

# VISUAL NARRATIVE ANALYSIS



# **Narrative Analysis**

answers these questions:

- ▶ **How do characters, plots, and scenes create the narratives in visual images?**
- ▶ **How do the rhetorical devices of figurative imagery--including cultural allusions, humor, and visual metaphor--contribute to the images' story-making functions and their persuasive force?**

**Political Cartoons have all these features.**

# 7 Steps

1. Identify the **characters**:  
Which receives more emphasis?  
Are they behaving characteristically?
2. Identify the **plot (action themes)**.
3. Identify the **settings**:  
Is the background appropriate to the story?
4. Identify any **archetypal myths**.
5. How does **temporal/spatial form** impact the content?
6. How is **figurative imagery** used and what meaning does it contribute?
7. Is there **one or several narratives (storylines)**? Identify them.

**NOTE:** This slideshow does not attempt to do all of the above.



# **“Obamacare”**

**(ACA, Affordable Care Act)**

**The United States’ first national healthcare plan**

**Its website opened for mandatory enrollment in 2013 at a time when the government had been “shut down” (no approved budget for operation) for two weeks. Then the ACA website malfunctioned.**

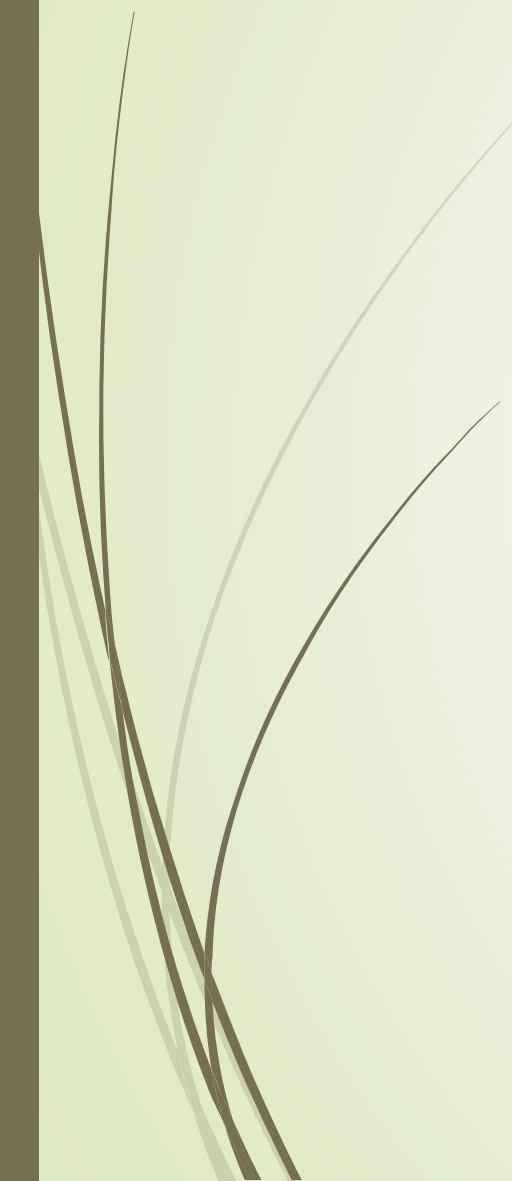
**People became disgusted with both the government and Obamacare.**

Editorial cartoonists responded with a variety of narratives





## The 5 narratives:

- **Obama is a liar, crook & a fool**
  - **Public are victims**
  - **Kathleen Sebelius (she oversaw the ACA website) is cold, detached, and incompetent**
  - **Obamacare is a monster & failure**
  - **Republican Party is a villain**
- 

A main character: Barack Obama

**LIAR + CROOK**



# Barack Obama

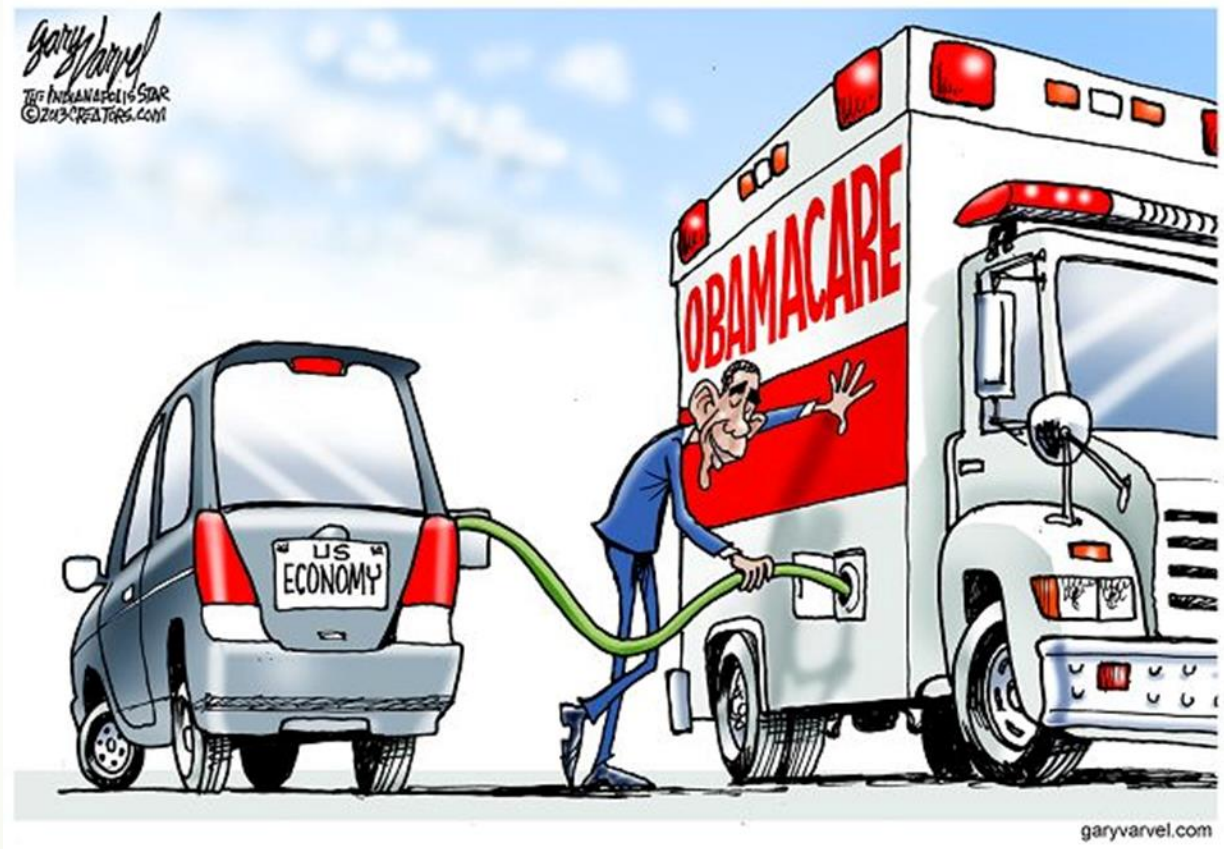
## LIAR + CROOK





# Barack Obama

LIAR + CROOK

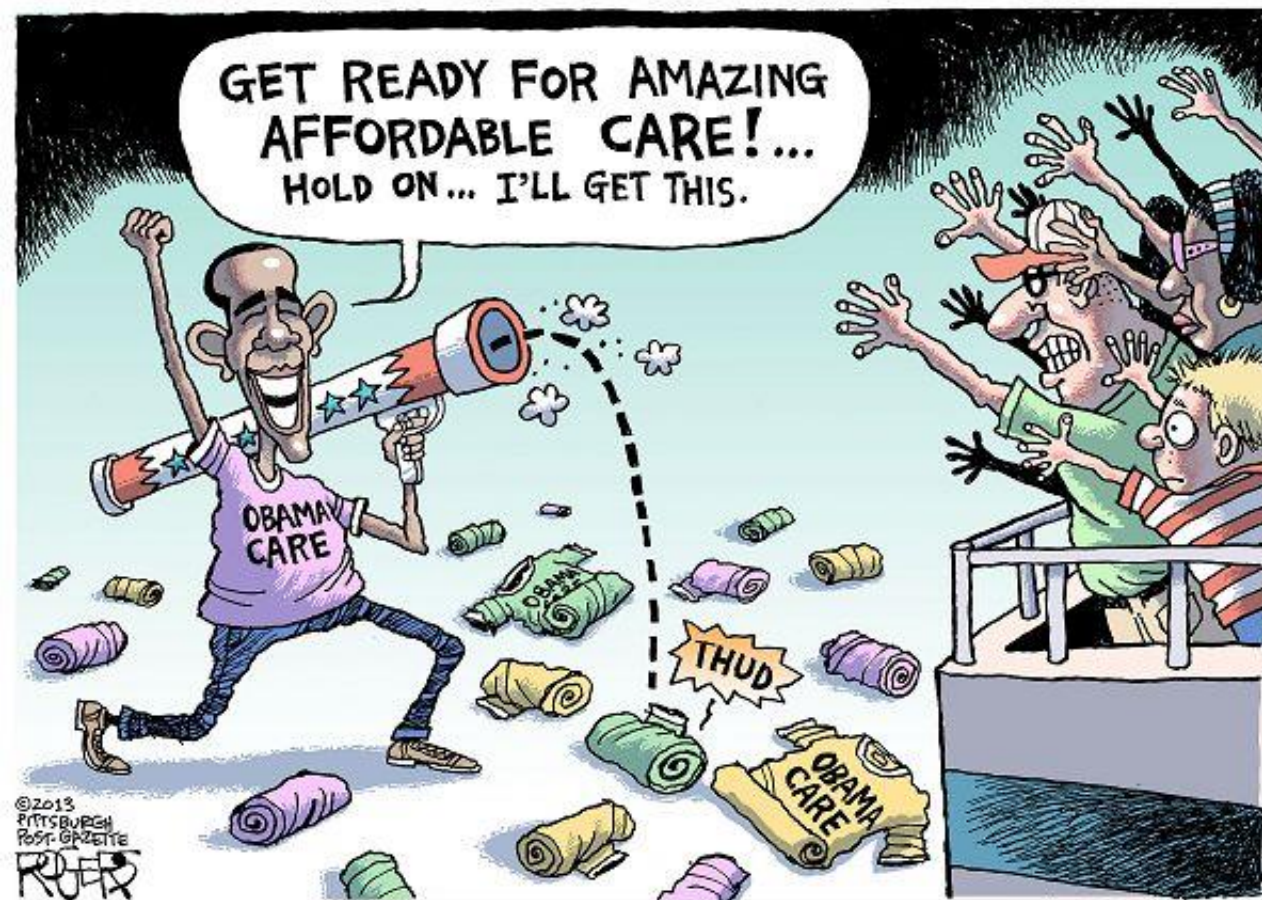


# Barack Obama

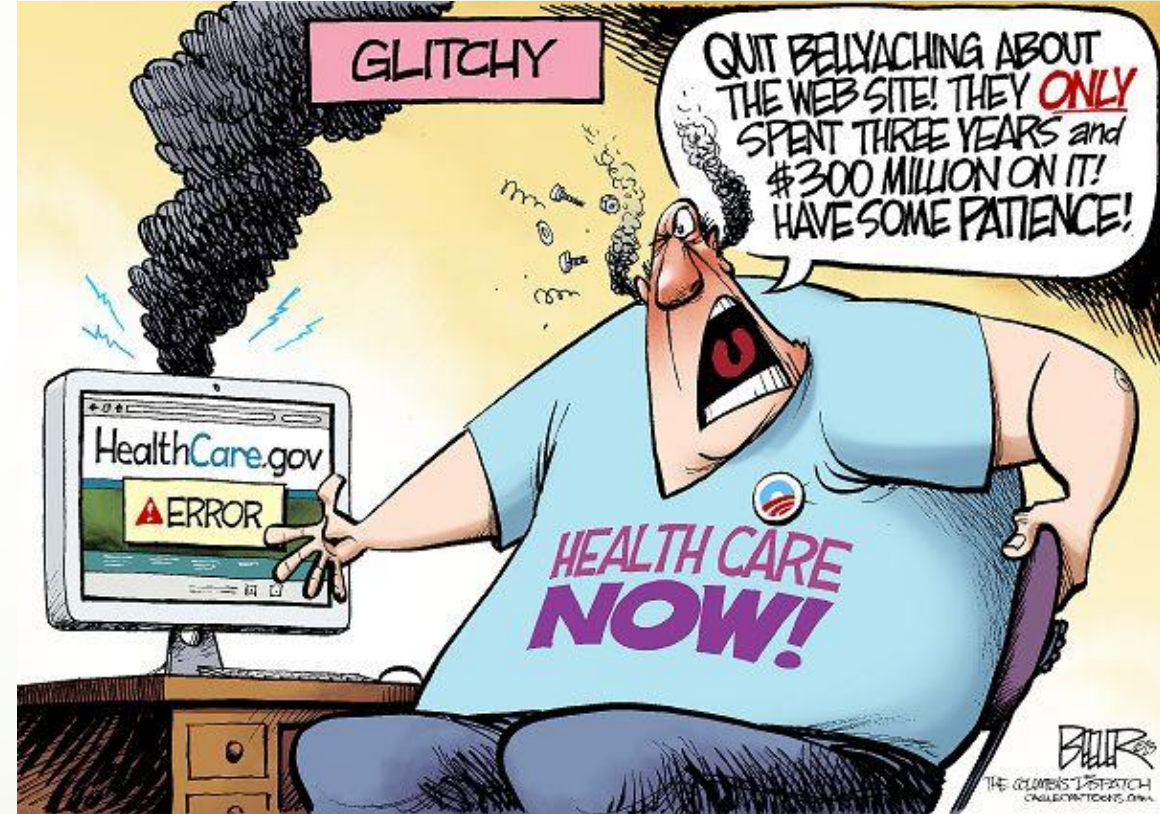
## Incompetent



garyvarvel.



# The Public VICTIMS

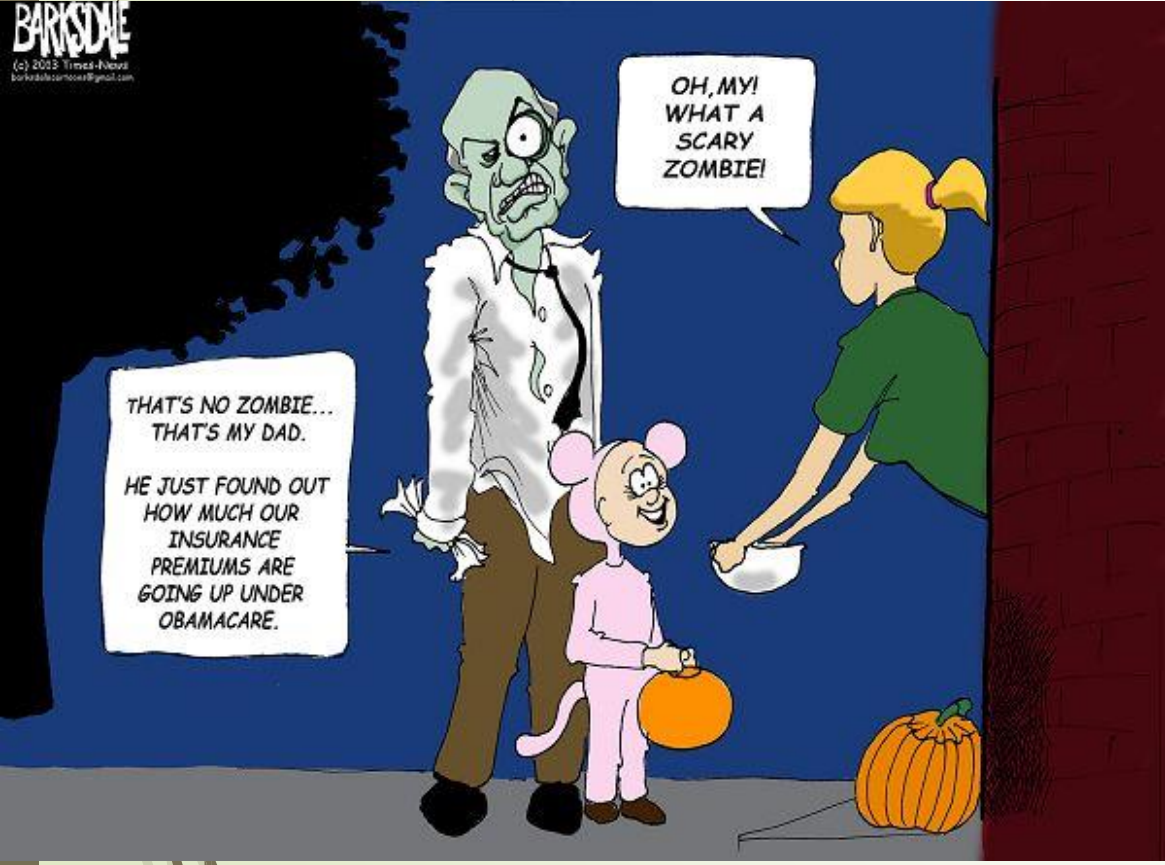


# The Public

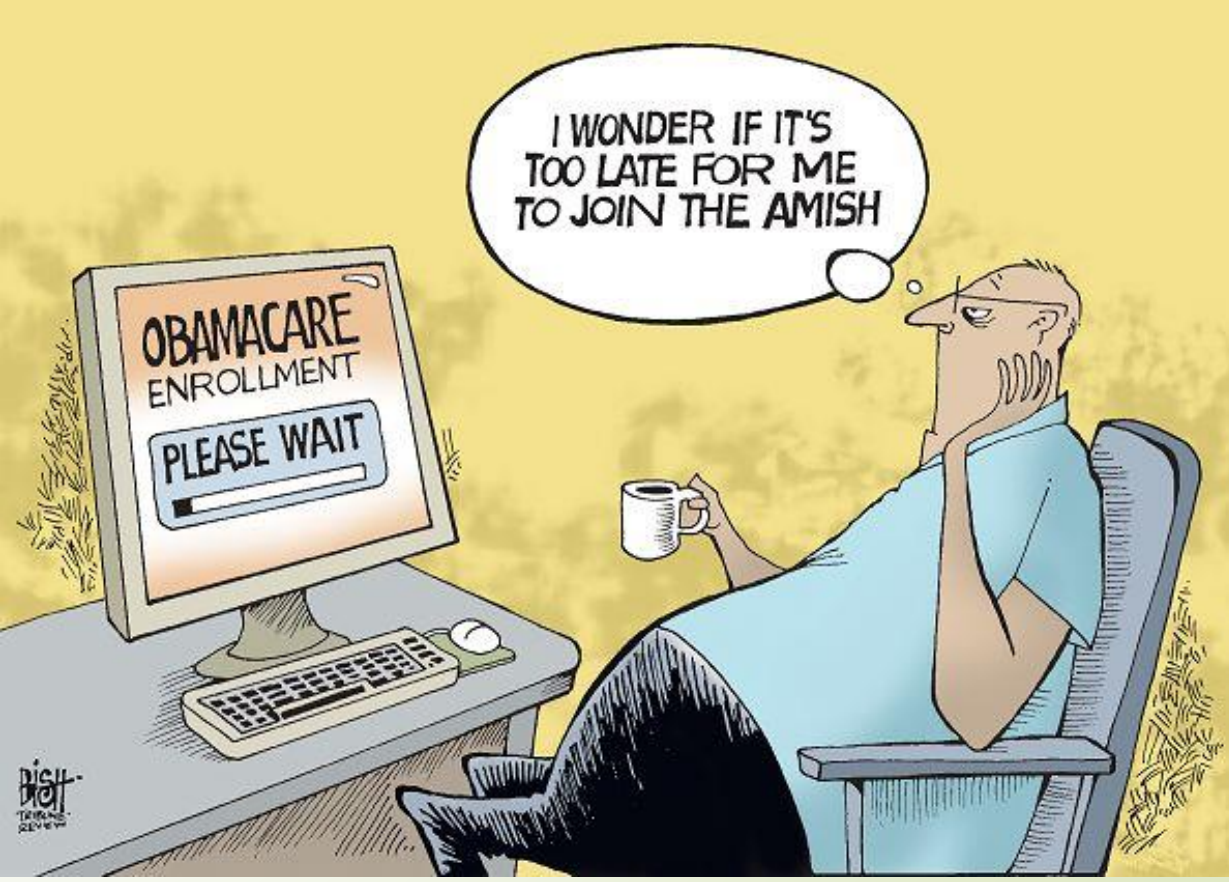
## VICTIMS



# The Public VICTIMS

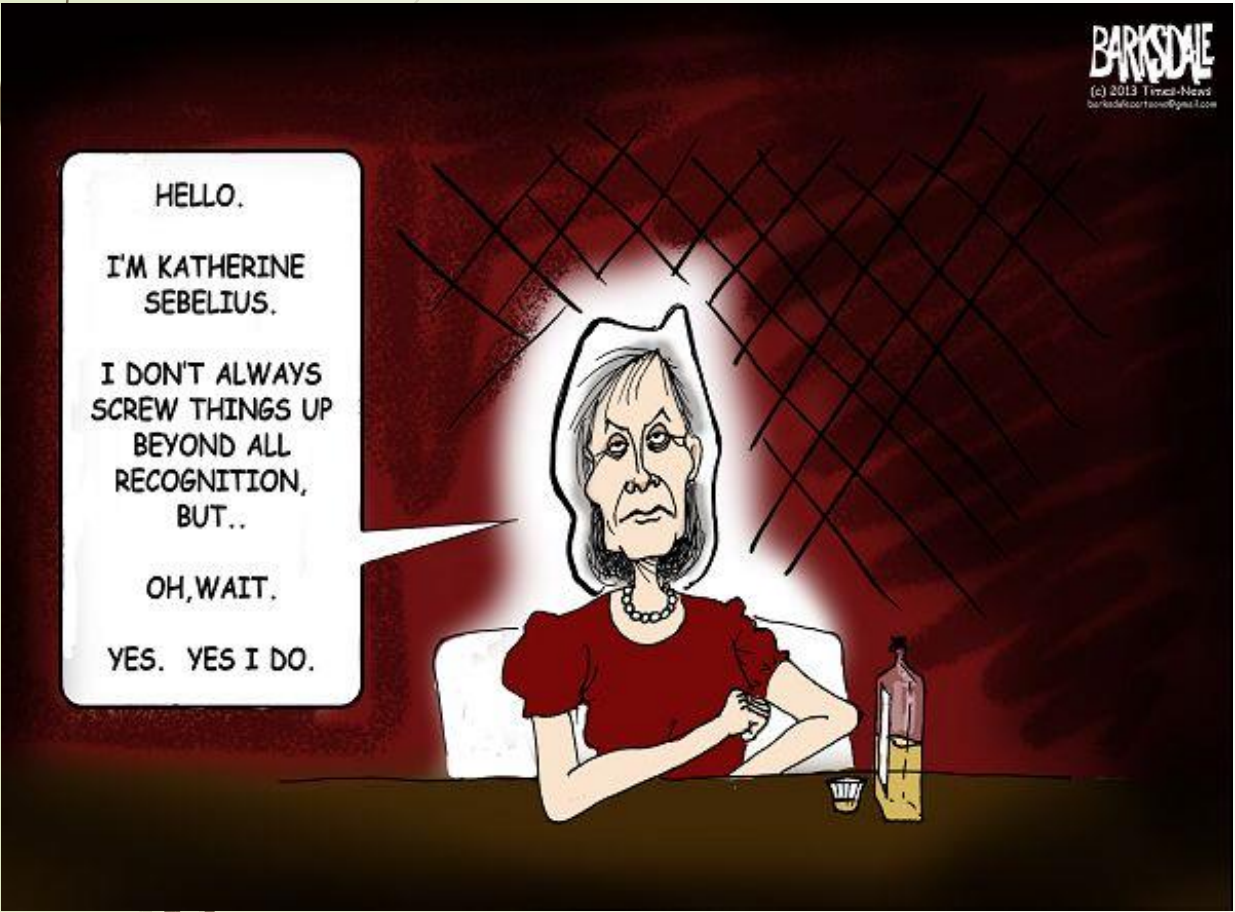


# The Public VICTIMS



# Kathleen Sebelius

**COLD + DETACHED**



# Kathleen Sebelius

## STUPID / INCOMPETENT



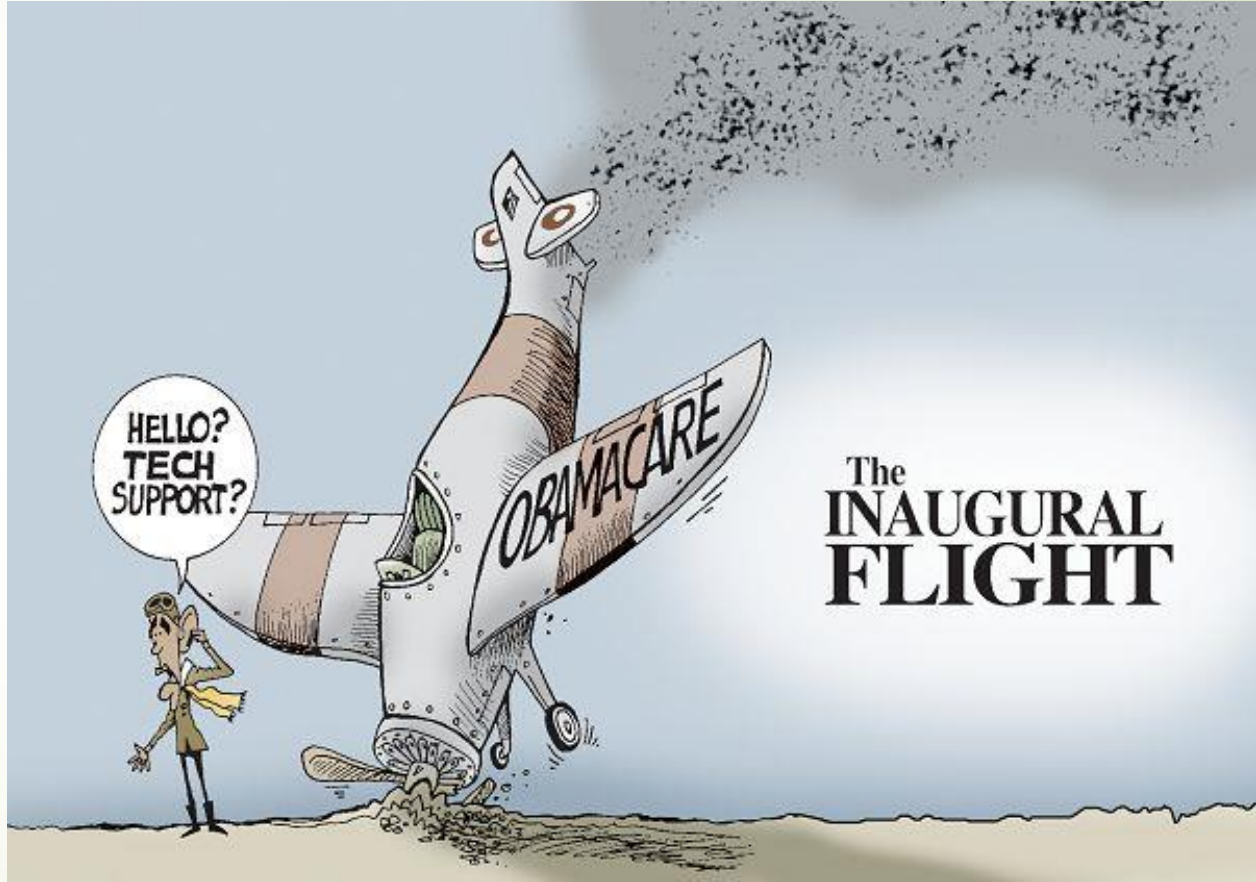
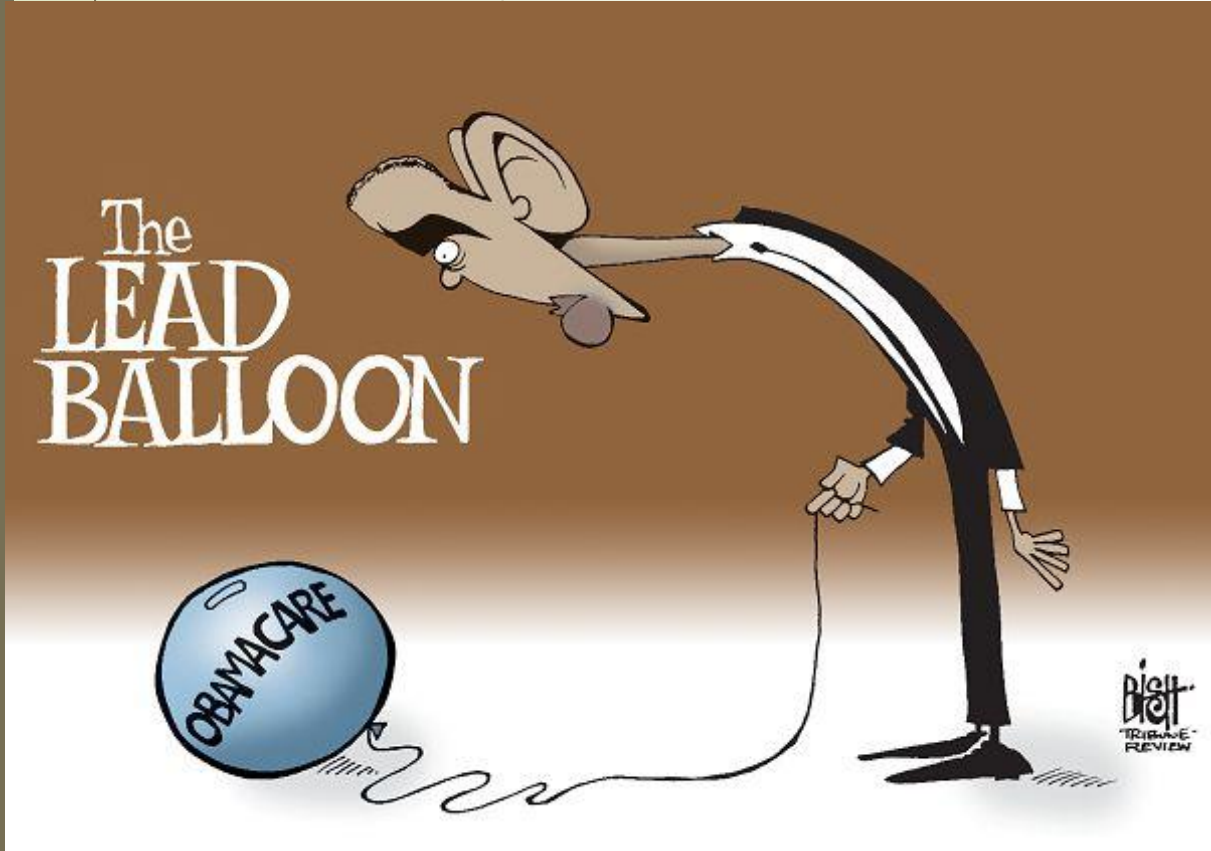


# Obamacare

## Monster



# Obamacare Failure



# Republican Party VILLAINS

Make the situation worse  
Delight in its failure

