



# The Month Gawne By August 2019

## What Happened?

Canada experienced its [strongest 3 month period of growth since 2017](#) at an annualized rate of 3.7%.

[US consumer spending increased in July](#), surpassing expectations.

The [UK economy contracted](#) 0.2% during the second quarter of 2019 (a recession is characterized by 2 straight quarters of negative growth).

[Germany's economy shrank](#) in the second quarter of 2019.

Argentina's [stock market dropped 48% in one day](#), the second biggest stock market drop in 70 years.

Central banks in India, Thailand, and New Zealand all made larger [cuts to interest rates](#) than expected.

27% of the Bloomberg Barclays Global Aggregate Bond Index has a [negative yield](#).

Inverted yield curves in [Canada](#) and the [United States](#). [What's the yield curve and why does it matter?](#)

China [weakened their currency and halted crop imports](#) in response to actions taken by the US.

Trade war [taking a toll on the shares of US companies](#).

Britain's new Prime Minister set in motion the [suspension of the UK Parliament](#), leaving less time to debate Brexit.

## Markets (as of August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019)

Stocks	Benchmark	August	YTD
Canada	<a href="#">S&amp;P TSX Composite</a>	0.22%	14.80%
United States	<a href="#">S&amp;P 500</a>	-1.81%	16.74%
International	<a href="#">MSCI EAFE</a>	-2.88%	7.13%
Emerging Markets	<a href="#">MSCI Emerging Markets</a>	-5.08%	1.92%
World	<a href="#">MSCI ACWI</a>	-2.57%	12.12%

Bonds	Benchmark	August	YTD
Canada	<a href="#">FTSE TMX Canada Universe Bond</a>	1.88%	8.70%
United States	<a href="#">Bloomberg Barclays US Aggregate</a>	2.59%	9.10%
World	<a href="#">Bloomberg Barclays Global Aggregate</a>	2.03%	7.42%

Currency	August	YTD
CAD / USD (Source: ThomsonOne)	1.53%	-2.21%

## Articles of Interest

How capitalism gives us the [illusion of choice](#).

[Do plants have something to say?](#) Exploring the idea of whether plants are conscious or intelligent.

[Did you sleep well last night?](#)

Seattle has figured out how to [end the war on drugs](#).

Mosquitoes, [the apex predator](#) who may be responsible for the deaths of half of the 108 billion humans who have ever lived on earth.





Staring down seagulls can prevent them from [stealing your fries](#), a potential indication they have theory of mind.

What if aging is a [curable disease](#)?

I've had more than one entertaining conversation about paper straws, [the case against them](#).

A [record number of fires](#) are raging in the Amazon rain forest.

[US debt](#) by president.

[Reconsumption](#) – the process of rereading books/rewatching shows.

From ancient Rome to modern Atlanta, the shape of cities has been defined by the technologies that allow [commuters to get to work in about 30 minutes](#).

Scientists have [produced complex brain waves](#) similar to newborns' using [organoids](#) (tiny, self-organized three-dimensional tissue cultures that are derived from stem cells).

## Books

["Oral Sadism and the Vegetarian Personality: Reading from the Journal of Polymorphous Prosperity"](#) Glen C. Ellenbogen

This is a bestselling book from the 80's that had been on my reading list for a while. It is a parody of psychological scholarly articles. The first chapter was enjoyable and quite funny. It described childhood as a syndrome marked by dwarfism, knowledge deficits, and legume anorexia. I lost interest halfway through the book after finding the humour repetitive and not being able to identify with the content.

["The Mueller Report"](#) Washington Post, Robert S. Mueller

I finished this book, though I mostly skimmed through it. It is a daunting task reading a 700 page report. It wasn't entirely shocking to learn that another country had an interest in a certain person being elected. People and corporations contribute money to presidential campaigns with the expectation that they will benefit from the election of the candidate being supported. A foreign country has similar interests. As a result, there are laws written stating

that foreign persons or institutions are not able to contribute anything of value to campaigns. One sticking point was deciding whether copies of emails constituted something of value. Collusions, cooperation, and coordination are words that are defined in order to classify the involvement of Russia to determine whether laws were broken. Ultimately it was determined that there was no collusion and that it wasn't in the best interest to prosecute a sitting president. An inside look at what democracy in its current form.



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