality of care to look better than it actually is. And the data which supports the desperate need for a change in our healthcare system, becomes less alarming or not alarming at all.

In the United States, a foundation of our society is that all "men (and women) are created equal". Healthcare is a right and high-quality healthcare needs to be available to all, not just a select few. This is an imperative which we must uphold and not shrug off our responsibility by mathematically hiding our society's moral and medical lapses.

Kevin Kavanagh is a retired physician from Somerset Ky, Board Chairman Health Watch USA and Associate Editor of the Journal of Patient Safety.