

# MAINE REVIEW

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## 'Terminator' helped me focus on my survival

I wanted to establish a theme to adhere to over 2016. As I've learned over the past year, not adhering to a lens through which I address what's going on in the world can be as alienating as it can be liberating. Sure, it's nice not to have parameters. It's nice to take on whatever issues present themselves as deadlines approach, but this also leaves a lot of room for response and reaction rather than substantial exploration over time. In theory, my offering is one from a "millennial" perspective, but considering the size and breadth of the generation, that perspective requires some refinement for it to remain relevant.

The same day I asked my wife to help me figure out what would best suit my personal, professional and creative interests, I watched the newest title in the "Terminator" franchise, "Terminator Genisys." I am embarrassed to admit this: It was as bad as you would imagine it to be, but it helped me refine my search for the right lens. In "Genisys," machines become self-aware and the fabled judgment day ensues. Humans live under decades of war against the machines.

The Terminator apocalypse metaphor is often interpreted as a crass suggestion of the inevitability of our demise at the hands of our own invention. Maybe this is what they're going for.

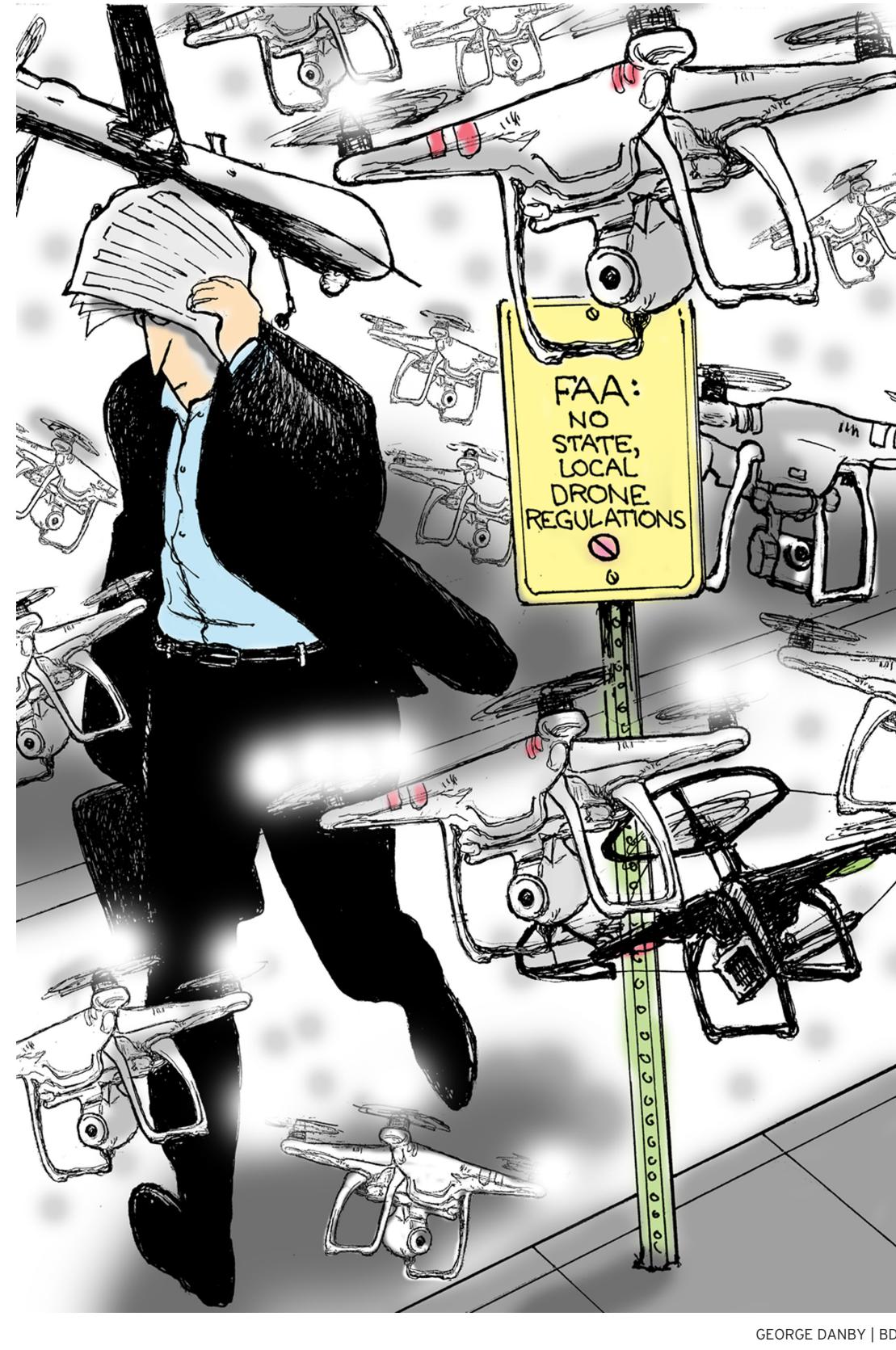
But ultimately, in viewing the latest in the series, I had thought that maybe it's more specifically about our anxieties — about how we will co-exist with our inventions — than it is about our inevitable demise. Our projected future survival is never in question; we're adaptable. So much so, in fact, that we use the technology that turns against us in the war it wages against us.

I am fascinated by this concept — how we survive and how we adapt in order to do so. After all, what is adaptation but the primary mechanism by which survival becomes possible? I explained this interest to my wife, and she found the unifying theme in my work. How will we adapt to the epidemics that face us today and that we inflict upon ourselves? How will we respond to violence, institutional racism and other related ills, and how have we adapted and survived in the face of these things to this point?

Depending on the day, or even the moment, I convince myself that it is over for us. This is particularly the case when I see anything by way of widespread support for Donald Trump, but — and this isn't necessarily justification — we can understand his support in the context of a great deal of unhelpful and hateful feelings and perspectives rooted in anxiety about instability and what's next. We used to have some sense of what the next decade would look like. Now, it's hard to imagine what a year to two down the road will look like. What skills will be required then? Will we remain relevant or become obsolete? Everything's going to hell! If we don't change things now, and drastically, we're bound for disaster.

But survival is in our very

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## Rules from above

### FAA tells states, cities to back away from drone regulations

BY CHRISTOPHER BURNS

BDN STAFF

In 2015, elected officials in Maine and across the U.S. passed a slew of ordinances and laws attempting to restrict who can fly drones and when, where and how. But with the new year at hand, the Federal Aviation Administration wants legislatures and city councils to get out of the drone-regulating business.

While states and cities pass these regulations to protect their residents' privacy and safety, the FAA said in a memo released before Christmas this will lead to a "patchwork quilt" of regulations that will "severely limit the flexibility of the FAA in controlling the airspace ... and ensuring safety and an efficient air traffic flow."

Already, drones have created their share of unsafe conditions overhead, with 780 incidents of drones flying too close to commercial aircraft between January 2015 and August 2015, three times as many as reported in all of 2014. That includes one incident last March at the Portland International Jetport. Consumers purchased an estimated 700,000 drones in 2015, according to the Consumer Technology Association, so close calls with aircraft and people on the ground could become more common in 2016.

"It does seem like they are trying to get control [of the airspace] at a time when they need to get control," said Michael Bosse, an attorney at

the Portland law firm Bernstein Shur.

But with no federal drone regulations yet on the books, state and local policymakers often face more immediate pressure to address nuisance drones.

#### Federal pre-emption

The FAA states in its memo that it has complete authority "to regulate the areas of airspace use, management and efficiency, air traffic control, safety, navigational facilities and aircraft noise." As a result, and despite the absence of federal regulations, the FAA is asserting that its rules — once they're released and effective — will pre-empt city and state drone regulations.

The FAA missed a congressionally mandated deadline in September to integrate drones into the airspace. But the agency has taken steps to make its drone-regulating authority known.

In February 2015, the FAA released draft regulations for the flight of small drones that would bar operators from flying drones higher than 500 feet, beyond their line of sight or at night. In early 2015, the FAA began to expedite limited commercial drone flights. And in December, it began requiring hobbyists to register their drones with the federal government.

The FAA is asserting that its regulations will pre-empt local laws because "it's well-known that the federal government regulates aircraft," Bosse said.

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## What to watch for in politics in 2016

2016 is going to be huuuuge.

With a presidential election, a legislative session and countless referenda, there will be many political conversations occurring throughout Maine. My former sparring partner, Cynthia Dill, and I had one such discussion, trying to forecast what 2016 would bring before she left me for different pastures. Looking back, some of those predictions might not have been fully thought out.

Luckily, with a new year, there is an opportunity to make new predictions.

Therefore, following a tradition that once included the Mayor with the Hair — Ethan Strimling — here are 16 predictions for 2016.

1. The next president of the United States will be a Republican ... and a Latino. The question will be whether he is from Texas or Florida.

2. Mark Eves' lawsuit against Gov. Paul LePage will be dismissed. The nascent impeachment talk will invigorate a small, engaged minority, but Articles of Impeachment will not be put before the House for a vote.

3. After a hard-fought primary, the Democrats' nominee in the 2nd Congressional District will be Emily Cain.

4. She will lose — again — to Rep. Bruce Poliquin.

5. Whoever it may be, the Republican challenger to Rep. Chellie Pingree will ride the angry anti-incumbent wave presently propelling people such as Donald Trump. It won't be enough, although the final margin will be less than 5 percent.

6. Maine and Nebraska are the only two states that split their electoral votes. There will be lots of quadrennial hype that Maine's 2nd District electoral vote might go to the GOP nominee. It won't.

7. Two presently serving lawmakers will leave their party in 2016, unenrolling and identifying as "independent." It will have little practical effect.

8. Medicaid expansion will fail to reach LePage's desk, despite the efforts of Sen. Tom Saviello.

9. Democrats will continue to try and seize the "welfare reform" narrative from the Republicans, with little success.

10. In State House races, outside spending will favor Democrats. Opponents of the Clean Elections expansion will point out this irony, with limited results.

11. Republicans will hold the Maine Senate, losing one seat. Democrats will keep the House, gaining two. Attorney General Janet Mills won't lose her job.

12. Republicans will maintain their hold on the U.S. House of Representatives. There will be 50 Republican U.S. senators, giving the GOP VP the tie-breaker vote.

13. Sen. Angus King will remain in the Democratic caucus, publicly declaring himself a bridge between the two parties.

14. LePage will appoint three new commissioners, not counting the new adjutant general. All will be confirmed without issue.

15. The marijuana referendum will pass with over 55 percent support. None of the other statewide referenda will get more than 52 percent support.

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## How did Maine voters' data end up in a mysterious database?

BY CHRISTOPHER BURNS

BDN STAFF

More than 1 million Maine voters are among more than 190 million from across the country whose information was leaked onto the Internet this week through the release of a mysterious, misconfigured voter data base.

The leaked data included information a person gives when he or she first registers to vote: name, address, date of birth and party affiliation. The leaked information also includes whether an individual

voted in recent general and primary elections dating as far back as 2000, according to Databreaches.net. The email addresses and phone numbers of some voters also may have been among the leaked information.

No one has been able to identify the owner of the database nor how the data of Maine voters made its way into the database. Databreaches.net confirmed Monday night that the database is no longer publicly accessible.

Maine officials aren't aware of any malicious attempt to access the state's central voter registration system, Kristen Muszynski, the Maine secretary of state's office

spokeswoman, said Monday afternoon. But there are a few plausible paths to explain how more than 1 million Maine voter records made their way online.

Maine voter data are considered "quasi-public" under state law, Maine Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap said Tuesday afternoon. It's not a public record, but political parties, party committees, campaign committees and political action committees can purchase voter data — names, addresses and whether a Mainer voted in recent elections — for a political party's activities, get-out-the-vote efforts and campaigns.

The state does not sell other information, such as voters' phone numbers and email addresses, to political groups, though Dunlap noted that once they acquire a state's voter registration data, political groups and campaigns may aggregate information from other databases to add phone numbers and emails.

Political groups that obtain voter registration data are prohibited under state law from using it for commercial purposes or to sell and distribute it, Dunlap said. He said it's unlikely the leak will result in legal action on the part of the state because it appears to have been accidental. But without further information about the nature of the leak

and who is responsible, Dunlap could not rule out any state action to address the leak.

While names, addresses and party affiliation data are not particularly useful on their own, if the data were combined with sensitive information — such as Social Security numbers — obtained from data breaches, it could be useful to identify thieves, said Jane Carpenter of Maine Identity Services, a company that advises victims and law enforcement agencies across the country on how to deal with identity theft.

"The reality is we have a lot of information about ourselves out there," Dunlap said.