

October 29, 2020

I loved The Office and as last March unfolded I turned to reruns of The Office, as many did, as a means of distracting myself from that whole awful sense of helplessness that was overwhelming at times as we began this tragic unfolding of our futures, but then I stopped watching it.

I still distract myself, but I found that The Office was no longer funny, some of it hurt, what had been silliness once, now bordered on cruelty, Dwight's buffoonery was too close to what I had to see as real.

Bleach?!

I didn't know what to call it, but I am doing a good deal of doom scrolling and I would bet you are too, I do it every day and have been doing it a lot, too much, in fact.

Doom scrolling is looking at a screen, phone, tablet, computer and reading bad news after more bad news about Covid, about our politics such as they are, about life as it can be in these times.

I learned of the term "doom scrolling" and the emoji, lol sob, in a story, a brilliant story, in my opinion, posted on the website of The Atlantic Daily, Dwight Scrutte Was A Warning. The story is written by Megan Garber.

Megan Garber's booking agency describes her as, a staff writer at The Atlantic. Focusing on technology, culture, and the intersection between the two, she has written about everything from the history of applause to the future of space travel for theatlantic.com and the magazine. Garber was formerly a media reporter for Harvard's Nieman Journalism Lab and a media critic for the Columbia

Journalism Review, serving as founding editor for the website's news innovation section.

I find myself on the same page with her more often than not, for the record, many of you would disagree with her, some vehemently.

Of Dwight she writes, "Dwight, Dunder Mifflin's best-performing paper salesman and its worst-performing person, is a category error in human form. He is a beet farmer in a corporate park, a survivalist selling office products, a 19th-century spirit in a 21st-century timeline. He is arrogant. He is, relatedly, a buffoon. "INCORRECT," he will say about something that is true. "FACT," he will say about something that is not. He listens to metal but plays the recorder. He defers to the rules right up until he breaks them. Dwight is Darwinism with a desk job. He is anarchy in the guise of law. He is tragedy and he is comedy, and because of that he is intensely cathartic to watch. Many fictions speak to this moment. Dwight K. Schrute, however, inhabits it."

I hope you find something to be genuinely worth laughing at today and that you have the wisdom to cry at what should be cried about and that you have the love to know the difference.