**Comparisons**

**More Americans have perished from Covid-19 than on the battlefields of World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam War combined. *(The Week magazine, March 5, 2021)***

**The more than 500,000 Americans who've died of Covid-19 exceeds the number of war veterans buried in Arlington National Cemetery. The cemetery dates to the Civil War and holds the remains of troops from every major U.S. military conflict. *(The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 5, 2021)***

**Nearly 4,700 military veterans who've been treated at federal Veterans Affairs facilities have died from Covid-19 this year -- more than the death toll in the nine-year occupation of Iraq and double that of the 19-year Afghanistan War. *(The DailyBeast.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 11, 2020)***

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**It took me 17 years to get 3,000 hits, but I did it in one afternoon on the golf course. *(Hank Aaron, Hall of Fame baseball player)***

**Ask a Dad: Zoe: “What time is it?” Dad: “830.” Ask a Mom: Zoe: “What time is it?” Mom: “Time to brush your teeth, time to wash your face, time to put your pajamas on, and time to help me straighten up this living room before somebody trips and breaks their neck!” *(Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott, in Baby Blues comic strip)***

**My husband and our son, both golfers, were telling our grandson Mike, an avid bowler, the great joys of golf. Mike, however, was not impressed. “You hit the ball and then have to chase it all over the field,” Mike said. “I prefer bowling. You just stand there and the ball comes back to you.” *(Alberta R. Fuller, in Reader's Digest)***

**Smart is when you believe only half of what you hear. Brilliant is when you know which half to believe. *(Robert Orben)***

**Before you try to keep up with the Joneses, be sure they’re not trying to keep up with you. *(Erma Bombeck)***

**An adult has 206 bones. A newborn infant has 300. (Jack Kreismer, in The Bathroom Trivia Book , p. 37)**

**It took 200 years to build Italy’s famed Leaning Tower of Pisa, while India’s main tourist attraction, the Taj Mahal, was built in only 22 years. *(Samantha Weaver, in Tidbits)***

**Dad: “First, Zoe couldn’t sleep, so I let her crawl in bed with me. Then Hammie couldn’t sleep, so I put him in bed with Zoe, and I went to Hammie’s room to sleep. Then neither of them could sleep, so we all ended up on the living room floor in sleeping bags.” Mom: “It sounds like you were very busy.” Dad: “Busy? Las Vegas doesn’t have that much nighttime action.” *(Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott, in Baby Blues comic strip)***

**Grandma claims her pineapple cheesecake once garnered first prize at the state fair. Grandpa counters that she actually won “Best Science Project.” *(Jill Marie Bonnier, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**Call it a tale of two systems. In authoritarian China, where the pandemic first emerged, the coronavirus is now a mere inconvenience. The disease has been almost entirely suppressed through the combination of strict lockdowns, face-mask mandates, and mass testing and contact tracing. As a result, China is going from strength to strength. Experts believe China will be the world's only major economy to notch positive economic growth this year -- the U.S. economy is predicted to shrink by about 4 percent -- and for ordinary citizens there, life has largely returned to normal. During this month's Golden Week holiday, more than 600 million Chinese hit the road to visit relatives and vacation resorts. Here in the democratic U.S., it's a different story. With no national strategy in place to contain the virus, we're now experiencing our second or possibly third wave of the disease. The U.S. (population 328 million) has so far confirmed some 8.5 million Covid-19 cases and 226,000 deaths -- more than any other nation, China (population 1.4 billion) has recorded about 86,000 infections and 4,700 deaths. In a single day this week, the U.S. logged about 48,000 new cases, compared with 13 in China. Of course, it was always going to be easier for an Orwellian state such as China to control its population and limit viral spread than for a society that values rugged individualism. But as countries such as New Zealand and South Korea have shown, it is possible to push back the virus without resorting to totalitarianism. It requires national leaders to listen to credible scientists, not berate them as "idiots," and to sell the public on the idea that the short-term inconvenience of wearing a mask or not drinking inside a bar is worth it for the long-term gain. Whether any politician can rally this divided nation around such common-sense ideas remains to be seen. But if we continue to fight among ourselves, a united China -- not a disunited America -- may dominate the 21st century. (Theunis Bates, in The Week magazine, October 30, 2020)**

**If you read a lot of books, you’re considered well-read. But if you watch a lot of TV, you’re not considered well-viewed. *(Lily Tomlin)***

**Proud of my cooking skills, I smugly asked my 11-year-old brother if he could tell the difference between my cooking and my father’s. “Sure,” he said. “When Dad cooks, we don’t have to open the windows.” *(John Shirley, in Reader’s Digest)***

**In the past eight months, the coronavirus has killed more people than the last five flu seasons combined. The flu killed an estimated 22,000 people during the last flu season, which runs between October and May, an average of 91 people a day. The coronavirus has killed more than 211,000 people since early February, an average of more than 867 deaths a day. (CNN.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 23, 2020)**

**In counties where Donald Trump won at least 70 percent of the vote in the 2020 election, Covid-19 has killed about 47 out of every 100,000 people since the end of June. In counties where Trump won less than 32 percent of the vote, the Covid death rate is about 10 out of 100,000. (The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 8, 2021)**

**U. S. Covid deaths have reached 675,000, surpassing the official death toll for the 1918-19 flu pandemic in the U. S. One in 500 Americans has died from Covid. (New York Daily News, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 1, 2021)**

**Three boys were talking as they walked to school. The first boy said, “My dad wrote a poem that was published, and he got $50 for it.” The second boy boasted, “My dad wrote a story and got $100 for it.” The third boy responded, “That’s nothing. My dad writes a sermon every Sunday, and it takes four men to collect all the money.” *(Jane Watts, in Country magazine)***

**A Calvinistic Presbyterian believes that all Catholics will be damned because they are predestined to be damned; an ordinary Presbyterian believes that all Catholics will be damned on their merits. *(John Bartley)***

**“What’s dating like in the animal kingdom, Axel?” “It’s pretty similar to human dating, except that instead of bringing flowers, I have to bring a dead caribou.” *(J. C. Duffy, in The Fusco Brothers comic strip)***

**Man: “What a day! I thought it would never end.” Garfield: “And just whose fault is that? I took several naps and it zipped right by.” *(Jim Davis, in Garfield comic strip)***

**Difference between an “optimist,” a “pessimist” and a “cynic,” it’s said, is that the optimist will lend his cousin money, the pessimist won’t and the cynic did. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**If you’re a woman, typically, you like it when a man opens a door for you, providing he’s not putting on some sort of performance. If you’re a man, typically, you don’t like it when a woman opens a door for you, unless she is putting on some sort of performance. So say psychology researchers. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**If Earth continues on its current warming trajectory, the average 6-year-old will experience three times as many climate disasters as their grandparents, according to a new study. They will see twice as many wildfires, more than three times more river floods, and 36 times the number of heat waves as someone born in 1960. (Axios.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 8, 2021)**

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**The price tag for the energy crisis in Texas: $50.6 billion, the cost of electricity from early Monday, when the blackouts began, to Friday morning, according to Bloomberg estimates. That compares with $4.2 billion for the prior week. (Bloomberg.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 5, 2021)**

**The oldest and largest power generation and transmission cooperative in Texas, Brazos Electric, filed for bankruptcy this week after racking up an estimated $2.1 billion in charges over seven days of deep winter freeze last month. Cooperative members paid $774 million for power for all of 2020. (Bloomberg.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 12, 2021)**

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**You read about all these terrorists: most of them came here legally, but they hung around on these expired visas, some for as long as 10-15 years. Now, compare that to Blockbuster: you are two days late with a video and those people are all over you. Let's put Blockbuster in charge of immigration*. (S.C.U.C.A. Regional Reporter)***

**A Texan visiting Niagara Falls admitted that his great state of Texas had nothing to compare with the falls. But he insisted that Texas had plumbers who could fix it. *(Hillery C. Rice)***

**Give a man a fish and he has food for a day; teach him how to fish and you can get rid of him for the entire weekend. *(Zenna Schaffer)***

**A Dutchman was explaining the red, white and blue Netherlands flag to an American. “Our flag is symbolic of our taxes. We get red when we talk about them, white when we get our tax bills, and blue after we pay them.” The American nodded. “It's the same in my country, only we see stars too!” *(Bedside Bits)***

**United Airlines, in an effort to reduce fuel costs on its New York-to-California flights, is actually flying passengers only as far as Pittsburgh, which United points out is “less than four days from Los Angeles by taxi.” *(Dave Berry)***

**One of the subtle differences among the generations: people over 35 generally know their Social Security numbers by heart; people under 35 memorize their credit-card numbers; people under 15 know all the cable channels. *(Jay Trachman, in One to One)***

**Early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese. (*Gettos humor and jokes, in Catholic Digest)***

**As the TV gives the message: “And, if you act now, there's nothing up front, and no interest for six months!” The man responds: “Sounds like my last girlfriend.” *(J. C. Duffy, in The Fusco Brothers comic strip)***

**Billy says to Dolly: “When Clark Kent takes off his glasses, he becomes Superman! When Daddy takes off his glasses, he bumps into things."**   
***(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**Although my husband and I both took (golf) up at the same time, we quickly progressed to different levels of skill. He now tries to break eighty. I would be happy now to shoot below my weight. *(Rita Rudner)***

**It takes Halley's comet seventy-six years to get here. Big deal, so does home-delivered pizza*. (Bob Hope)***

**The Atlantic hurricane season produced 30 named storms, the most in history. Twelve of them made landfall -- beating a record of nine that's held since 1916 -- and 10 of them hit in September, a record for a single month. There were six major hurricanes of Category 3 or above. *(Houston Chronicle, ass it appeared in The Week magazine, December 11, 2020)***

**A salesman, tired of his job, gave it up to become a policeman. Several months later, a friend asked him how he liked his new role. “Well,” he replied, “the pay is pretty good and the hours aren't bad, but what I like best is that the customer is always wrong.” *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**I had to have my car towed into work today. Nothing wrong with it – it’s just cheaper than having to fill it up with gas. *(Jay Leno)***

**How many to change a** light bulb**? Aries: Just one. You want to make something of it? Taurus: One, but just try to convince them the old bulb is useless. Gemini: Two, but they keep arguing over which one should do it. Cancer: Just one. But it takes a therapist three years to help them get through the grief process. Leo: Leos don't change light bulbs, but sometimes their agents will get a Virgo to do it for them. Virgo: Approximately 1.000000 with an error of +/- 1 millionth. Libra: Two. Or maybe one. No, make that two, is that OK? Scorpio: That's top secret, shared on a need-to-know basis. Sagittarius: The sun's shining, the day is young, and you're worried about a light bulb? Capricorn: I don't waste my time with these childish jokes; Aquarius: You have to remember that everything is energy, so . . . Pisces: Light bulb? What light bulb? (Denver Rocky Mountain News)**

**Teacher: “Why is a democracy better than a monarchy?” Student: “Because in a democracy, 49% of the people like you!” Teacher: “What's so great about that?” Student: “In a monarchy, nobody likes you.” *(Johnny Hart, in B. C. comic strip)***

**One day my husband, Don, showed his new gasoline-powered garden machine to our neighbor and her teenage son. “What does it do?” she inquired. “It turns the soil and gets rid of weeds,” Don explained. “I have one of those,” she said, throwing an arm around her son's shoulders. “But mine runs on cornflakes.” *(Elizabeth A. Lacey, in Reader's Digest)***

**Before a marriage, a man will lie awake all night thinking about something you said; after marriage, he’ll fall asleep before you finish saying it. *(Helen Rowland)***

**Missing: One flu season: While Covid-19 continues to infect tens of thousands of Americans every day, another usually rampant respiratory virus is almost nowhere to be seen: influenza. Since the fall, about 800,000 lab flu tests have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Only 1,500 have come back positive, or 0.2 percent, an infection rate 100 times lower than it was 12 months ago. In a typical year, hundreds of thousands of Americans are hospitalized with the flu, but this season's tally was only 155 as of last week. And only one child has died from the flu so far this year, compared with 78 at this point in 2020. Scientists say the radical behavioral changes that Americans have made during the pandemic -- such as social distancing, mask wearing, and constant hand-washing -- are largely responsible for this unusually quiet flu season. "Flu just tends to be a lot less transferable (than a coronavirus), which means it's easier to suppress," Shweta Bansal, a disease ecologist at Georgetown University, tells The Atlantic. Travel bans have also helped quash influenza, which is often seeded in the Northern Hemisphere in fall by travelers from the Southern Hemisphere. But influenza could still make a late-season return: There's some evidence infections are increasing in parts of Asia that have eased anti-Covid precautions. "We may not be out of the woods yet," says Bansal. (*The Week magazine, February 26, 2021)***

**A woman and her teenage daughter were watching a typical romantic movie of the Thirtees on TV. After it had ended with the usual clinch and fadeout, as most movies of those days did, the daughter turned to her mother and said, “Gee, Mom, your movies ended where ours begin.” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Woman: “My parents have an apartment in Paris and we’re going to be visiting them. When it’s time to come home it’s always kind of painful saying goodbye.” Crankshaft: “Jeff’s mother Rose comes over for Thanksgiving, and it’s always kind of painful saying hello.” (Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers, in Crankshaft comic strip)**

**In storybooks, Peter Pan fights mean guys, but in real life he just makes peanut butter. *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**Covid-19 is now the leading cause of death for police officers in the U. S. Some 420 have died from the disease since January 2020, compared with 92 who died from gunfire, the second-leading cause. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 8, 2021)***

**Sick of gas prices lately? Diet Snapple, 16 oz. for $1.29 = $10.32 per gallon; Lipton Iced Tea, $9.52 per gallon; Gatorade, $10.17 per gallon;  Vick's NyQuil, $178.13 per gallon; Pepto Bismol, $123.20 per gallon;  and White Out, $25.42 per gallon. *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**A group of men were discussing how to deter possible home prowlers. One said he kept a gun by his bed. Another said he had an elaborate alarm system. The third, the father of six young children, said, “If a burglar came into our bedroom during the night, I'd probably get up to take him by the hand, and walk him into the bathroom.” *(Thomas LaMance, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**The stories of sacrifice from 9/11 are almost endless. There were the passengers and crew on Flight 93, who rushed their al Qaida hijackers and forced the plane to crash in a field in rural Pennsylvania rather than into its intended target, the U. S. Capitol. In New York City, hundreds of firefighters, police, and paramedics ran into the twin towers to evacuate the burning buildings – and died when they came crashing down. Thousands more emergency personnel, construction workers, and volunteers headed to Ground Zero following the collapse to search for survivors and bodies in the rubble. Many would go on to develop cancer, lung disease, and other health problems from breathing in toxic dust. In the year after 9/11, 181,510 Americans enlisted in the military – more than any year since – many of them driven by a desire to prevent another attack on U. S. soil. “It doesn’t matter how the war (on terror) turned out, said Joslin Joseph, who joined the Marines and went on to serve in Iraq. “When my country needed me, I showed up.” Twenty years on from those horrors, we are now under attack by a different kind of enemy: Covid-19. With more than 1,500 Americans dying from thr virus in a typical 24 hours, we are suffering a 9/11-size death toll every two days. Just as in a war, the fight against Covid requires citizens to defend one another and the country. Compared with what was asked of so many people two decades ago, the sacrifices required in this struggle are minimal. We don’t have to dig through smoking ruins with our bare hands or exchange fire with jihadists in the Tora Bora mountains; we simply need to roll up our sleeves and get vaccinated. Yet about one-quarter of the vaccine-eligible population has so far failed to do this, with many insisting that it’s their right to risk catching and spreading this killer disease. September 11 was an attack by foreign extremists; the bodies now piling up in morgues are the victims of domestic madness. *(Theunis Bates, in The Week magazine, September 24, 2021)***

**Cleaning your house while your kids are still growing is like shoveling the walk before it stops snowing*. (Phyllis Diller, American comedian)***

**An optimist stays up until midnight to see the New Year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves. *(Bill Vaughn, life coach)***

**For our first Thanksgiving, my wife’s parents came over for dinner. My bride roasted a beautiful turkey, which she brought to the table on a silver tray. With a very sharp knife, I carved it into lovely piles of thinly sliced white and dark meat. I smiled at my father-in-law, a well-known surgeon, and said, “How was that for a stunning bit of surgery?” He laughed and replied, “Not bad. Now let’s see you put it back together.” (Carl Ross, in Reader’s Digest)**

**Billy: “My teacher says ‘Y’know’ a lot.” Dolly: “My teacher says ‘Quiet’ a lot.” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**Ways teenagers are like cats: Neither teenagers nor cats turn their heads when you call them by name. No matter what you do for them, it is not enough. Indeed, all efforts are barely adequate to compensate for the privilege of waiting on them hand and foot. No cat or teenager shares your taste in music. Cats and teenagers can lie on the living-room sofa for hours on end without moving, barely breathing. Cats have nine lives. Teenagers carry on as if they did. Cats and teen-agers do not improve anyone's furniture. *(Rocky Mountain News, circulating on the Internet)***

**Accentuate the positives, medicate the negatives. *(Actress Amy Sedaris)***

**Grandma: “I think it’s a mistake for Sylvia and Dan to home school Nelson. I wish you wouldn’t encourage them.” Grandpa: “Oh, they’re just trying to do what they think is best for their son.” Grandma: “I know. They think Nelson is a child prodigy or something, but I think he’d rather be back with his friends in public school.” Grandpa: “Well, you know what they say: Every parent thinks his kid is a genius, and every kid thinks his parents are idiots.” *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

**Capitalism: He who dies with the most** toys **wins; Catholicism: He who denies himself the most toys wins; Atheism: There is no toy maker; Polytheism: There are many toy makers; Evolutionism: The toys made themselves; Communism: Everyone gets the same number of toys, and you go straight to the opposite of heaven if we catch you selling yours; Amish: Toys with batteries are surely a sin; Taoism: The doll is as important as the dump truck; Hedonism: Hang the rule book! Let's play! Existentialism: Toys are a figment of your imagination.(Denver Rocky Mountain News)**

**Dolly says to Billy: “Farmers have roosters to wake them up. We have trash trucks.” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**When the Wright Brothers made aviation history at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, their initial 12-second flight spanned a distance shorter than the wingspan of a Boeing 747 jumbo jet -- which measures 195.7 feet from tip to tip.(Denver P. Tarle, in A Treasury of Trivia, p. 20)**

**When the teacher asked the difference between one yard and two yards, my then 7-year-old granddaughter Elizabeth had a ready reply: “A fence!” *(Suzan L. Wiener)***

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