

# Best Blackouts, Fall 2013

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## News Blackout - Reaction

My selective service number follows me everywhere. My registration acknowledgement for the almost inevitable reinstatement of the draft, at some future date, sits in my wallet among the mundane, everyday necessities. During this news blackout my wallet hung heavy on my mind. I felt anxious about it, however, because I couldn’t know what decision had been made with my future.

President Obama decided to delay military action against Syria. Delay. When I read the NYT headline I set free this horrible creature that had been building inside my chest for 48 hours, a deep anxiety with not being connected to the world around me and compounded with the gravity of our possible involvement in a fresh war, one which – if the draft were enacted – would surely, as surely as any war does, leave our nation’s youth in a state of turmoil reminiscent of Vietnam or Korea or Iwo Jima or Normandy or the Spring Offensive or Bull Run or Bunker Hill. Nevertheless I am relieved.

I did not enjoy my time in a news blackout. I like being informed, especially when big things are going on. When I returned to the world I was particularly struck by the news that I automatically filter out. I realized that there is far more news out there than we are able to process.

I found myself reaching for twitter, facebook, reddit, the television remote, my NYT subscription etc. so that I could have some idea of what was going on. I felt very unplugged and it did not comfort me.