Data Journalism For Non-Nerds*

Ben Casselman, Senior Editor & Chief Economics Writer, FiveThirtyEight
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* Well, not only nerds
Dwayne ‘The Rock’ Johnson Eats About 821 Pounds Of Cod Per Year

By Walt Hickey
Filed under FiveThirtyEight

Like many people on the Internet, those of us at the FiveThirtyEight office have been passing around a piece from Mallory Ortberg at The Toast that details the author’s shock at Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson’s daily food plan, which was chronicled in Muscle and Fitness.

The three types of Dwayne Johnson movies
Domestic box office in 2015 dollars vs. Rotten Tomatoes score

Dwayne Johnson

Furious 7

Dwayne ‘The Rock’ Johnson

GI Joe: Retaliation
San Andreas

Hercules

The Tooth Fairy

Doom

The Rundown

Dwayne

Rotten Tomatoes score

The Rock

Sources: OpusData, Rotten Tomatoes
Age Distribution of American Girls Named Brittany

By year of birth

Number of Brittanys born each year estimated to be alive on Jan. 1, 2014

The median living Brittany is 23 years old

NEW YORK CITY'S EDGES ARE UBER-HEAVY

Share of all Uber, yellow cab and green cab pickups that were by Ubers from April through September 2014, by census tract

FIVETHIRTYEIGHT

SOURCE: SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
You Can Never Have Too Much Curry
True shooting percentage vs. FG attempts per 100 possessions for each season, by player; 2009-10 through Nov. 29, 2015

The most popular national parks
National parks ranked by number of visitors in a given year

Players with at least 1,000 possessions played in a season

SOURCE: BASKETBALL-REFERENCE.COM

SOURCE: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Gun Deaths In America

By Ben Casselman, Matthew Conlen and Reuben Fischer-Baum

TAP to advance
More than **33,000** people are fatally shot in the U.S. each year.

One gun death —·
But nearly two-thirds of gun deaths are **suicides**.
More than half of homicide victims are young men ...
... two-thirds of whom are black.
33,599 gun deaths 10.6 deaths per 100,000 people
Surviving Suicide In Wyoming

By Anna Maria Hazzz-Jester

Self-reliance helps people thrive in a landscape that’s big and tough, but it can also put them at risk if they get into a personal crisis.
New Orleans Searches For The Truth
By Ben Casselman

Cities have made great strides in reducing murders of young men. The next step will be much harder.
Trump and Clinton Can Both Spin The Latest Jobs Report

By Ben Casselman

Less than 10 weeks before Election Day, there are two main stories about how the U.S. job market is doing, one positive and one negative. The positive story (mostly told by Democrats) holds that the job market, like the economy as a whole, is in basically solid shape. Job growth has been steady and occasionally outright strong. Unemployment is down. Wages are rising, albeit not as quickly as workers would like.

The negative story (told by Republicans) takes the same evidence and offers a different spin: Hiring has been consistent but much too slow to dig out of the hole left by the Great Recession. Unemployment is low only because so many people have given up looking for work. Wage growth is too weak to mean much for the many Americans struggling to make ends meet.

Friday’s jobs report, the third-to-last before voters head to the polls in November, offered evidence for both sides. Employers added 151,000 jobs in August, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported; that’s the weakest growth since May, and a bit below economists’ expectations, but still not a bad number in absolute terms. The unemployment rate held steady at 4.9 percent for the third month in a row; hourly earnings rose modestly. The rest of the report fit the same basic pattern: a bit disappointing compared to June and July, but not bad overall.
Immigration Is Changing Much More Than the Immigration Debate

By Ben Casselman

In 1994, California Governor Pete Wilson aired television ads showing people scrambling across the Mexican border near San Diego. “The rules are being broken,” a narrator intoned. “Pete Wilson has had the courage to say enough is enough.” Wilson, who at one point trailed in the polls, ended up cruising to an easy re-election.

Two decades later, the rhetoric around immigration hasn't changed much — just look at Virginia, where long-shot challenger Dave Brat upset Eric Cantor in part by promising to “secure the border” and “reject any proposal that grants amnesty” to undocumented immigrants.

But while the rhetoric has stayed largely the same, immigration hasn't. The immigration debate, now as then, focuses primarily on illegal immigration from Latin America. Yet most new immigrants aren't Latinos. Most Latinos aren't immigrants. And, based on the best available evidence, there are fewer undocumented immigrants in the U.S. today than there were in 2007. Even the latest immigration crisis — a sudden influx of unaccompanied minors, for which President Barack Obama requested $4 billion in emergency funding to address on Tuesday — represents a break from past patterns: The children are from Central America, not Mexico, and are primarily escaping violence in their home countries, rather than seeking jobs in the U.S.
It’s Getting Harder To Move Beyond A Minimum-Wage Job

By Ben Casselman

Minimum-wage jobs are meant to be the first rung on a career ladder, a chance for entry-level workers to prove themselves before earning a promotion or moving on to other, better-paying jobs. But a growing number of Americans are getting stuck on that first rung for years, if they ever move up at all.

Anthony Kemp is one of them. In 2006, he took a job as a cook at a Kentucky Fried Chicken in Oak Park, Illinois. The job paid the state minimum wage, $6.50 an hour at the time, but Kemp figured he could work his way up.

“Normally, a good cook would make $14, $15, $17 an hour,” Kemp said. “I thought that of course I’d make a better wage.”

He never did; nine years later, the only raises Kemp, 44, has seen have been the ones required by state law. He earns $8.25, the state’s current minimum wage.
6. There are various methodologies for doing this. The simplest would be to divide household income by the number of people in the household, creating a per capita income. But that ignores the fact that living together is more efficient than living alone: Expenses like rent and utilities don’t double when the number of people in a household does.

The standard formula for adjusting household income is:

$$Income_{adj} = \frac{Income}{Size^N}$$

Where N is a number between zero and one. For my calculations, I use $N = 0.5$ and then normalize to a three-person household ($Income_{3-person} = Income_{adj} \times (3^N)$). This is the same methodology used by researchers at the Pew Research Center, from whom this description is also adapted. ^
Our Readers Should Understand...

... Where the data comes from.
... The limitations of that data.
... The assumptions and decisions that we made.
... How confident we are in our conclusions.
At FiveThirtyEight, we like to celebrate outliers. LeBron James’s Cleveland Cavaliers may end up losing in the NBA Finals, but James’s performance has been **outlandishly good**. In the same vein, I want to congratulate Donald Trump, who reportedly will declare today that he is running for president.
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