

## What I'm Reading (Dec. 6)



By Chuck Dinerstein, MD, MBA — December 6, 2019

*Here's the latest: A mashup of a warning in the Federalist papers and social media ... navigating the minefield of religious and cultural concerns from India's nutritional guidelines ... and a video pointing out that just because it's a plant, it doesn't make it a healthy food choice.*



Image courtesy of Jose Antonio Alba on Pixabay [1]

***"For example, in "Federalist No. 10," James Madison wrote about his fear of the power of "faction," by which he meant strong partisanship or group interest that "inflamed [men] with mutual animosity" and made them forget about the common good. He thought that the vastness of the United States might offer some protection from the ravages of factionalism, because it would be hard for anyone to spread outrage over such a large distance. Madison presumed that factious or divisive leaders "may kindle a flame within their particular States, but will be unable to spread a general conflagration through the other States." The Constitution included mechanisms to slow things down, let passions cool, and encourage reflection and deliberation.***

***Madison's design has proved durable. But what would happen to American democracy if, one day in the early 21st century, a technology appeared that—over the course of a decade—changed several fundamental parameters of social and political life? What if this technology greatly increased the amount of "mutual animosity" and the speed at which outrage spread?"***

From the Atlantic, [The Dark Psychology of Social Networks](#) [2].

***“In India, politics, culture, religion, caste and economics around cereals, vegetables, fruits, pulses, oils, eggs, meat etc., constantly dictate what people eat. Even a suspicion of transporting beef or a mention of its nutritional/cultural/religious value can trigger a series of events ranging from abuse, arrest, harassment and lynching. This has been used with great elan by politicians seeking to fragment India along caste and religious lines.”***

If you thought nutrition was contentious in the US, it is time to take a look at India. From Medium, [Tiptoeing Around Meat in India’s Nutritional Minefields](#). [3]

***“Many fast food restaurants are now creating products with plant-based meat substitutes that are pretty convincingly meat-like. Some of these chains are positioning these foods as “healthier options.” Sorry to be a party pooper, but they aren’t really healthier than normal fast food.”***

I love Aaron Carroll and the Incidental Economist. He is a physician that tells it like it is, irrespective of whose ox gets gored. Here is his [video take](#) [4] (5 minutes) on those impossibly fast foods.

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[1] <https://pixabay.com/photos/leaves-books-color-coffee-cup-1076307/>

[2] <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/12/social-media-democracy/600763/>

[3] <https://medium.com/brainfoodmagazine/tiptoeing-around-meat-in-indias-nutritional-minefields-5237459c7ef8>

[4] <https://theincidentaleconomist.com/wordpress/plant-based-fast-food-isnt-health-food/>