

A Substack About Nothing

Well, about Jerry Seinfeld, anyway. And some related items.

By Glenn Harlan Reynolds

So last weekend I went to Las Vegas, and saw Jerry Seinfeld's new tour. He was performing in the Coliseum at Caesar's Palace.



(He was very visible on stage but I couldn't get a decent pic because the spotlights washed him out against the background ; hence

the monitor shot).

It was a good show. He started out a bit, well, maybe "ranty" is a bit strong but it's kinda accurate, as he inveighed against social media and the AI craze to the point that it sounded a bit curmudgeonly – even though his criticisms were funny, and on point. (Curmudgeons are usually right.) He just didn't have the detached irony that I sort of expected. But as Helen noted, his actual standup always had a sharper edge than the bits on his show.

He looked great – slim, fit, healthy, and moving on stage like

a younger man, even though he sounded like he was getting over a cold. Jerry's 70, which isn't that old anymore, but still. Lots of people aren't doing that well at that age. More on that later.

The best part – and one that maybe is most interesting for our purposes – came in the Q&A that was his encore. He told people to ask him about anything, and the very first question was “who are you going to vote for?” His response was “Nope, we're here to have a good time tonight and there's no good time in talking about that.”

He then went on “really, can't we get away from that stuff for one hour? Just one hour of normal fun?”

Despite some public comments he's made recently, his set wasn't anti-woke, except in the sense that he basically ignored the woke stuff, which is enough to count these days. (Wokeness: *“Normal fun? You don't get to have fun in this world when so many people are being misgendered! And ‘normal’ fun is marginalizing to stigmatized groups!”*) At this point, normal fun is itself revolutionary.

It was all funny, though I found some of his marriage material not very relatable. (And I doubt it really applies even to his marriage, which by all accounts is excellent.) My only real complaint is that his set was exactly an hour long, a bit short, plus a half-hour of excellent warmup by Mario Joyner, a black comedian who was more anti-woke than Jerry. (He also appeared in a couple of episodes of *Seinfeld*.) Joyner was very good, incisive in a mellow sort of way, and had a great relationship with the audience even though everyone was there to see Jerry. It speaks well of *Seinfeld* that he'd have such a strong opening act; some people wouldn't want that.

For me it was my first trip to Las Vegas that wasn't just a business trip for some sort of convention; I went there several times for *Popular Mechanics* to cover the Consumer

Electronics Show, and once for the delightful 2005 Pajamas Media blog convention. But on those sort of trips you don't see much. You go to the hotel, you take a car or van to the convention center, you have dinner somewhere that night, repeat the next day.

What struck me was that the guy with the question for Seinfeld was the only person I saw there who evidenced a strong interest in politics. I didn't see signs, I didn't hear people talking politics, I didn't see candidate t-shirts, nothing.

I did see a lot of people talking to strangers about normal life. I was hanging out at the pool and there was a group of middle-aged women, aged mid-30s to mid-50s (though they looked older, about which more in a bit) about half black and half white, talking about mortgages – they were happy to be locked in at low rates and horrified at the thought of having to move or refinance now – kids, animals, and work. High prices were a concern, too. Politics were not mentioned.

I don't think this is so much because people don't care about politics, as that everyone is resigned to not having useful, or even pleasant, discussions. People used to be better about talking politics with people on the other side in the kind of joking/teasing way people talk to sports rivals. Not so much now. It's too fraught. That's too bad.

And yeah, people looked old. There were a certain number of sleek and elegant folks, but I've already learned that casino crowds aren't much like the ones in James Bond movies. But you see a lot more people who are overweight, moving badly, and looking older than their age. I suppose some of it is that those people aren't going to be going rock-climbing, so they're in a casino, though I suspect the casino-going lifestyle doesn't help. One weekend of cocktails at brunch and dinner, along with big brunches and dinners, left me feeling bloated and ready to go back to my usual diet routine.

It reminds me that I live in a fitness bubble of sorts. Working at the university, with much of my activity otherwise involving the gym, the people I'm usually around are probably at least a standard deviation better overall in terms of fitness and weight than the general population. I know that to be the case in the abstract, of course, but every once in a while I'm really reminded of it.

But hey, everything in moderation, including moderation. At least that's what I told myself when I ordered the Veal Parmigiana and a big martini at [Piero's](#).

And it was worth it.

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