

<p><a title="heat wave (July 7, 2010)"

href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/11392443@N07/4775932607/"></a>I will be the first to admit: the dogs days of summer have gotten the better of me. And the way the summer has gone thus far in the news world, if you've already poked fun at BP, then you pretty well have the summer's news covered.</p>

<p>You would think that this be a good time to simply sit down and write while enjoying the cool air conditioning and a cold unspecified and to-be-named-at-a-later-date beverage? For those that live in Texas, you know what happens though the heat just saps the maple syrup right out of you (insert much Canadian laughter here).</p>

<p>In the midst of sweating my way through the summertime blues, there was time for another episode of Rhubarb Ruminations.</p>

<p>#1: Roger Clemens was <a title="Roger Clemens indicted in steroid case"

href="http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100819/ap\_on\_sp\_ba\_ne/bbo\_clemens\_steroids">indicted </a> by a federal grand jury for allegedly lying to <a class="zem\_slink" title="United States Congress" href="http://www.house.gov/" rel="homepage">Congress</a>. So, hold the presses here. Before people start jumping to conclusions, this is not about whether he did or did not take steroids. This is about whether or not he lied. So, Polyanna, why are we so surprised that lies and deceit exist in the hallowed halls of Congress, on either side of the table? Legislators do this day in and day out without any congressional (or judicial) impact whatsoever.</p>

<p>But perhaps the bigger question is this: what the hell is Congress doing putting good money and time into Congressional <a title="Congressional hearings on steroid use in baseball" href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A41366-2005Mar16.html">hearings</a> on steroid use in baseball in the first place? This is an issue that needs to be resolved by <a class="zem\_slink" title="Major League Baseball" href="http://mlb.mlb.com/index.jsp" rel="homepage">Major League Baseball</a> (and I am looking at you, Mr. Selig), not our legislators.</p>

<p>Sure, we'd all like to know if Barry Bonds was juiced when he broke Aaron's record. Fair enough. But is it illegal, in the United States, to consume <a class="zem\_slink" title="Growth hormone" href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Growth\_hormone" rel="wikipedia">human growth hormone</a> or steroids?</p>

<p>The simple answer? No. Is it good judgment? You be the judge and jury on that one. Is it against the rules of MLB a privately-owned organization? Yes. Whether Clemens did or didn't use steroids really isn't the <a title="Roger Clemens Indictment: A Legal Perspective"

href="http://www.opposingviews.com/i/roger-clemens-indictment-a-legal-perspective">point</a> . The problem is that this should never have been an issue dealt with by a Congressional committee, and thus the issue of perjury (and perhaps going to jail because of it) shouldn't even be on the table. </p>

<p>I would suggest that this is an abuse of the power of the legislative branch more of a witch hunt than an actual benefit to their constituents. What say you, legislators are there to work for their constituents? Heresy.</p>

<p>They have done it with baseball, and they are now forging ahead to do so with cycling. The UCI is responsible for policing it's sport, so let them get on with it and make their own decisions about it. No wonder Lance Armstrong hired a defense attorney not because he is guilty of any offenses (still no positive tests), but because the fallout from this type of Congressional hearing is far beyond what is right or wrong for the sport.</p>

<p>#2: Speaking of legislators doing funny things (that could be a column all it's own), take one look at the Big 12 <a title="Big 12's future increasingly doubtful"

</a>

href="http://www.statesman.com/sports/big-12s-future-increasingly-doubtful-740862.html?cxtyp  
e=rss\_ece\_frontpage">fiasco</a> this summer. It inspired many Texas legislators to speak out  
in the battle to maintain it, such as State Representative Jim Dunnam (D-Waco) -</p>  
<blockquote> <p>The current Big 12 debate should not be what's best for just Baylor, or just  
UT ♦ The center of discussion should be what's best for Texas as a whole, and the debate  
should be conducted in public, not back rooms.</p> </blockquote> <p>Great idea Jim, now  
let♦s extend that to some other important issues in our fair state, ones that I am sure you♦re  
also very concerned about solving. Hey, let♦s start with health care. Don♦t be hypocritical now.  
Let♦s have some open meetings on direct access, let people (such as your constituents) speak  
on what is important to them and not those senators and legislators who have deep pockets and  
even deeper relations with lobbyists against the cause (and you know who you are). Yes, Jim,  
let♦s do what is right for Texans, let♦s do it in public, and let♦s not just leave it at the Big 12  
discussion.</p> <p>#3: How about this ♦ being paid to take your medication. Yes, I said that  
correctly. There appears to be a problem with patients either a) purchasing the medicine  
they♦ve been prescribed, or b) adhering to the directions prescribed by their doctor. According  
to the data, one-third to one-half of patients do not take medication as prescribed. One quarter  
of patients don♦t fill their prescriptions. In the infinite wisdom of doctors, pharmacy companies,  
insurers, and researchers together, it has been <a title="For forgetful, cashhelps the medicine  
go down" href="http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/14/health/14meds.html">proposed</a> that  
we now pay patients to take their medications. I kid you not.</p> <p>Here♦s an interesting and  
perhaps novel thought. Don♦t pay patients to take their medications. Spend more than 20  
seconds in the patient consultation explaining why the patient needs to take them in the first  
place. Foster self care and self responsibility. And then, how about making them more  
cost-effective to purchase in the first place? But look at the groups that have proposed the  
solution, and you will see why this is just another attempt to get around some of the age-old  
insufficiencies in the current health care delivery and payment model. And shame on the  
pharmaceutical industry for proposing this as a solution to a problem when it♦s simply lining  
their coffers.</p> <p>The same approach has been proposed to stem the tide of obesity in this  
country. Being paid to lose weight? What about doing it because it♦s the right thing to do?</p>  
<p>#4: I end this episode on a sad note. <a title="Antonio Pettigrew"  
href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio\_Pettigrew">Antonio Pettigrew</a>, 400m gold  
medalist at the 1991 World Track and Field Championships, has <a title="Antonio Pettigrew,  
Sprinter Who Admitted To Doping, Dies At 42"  
href="http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/12/sports/12pettigrew.html">died</a> at the age of 42.  
Many track and field fans will note that Pettigrew admitted in 2008 to using <a  
class="zem\_slink" title="Performance-enhancing drugs"  
href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Performance-enhancing\_drugs"  
rel="wikipedia">performance-enhancing drugs</a>, and had done so from 1997 to 2001.</p>  
<p>In 1994, I saw a different side of the person that was Antonio Pettigrew. Antonio was on the  
US National Team for the 1994 IAAF World Cup of Athletics in London, England. He ran a  
45.26 to win in what were lousy conditions. I met Antonio on this team as it was my first US  
National team trip. I was able to have some great discussions with many great people, of which  
Antonio was one of them. I still have an event poster in my office, signed by Mark Everett, Todd  
Reich, and Antonio.</p> <p>Though he admitted to drug use later in his career, this takes  
nothing away from the discussion of his persona. Sometimes, good people make mistakes and  
attempt to reclaim themselves in the process.</p> <p>Pettigrew was an assistant track coach

at the University of North Carolina. After his admission of drug use in 2008, Pettigrew went on to say that

**I have an obligation and duty to speak out against the use of banned substances. I want to play a role in teaching people, especially young athletes, to know that the negatives far, far outweigh the benefits these substances may give you.**

My condolences go out to the Pettigrew family and to those collegiate athletes he was trying to guide in their own search for excellence and growth as both great athletes and great people.

*Photo credit:* [Your Secret Admiral on Flickr](http://www.flickr.com/photos/11392443@N07/4775932607/)

**Your Secret Admiral**

**Related articles by Zemanta**

- [Roger Clemens: 10 Reasons He Should Come Clean Now to Save Himself](http://bleacherreport.com/articles/439899-roger-clemens-10-reasons-he-should-come-clean-now-to-save-himself) (bleacherreport.com)
- [Clemens indicted on perjury charge](http://r.zemanta.com/?u=http%3A//sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2010/baseball/mlb/08/19/clemens.perjury/%3Fxid%3Dsi_topstories&a=22931464&rid=ae4ab515-54ba-4315-a93b-4d4bf91f654b&e=b27584d44944e72eab89d4e7825b1a17) (sportsillustrated.cnn.com)

