

Your Health Care & You
in the Twenty-First Century
Tips for the Precariat





dedicated to bob clark

and alice rentz



Keep yourself alive
Yeah keep yourself alive
Ooh, it'll take you all your time and money
Honey you'll survive
Ow
— Freddie Mercury & Queen

A short history of health care in the United States since 1964: Bob Clark is born. Private insurers offer prescription drug benefits. **1965:** Medicare & Medicaid signed into law, establishing the federal government's role in funding health care and bringing health care to major segments of the population, rather than an enjoyment of the privileged. **1970:** Health care expenditures rise to \$74.3 billion, from \$27.1 in 1960, outstripping overall inflation. **1971:** Ten year anniversary of Griswold vs. Connecticut, in which birth control was legalized for married couples. The defeated Health Security Act would have established a comprehensive program of free medical care and budget constraints. **1973:** *Keep Yourself Alive* released by Queen. The MRI is invented. **1977:** As neighborhood woods are cleared for a new mall, Bob and friends use new pavement for skateboarding, many scrapes result, many scabs picked. **1979:** Smallpox officially eradicated. **1982:** Bob's first job as a gas station attendant. **1984:** DNA fingerprinting invented by Sir Alec Jeffrey. Bob's in the Navy, has access to health care. Teeth are pulled. **1985:** 18% of Americans in their late 60s still have jobs. (In 2006, 29% do.) Ronald Reagan says AIDS will go away like measles. The Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act requires any hospital participating in Medicare to provide treatment regardless of ability to pay. **1986:** The number of community hospitals continues to decline with 45 percent more closures than the previous year. **1990:** Bob plays pool and will tell people to 'hush' rather than 'shut up.' Health care expenditures increase to \$696.6 billion from \$251.1 in 1980. **1993:** The Health Security Act proposes a fundamental restructuring and is defeated. **1998:** Insurance companies choose to cover Viagra but not birth control. **2000:** The human genome is sequenced. 44 million Americans do not have health insurance. **2001:** Health insurance premiums rise 11% from the spring of 2000 to 2001, the largest rise since 1992. **2003:** Bob attends the University of Texas at Austin studying animation, works as tech support, picks up some Spanish. **2005:** The share of health care spending accounted for by prescription drugs increases to 10%, from 5% in 1980. **2006:** Over \$2.1 trillion is spent as health care costs rise twice as fast as inflation. 1 in every 6 dollars goes to health care; in 1960, it was 1 in 20. **2007:** South Carolina has the country's worst rate of working family health insurance premiums outpacing wages. **2008:** Employment decreases for nine consecutive months. Nearly one million people enroll in the federal food-stamp program between April and July. Spending on prescription drugs more than doubles between 2000 and 2008, to a projected \$247.6 billion. In California, cases of West Nile Virus rise as the number of foreclosed and abandoned homes provide mosquito habitats. Four out of five uninsured Americans are in working families. Bob visits a doc-in-a-box, gets a prescription for headaches, and dies a few weeks later of an aneurysm. He is cremated to allay his mortal concerns about becoming a zombie.

These tips & hints are intended to help the Precariat ~ the people who were perhaps once firmly middle class, or might have been, but now face the shrinking of private affluence, due to the absence of affordable quality in health care, education, childcare and elder care.



Never lift anything more than one quarter your body weight over your head.

Never try to catch a falling knife

Look over your shoulder before backing up.

Don't use your foot to break any object's fall.

Yes, it's hot and will burn.

Turn off the breaker yourself.



Sit down with a plate and silverware to eat, and look at your food.

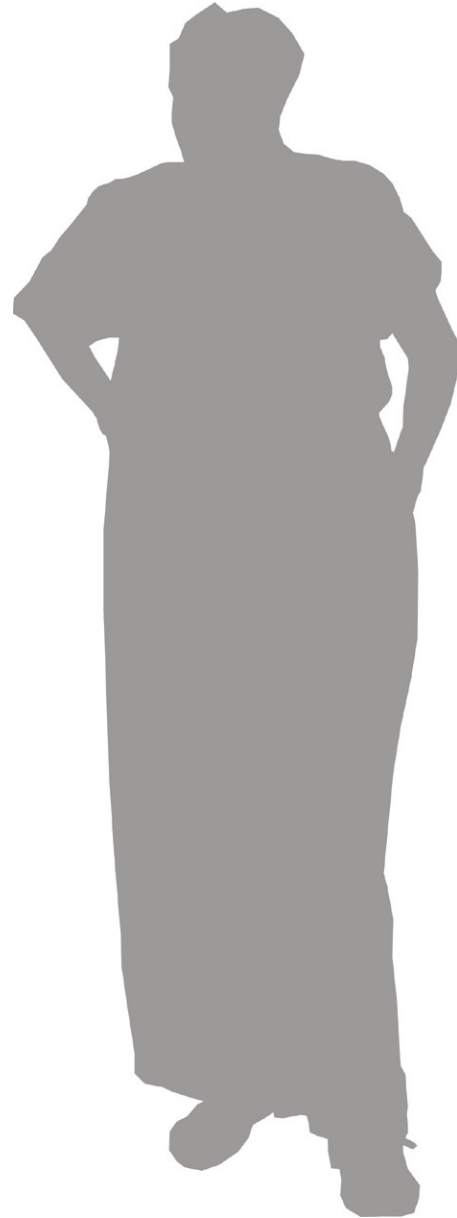
Drink a lot of water.

Every meal should contain foods of at least three distinct colors.

The majority of your food should contain fewer than 10 ingredients.

Do not eat things that your grandparents wouldn't have heard of, not because of their origins but because those foods didn't used to exist.

Use cloth diapers.



Take naps.

Stretch.

Buy everything used that you can.

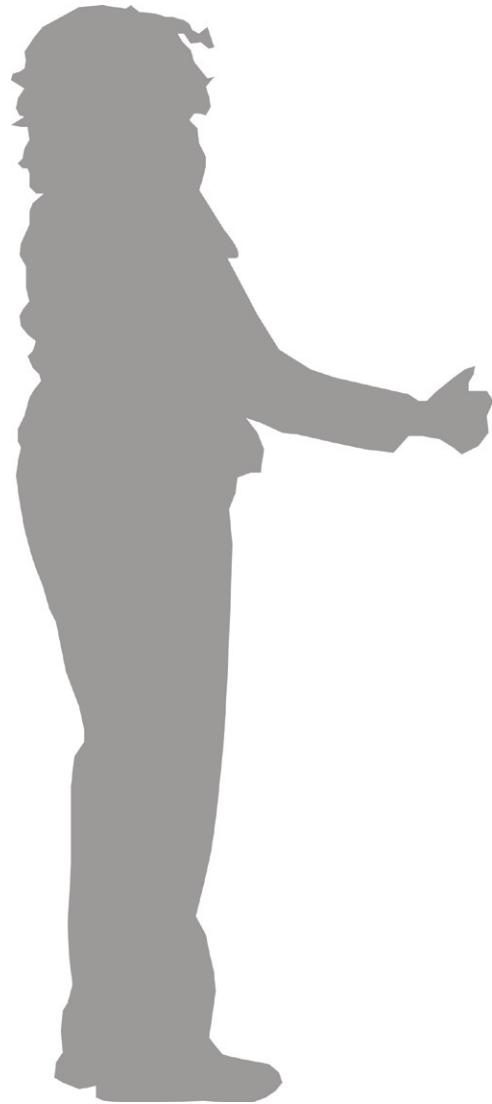
Most items have at least one recyclable use after their initial purpose is exhausted.

There is no such thing as unbiased reporting on anything. Find sources with opposite biases to run your information through; between them you'll arrive at something like the truth.

You have biases, too, so don't believe everything you think.

Go slightly overboard with your own children in every way that occurs to you. And remember that other people's children are none of your business.

Not flushing saves money and keeps the house quieter.



Stand up from seated positions without using your arms as support.

Don't consume so much refined sugar.

Brush your teeth, basic dental hygiene adds a few years to your life.

Lift with your legs when moving objects, or get a teenager to do it.

Don't poot in space suits.

Never climb a ladder alone.

Or use powered or pneumatic tools alone.

Just say no.

please also consider these helpful books ~

Thank You, Sir ~ The Proper Etiquette Guide for Improper Ladies and their Phantasmal Pharmacists Who Know What's Best

The Boy's Guide to Disease Vectors of Girls Aged 9 through 15 years

The Boyfriend's Guide to Waiting Rooms

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Guide to Executively Discriminatory Practices for Health Care Providers Who Can't Take the Heat But Want to Stay in Public Service ~ Including an A to Z insert on bodily parts and functions to speak of disapprovingly.

The Illustrated Wallet, a *Grey's Anatomy* for Your Financial Life with Bonus Spreadsheets

Eternity & You

The Platelet and the Mercury Molecule ~ Why toxins in your bloodstream really don't matter. Really!

Making Inner Peace with Your Outer Urn

Should You? Six Questions for People with a Pre-Existing Body

to order, send \$8 International Reply Coupon to Postal Box 6, Canton

This project is partially funded through a grant from the Arts Council of Beaufort County with funds from the City of Beaufort and the South Carolina Arts Commission through the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional funding is from the John & Susan Bennett Memorial Arts Fund of the Coastal Community Foundation of South Carolina.

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coming in 2009:

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