



## Five Best Friday Columns

By Allie Jones  
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[Esther Yu-Hsi Lee at Think Progress on the deportation of felons.](#) "Canadian pop star Justin Bieber may soon [face felony charges](#) for allegedly egging his neighbor's mansion. On the small chance that Bieber is convicted, Bieber could face possible deportation because of a 1996 federal immigration law that makes felony convictions a deportable offense," Lee explains. "Bieber's possible deportation underscores a problem that 1,200 immigrants, including [lawful permanent residents](#), experience every day. Some of those immigrants with similar felony charges and many more convicted of [lower-level offenses](#) are deported and permanently banned from ever seeing their families," she writes. "Even many of the immigrants with 'serious' felony charges comparable to Bieber's have compelling stories and are forced to leave families behind." *The Washington Examiner's* Justin Green is [less sympathetic](#): "Yes, we should deport felons."

[Alex Seitz-Wald at National Journal on the battle for unemployment benefits.](#) "Long-term unemployment insurance is [all but dead](#). Congress will take up the issue again after it returns from the recess that begins Friday, but even if a bill passes the Senate (where it failed twice on Tuesday), it's probably dead on arrival in the Republican-controlled House," Seitz-Wald explains. While Democrats rightly blame Republicans for this failure, both parties gain when the unemployed lose. "Cutting off the benefits will almost certainly cause the unemployment rate to drop," Seitz-Wald argues. "When it does, Republicans will feel ideologically vindicated, while Democrats will have some good economic news to sell to voters ahead of the 2014 election."

[Jonathan Chait at Daily Intelligencer on Obamacare's rescue.](#) "Last night, [Douglas Kamerow and I](#) debated Megan McArdle and Scott Gottlieb at Intelligence Squared over the notion, 'Obamacare is now beyond rescue,'" Chait writes. McArdle and Gottlieb "argued that the law was doomed for the reasons opponents had argued it was doomed in 2010, or for reasons a conservative could offer to suggest Medicare and Social Security are also doomed," he argues. But "even if none of the [liberal] optimistic projections are borne out — even if, unlike Massachusetts, the age distribution of the exchanges freezes into place — a death spiral still will not occur," Chait insists. "Obamacare opponents are going to have to let go of their hopes that the law cannot work and face up to their honest belief that they don't want it to." *The*

*Washington Post's* Greg Sargent [tweets](#), "Uh oh. Some Ocare foes no longer 100 percent certain the law has already collapsed."

**[John Cassidy at \*The New Yorker\* says don't trust Obama on NSA reform.](#)** "Courtesy of reports in the *Times* and [elsewhere](#), we already pretty much know what restrictions on the surveillance state President Obama is going to announce in a speech planned for Friday: very few," Cassidy writes. "The news reports say that Obama has rejected the Review Group's main recommendation, which was to end the NSA's bulk collection of metadata, such as the phone records of hundreds of millions of Americans," he explains. Reports characterize Obama as being shocked that Americans don't trust him on the surveillance issue. "But isn't the public's skepticism perfectly justified?" Cassidy asks. "Having run for President in 2008 as a strident critic of the Bush Administration's intelligence ambitions, and not hesitating to label some of its domestic spying programs illegal, the President has emerged as the most prominent enabler and defender of the current system." Cato Institute fellow Julian Sanchez [recommends](#) the piece.

**[Roxane Gay at Salon on Jezebel's mistake.](#)** Yesterday, Jezebel offered \$10,000 to anyone who can provide the unretouched photos from *Girls'* creator Lena Dunham's *Vogue* shoot. "Jezebel is shrouding this bounty in the guise of righteousness," Gay argues. "It's bizarre that Jezebel is once again taking *Vogue* to task for being *Vogue* — a fashion magazine essentially predicated upon providing its readers with unrealistic, highly retouched images of unrealistically beautiful women. Jezebel and other publications have already made the salient point ad nauseam," she writes. And "since the premiere of *Girls*, Dunham's body and her looks have been a source of cultural fascination, particularly because she is unabashed in displaying her body in intimate, awkward, vulnerable, utterly human moments. We see unretouched images of Dunham on nearly every episode of *Girls*. If Jezebel merely wanted screenshots of Dunham's body, a couple million people could provide those," Gay writes. HuffPost Women editor Emma Gray [tweets](#), "[@rgay](#) perfectly articulates why Jezebel's play for unretouched Lena Dunham photos is misguided."