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Subject: Greg Brown's Weekend Reading and Other Things.. 02/05/2017

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DEAR FRIEND.....

Going Vegan



If you are like me you probably have more and more friends who are vegan, as there is an estimated 6 million Americans are vegans, which is typically considered to be a healthy choice. "**Going vegan**," or cutting out all animal products (including meat, fish, poultry, dairy and eggs) from the diet, has become an increasingly popular choice over the past several decades for both health and ethical reasons. If done right, a vegan diet can be nutritious, delicious and healthy – it can significantly lower cholesterol, reduce diabetes and obesity risk, and even reduce the risk of death from a heart attack by about 25%. However, there are drawbacks to strict veganism that need careful consideration.

While I would never argue with anyone who decides to be a vegan for philosophical, spiritual or ethical reasons, nutritionists suggest that it's important to consider and address the risks if you're jumping into veganism for its purported health benefits alone. Surveys show ethical considerations are the primary reason people convert to vegetarianism or veganism. But veganism is not the only ethical diet. More importantly, it's not a historically validated diet.

A majority of Americans eat a meat-based American-style diet, including bacon and hamburgers. Veganism was largely unheard of in the U.S. until the late 1970s / early 1980s. Interestingly enough, there doesn't appear to be a single cultural group in the history of the world who actually survived long-term on an exclusively plant-based diet. So from a health perspective, there's very little historical support for the strict veganism idealized today.

It's really important that we distinguish between vegetarianism and veganism. Vegetarianism has a very long and honorable history. It goes back at least 2,500 years to Greece, and much further than that in the Indus Valley, India, and that part of the world. It has proven itself to be a viable diet ... [Yet even] in the Northern parts of India, the Kashmir regions, they eat meat because the climate is so different in the mountainous regions of North India.

Vegetarianism has a very long and noble history with verified health results. However, veganism ... is a non-historical diet ... Its health benefits are not verified. There were scattered enclaves of religious people that lived cloistered lives who probably did follow a vegan diet ... but these were very, very tiny populations, and we have no idea if they were healthy and how long they lived."

From a historical perspective, veganism is a very recent development. The roots of veganism go back to England, when in 1944, Donald Watson coined the term "*vegan*." Watson's primary argument for veganism was one of ethics. At the age of 14, [redacted] witnessed the slaughter of a pig, which left him horrified. Immediately, he decided to stop eating meat and wanted the whole world to follow suit, despite having no training in nutrition. Veganism is based on ideology, not human physiology, Kahn reminds us in her book, which also delves into human evolution.

Part of the confusion is that many vegans appear quite healthy in the earlier stages. This isn't so surprising when you consider the fact that many switch from processed foods to a mostly raw plant-based diet. The influx of live foods will undoubtedly improve your health. However, in the long term, the absence of all animal-based foods can take a toll, as certain nutrients cannot be obtained from the plant kingdom. Carnosine, carnitine, taurine, retinol, vitamin D3, conjugated linoleic acid and long-chained omega-3 fats are examples. B12 deficiency is also very common among vegans.

After six or seven years, the B12 stored in your liver will be completely exhausted, at which point you may start to experience serious neurodegenerative diseases. There are many documented cases of blindness from B12 deficiency, as well as other neurological disorders. Vegetarianism typically allows both dairy and eggs. Back in Pythagoras' days, early Western vegetarians also ate fish. (Today, this "*branch*" of vegetarianism is sometimes separated out and referred to as pescetarianism.)

Most nutritionist believe that seafood is one of the healthiest foods on the planet, primarily because of its docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) content — a 22-carbon omega-3 fat that is absolutely essential for your health, as it's a structural component of your cell membranes. If you have low DHA levels, it's almost physiologically impossible to be healthy because it's such an important part of energy generation at the molecular level. You need DHA, which is only found in fatty fish and certain other marine animals like krill.

Like it or not, most scientist say that you need Marine-Based DHA and that if you exclude these foods, you're just not going to be healthy. And contrary to popular belief, you simply cannot obtain all the DHA you need from plant sources. Plant-based omega-3 (alpha-linolenic acid or ALA) has 18 carbons whereas marine-based omega-3s (DHA and eicosapentaenoic acid or EPA) have 22 and 20 respectively. The difference in the length of the carbon chain makes a significant difference in terms of functionality.

ALA functions as a source of fuel (food), whereas EPA and DHA are structural elements. More than 90 percent of the omega-3 fat found in your brain tissue is DHA, which suggests how important it is for healthy neurological function, for example. The problem is that, although your body can convert some of the ALA found in plants to the DHA found in marine oils, it is very rare for it to be more than 5 percent — the typical conversion rate is 1 to 3 percent, or even less. This simply isn't enough to have any significant benefit. So scientist say that you shouldn't make the mistake of thinking you can forgo marine-sourced DHA for a plant-based ALA found in flaxseed, flaxseed oil, chia seeds, walnuts and leafy greens.

I think one of the reasons why vegetarians — at least those who follow Pythagoras' model, which includes fish — seem so healthy is because this diet is lower in protein than the conventional meat-based diet. When you eat excessive protein, you stimulate powerful biochemical pathways that trigger disease. This, combined with the fact that fish provides critical omega-3 and other healthy fats and cofactors, makes a strong case for the "pescetarian" form of vegetarianism. Eating plenty of fish should help you with energy as well as helping you sleep better.

DHA is really a problem with vegans ... In fact, two of the founders of veganism, as they became older, suffered from Parkinson's disease. They had their DHA tested and it was zero ... "I eat sardines every other day. The rush of powerful and sustained energy I get from them I cannot find anywhere in the plant world," said one nutrition expert. While keeping your protein low is a wise move, excessively low protein can become a problem for vegans — especially if your diet is also low in healthy fats. Some will get just eight to 12 percent protein from plants in their daily diet, which can trigger muscle wasting.

Low fat is another, and a more concerning problem, among vegans. When you eat a high net carb diet (total carbs minus fiber), you're essentially burning carbohydrates as your primary fuel. If you shift down to relatively low levels of net carbs, which is easy to do on a vegetarian diet since vegetables are so high in fiber, then your body starts burning fat as its primary fuel. This means you need to increase the amount of healthy fats in your diet in order to satisfy your body's fuel demands.

Sufficient dietary fat is also essential for maintaining healthy hormone levels, this same expert notes, including your sex hormones. Raw veganism in particular is associated with loss of menses (amenorrhea), due to low calorie and fat intake, increasing your risk for infertility and osteoporosis.

Low fat is likely far more troublesome than low protein, because once you start burning fat for fuel, powerful protein-sparing processes start taking place, allowing you to get by with as little as 6 to 8 percent protein without risking muscle wasting.

The health problems associated with veganism create a high dropout rate. It's difficult to find good statistics on this, as people don't want to discuss it. Many are ashamed, feeling they've somehow "*failed*," and many are shamed by their fellow vegans, who believe they're making a huge mistake to go back to eating animal foods. It is estimated that more than 50% of vegans drop out because of declining strength and deteriorating health.

What many moral vegans fail to integrate into their overall evaluation is that even the consumption of an exclusively plant-based diet involves killing a wide variety of animals. Not intentionally, of course, but rather as an artifact of the process of growing the food. Essentially, there's no animal-free lunch. There's going to be some type of destruction of life involved. Then there's the issue of plant consciousness as well.

Unless you're growing all your food by yourself in a no-till organic setting using hand tools, animals are destroyed in industrial agriculture. Studies by reputable scientists show up to 70 percent of rodents and small animals present in industrial growing fields end up being killed by the machinery. Animals are also killed in traps, and during food storage and transportation.

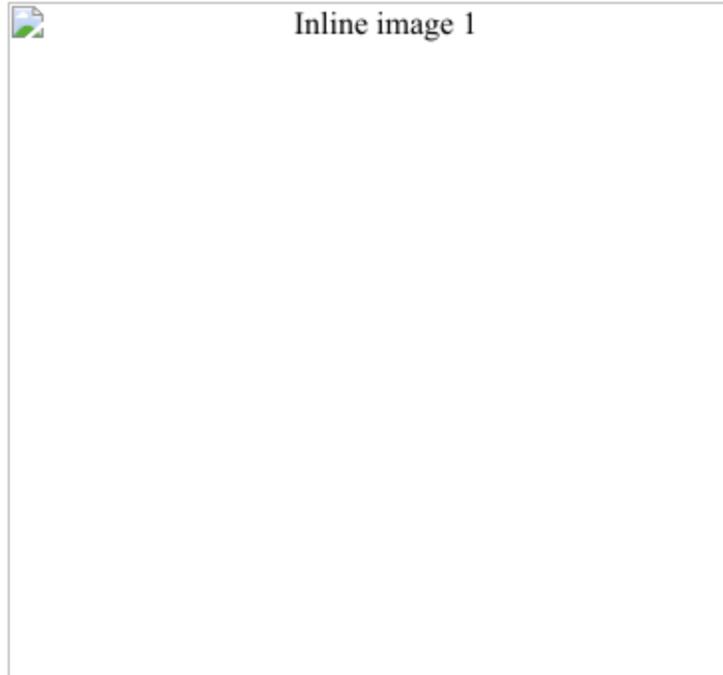
Much of the same can be said for fish, who are often viewed as not having consciousness. But new testing is showing that perhaps they do; perhaps they can feel pain ... The same with plants ... Brilliant botanists believe that plants have elevated intelligence that we can't even begin to understand, because we don't speak the same "language." They know for sure that plants absolutely know when they are being eaten.

■ not opposed to vegetarianism. And like most nutritionist, I suggest that one should eat a balanced diet that includes a minimum small amounts of animal protein; mostly fish and occasionally some organic grass-fed meat or free-range pastured chicken. But meats should not a cornerstone staple in any diet, and as such I believe most people could benefit from lowering their meat consumption. It shouldn't be entirely excluded, however, because animal foods do contain very valuable nutrients your body needs for optimal health. Organic pastured eggs are another source of incredibly healthy nutrients. Ditto for raw butter.

Should you decide to go vegan, I am told that you start off slowly – as going vegan suddenly can be a big adjustment for your body. Try starting your transition by being a part-time vegan – eat vegan until 6 PM and then finish your day off with moderate servings of fish, eggs and dairy. Continue this pattern for about a month before you cut out all animal products. And remember Animal products are usually our main dietary source of vitamin B12, an essential vitamin that our bodies need to keep our nerve and blood cells healthy. Vegans are at increased risk of a vitamin B12 deficiency, which can cause anemia and neurological problems including uneven gait, numbness or tingling in the extremities, mood problems, dementia and decreased concentration. To maintain healthy vitamin B12 levels, vegans should take a 25 microgram vitamin-B12 supplement once a day. Always talk to your doctor before starting a new supplement.

Whatever you do (vegan, vegetarian or not) try to stay away from pre-packaged organic foods and definitely limit as much as possible processed foods as they are one of the main reasons why people all over the world are getting fat and sick... as they are often loaded with sugar, high fructose corn syrup, salt and all sorts of artificial ingredients that, with many of the ingredients that aren't actually food and extremely low in essential nutrients compared to whole, unprocessed foods.

So True



What You Eat Can Kill You

Court Rules Against Monsanto, Allows California To Put Cancer Warning On Roundup



Inline image 1

Web Link:

[eSection=91297_pp&videoId=31907765](#) and [killer-can-be-labeled-with-cancer-warning/](#)

In 2015 an international committee of cancer experts shocked the agribusiness world when it announced that two widely used pesticides are "**probably carcinogenic to humans.**" The well-respected International Agency for Research on Cancer published a brief explanation of its conclusions in *The Lancet* and issued a book-length version later in the year. The announcement set off a wave of feverish reaction, because one of these chemicals, **glyphosate**, is a pillar of large-scale farming. Better known by its trade name, **Roundup**, glyphosate is the most popular weed killer in the world it is used by every day gardeners and farmers alike. Farmers like it because many crops, including corn, soybeans and cotton, have been genetically modified to tolerate the chemical. Farmers can spray it across entire fields, killing weeds while their crops survive.

Critics take issue with Roundup's main ingredient, glyphosate, which has no color or smell. Monsanto introduced it in 1974 as an effective way of killing weeds while leaving crops and plants intact. It's sold in more than 160 countries, and farmers in California use it on 250 types of crops.

The chemical is not restricted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which says it has "low toxicity" and recommends people avoid entering a field for 12 hours after it has been applied. But the International Agency for Research on Cancer, a Lyon, France-based branch of the World Health Organization, classified the chemical as a "*probable human carcinogen.*" Shortly afterward, the most populated U.S. state took its first step in 2015 to require the warning labels.

Monsanto, the company that invented both glyphosate and "Roundup Ready" crops which generated more than \$3.5 billion in sales, was indignant, calling the IARC's assessment "*junk science.*" Monsanto's chief technology officer, Robb Fraley, said in a statement that "this result was reached by selective 'cherry picking' of data and is a clear example of agenda-driven bias." Fraley pointed out that the IARC assessment did not result from any new scientific data, and that regulatory authorities in many countries have repeatedly evaluated these studies and concluded that glyphosate is safe.

Until then, glyphosate had been widely considered among the safest pesticides. Compared to other agricultural chemicals, it was claimed to cause little harm to birds, fish and mammals, and it breaks down relatively quickly in the environment. Opponents of genetic engineering, meanwhile, greeted the

announcement as long-awaited vindication of their skepticism regarding GMOs. In a statement, Gary Hirshberg, chairman of the Just Label It campaign, said that "our worst fears are now confirmed," and argued that it confirmed the need for GMO labeling.

Opponents say that mounting evidence suggests that exposure to Monsanto's Roundup weed killer increases the risk of developing non-Hodgkin lymphoma, a blood cancer that starts in cells called lymphocytes, which are part of the body's immune system. According to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, there is a higher reported incidence of non-Hodgkin lymphoma in farming communities. And that a number of studies (including those listed above) have suggested that specific ingredients in herbicides and pesticides are linked to lymphoma.

Concurrently, a number of farmers and others working in agriculture have filed lawsuits against Monsanto, the manufacturers of Roundup, claiming their non-Hodgkin lymphoma was caused by occupational exposure to Roundup [glyphosate]. As of today, Roundup is banned in more than 38 countries with dozens of other countries considering banning it as well. On January 27, 2017 a California judge ruled that Roundup weed killer could be labeled with a cancer warning. Attorneys for California consider the International Agency for Research on Cancer the "*gold standard*" for identifying carcinogens, and they rely on its findings along with several states, the federal government and other countries, court papers say.

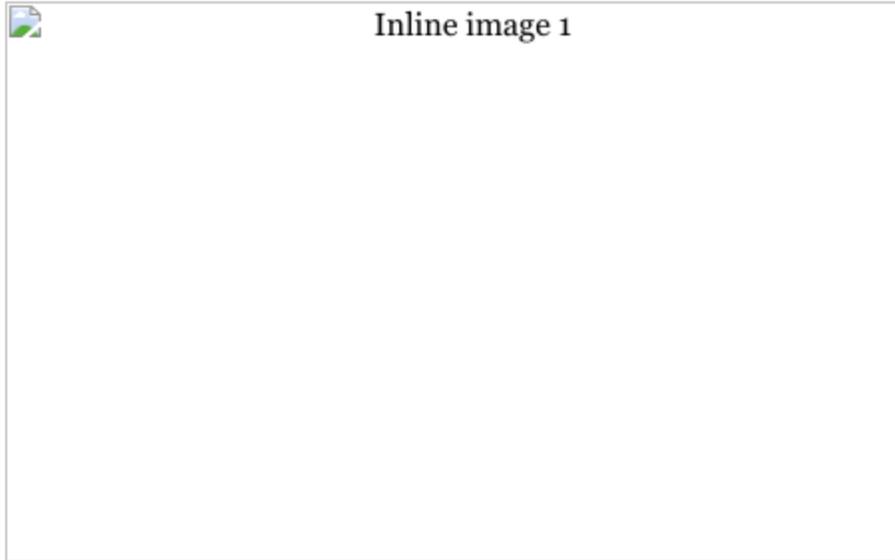
Fresno County Superior Court Judge Kristi Kapetan still must issue a formal decision, which she said would come soon. California regulators are waiting for the formal ruling before moving forward with the warnings, said Sam Delson, a spokesman for the state Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. Once a chemical is added to a list of probable carcinogens, the manufacturer has a year before it must attach the label, he said.

Teri McCall believes a warning would have saved her husband, Jack, who toted a backpack of Roundup for more than 30 years to spray weeds on their 20-acre avocado and apple farm. He died of cancer in late 2015. "I just don't think my husband would have taken that risk if he had known," said Teri McCall, one of dozens nationwide who are suing Monsanto, claiming the chemical gave them or a loved one cancer. But farmer Paul Betancourt, who has been using Roundup for more than three decades on his almond and cotton crops, says he does not know anyone who has gotten sick from it.

One thing is for sure is that cancer is on the rise in America with experts forecasting that cases could surge 57% worldwide in the next 20 years. And although the main reason cancer risk overall is rising is because of our increasing lifespan, lifestyle and diet are important factors. Adding to this, experts are telling us that pesticides used in planting our foods could be a contributing factor as well. Most importantly, it is reasonable to believe that anything that can kill weeds which as we know, grows and thrives when other plants can't, and can be killed by glyphosate – high concentration in and around our foods is probably not a good idea. **Bravo California.....**

Chalk this one up for Big Coal

House Republicans Vote To Overturn Rule Protecting Waterways From Mining



A large mountaintop removal mining operation, seen in 2008 in West Virginia.

While most people were focused on the frenzy of Executive Orders coming out the White House and the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch as President Trump's pick for the Supreme Court, House Republicans voted to overturn a regulation meant to protect U.S. waterways from coal mining operations on Wednesday. The measure will now move to the Senate, where GOP leaders are expected to quickly follow suit.

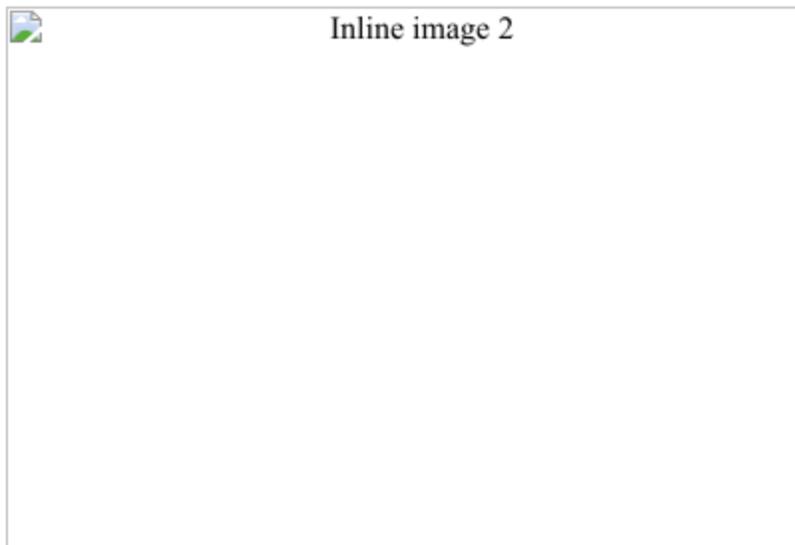
Earlier this week, lawmakers in both houses announced bills to block the stream protection rule, an update to regulations that the Department of Interior finalized toward the end of President Barack Obama's tenure. The update overhauled requirements for coal mining operations in order "to avoid mining practices that permanently pollute streams, destroy drinking water sources, increase flood risk and threaten forests."

The stream protection rule mandates testing and monitoring of waterways before, during and after mining operations, and requires companies that have used controversial practices like mountaintop removal mining to restore land to its "previous condition" after operations are finished. It updates regulations that were more than three decades old.

The House also voted to overturn a Securities and Exchange Commission regulation, passed last June, called the "extraction rule." The provision would require energy companies to disclose payments made to foreign governments for oil, gas and mineral developments and were intended to promote "greater transparency" among the sector. Fossil fuel interests rallied hard against the rule, including now Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, who fought it while he was still the head of Exxon Mobil.

Republicans, particularly those from coal states, strongly object to the new rules. Shortly after Obama signed the regulation, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) announced his plan to overturn the stream protection rule using the rarely invoked Congressional Review Act. The CRA grants Congress 60 days to vote to overturn executive branch regulations with a majority in both houses, with the approval of the president. That deadline is sometimes extended, and Congress may be able to roll back any law signed by Obama after mid-June of last year under some interpretations of the act.

The act is rarely used except during transitions of power, as presidents would be unlikely to overturn a rule that they or a predecessor in the same party had already signed. President Donald Trump's arrival in the White House, however, has given Republicans an opening. The CRA has only been used successfully once before – to block a Clinton-administration ergonomics rule shortly after President George W. Bush took office. The New York Times notes that while congressional Republicans tried to use the CRA to nullify regulations five times during the Obama administration, Obama vetoed the legislation each time.

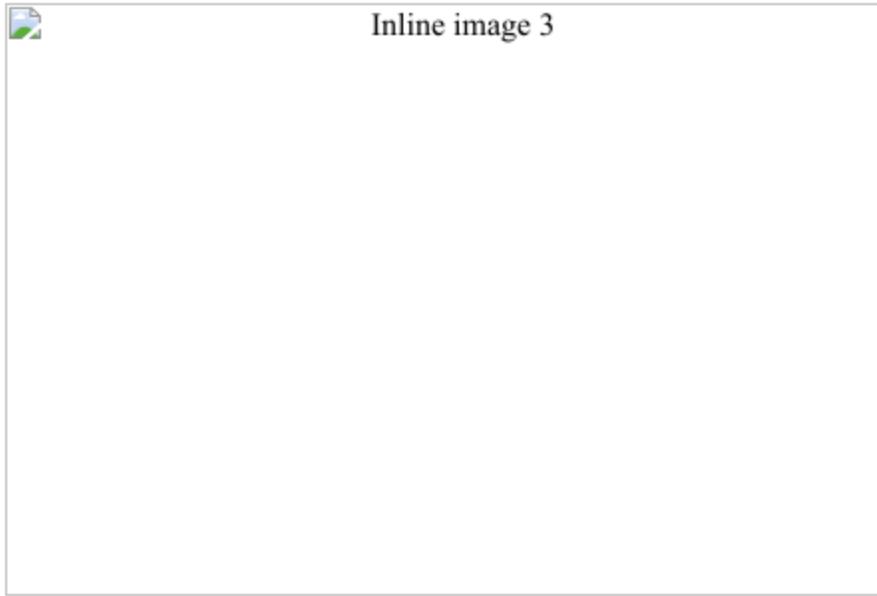


Throughout his presidential campaign, Donald Trump promised to revive American coal production.

McConnell lambasted nearly all of Obama's environmental regulations, and called the stream protection rule "just one example of the former administration's policies that have jeopardized jobs and taken power away from state and local governments in order to grow the federal bureaucracy." "This regulation, like many others of the Obama era, does not take into account the negative consequences these policies would have on hardworking Americans and the families they support," McConnell said in a statement this week.

Scott Slesinger, legislative director at the Natural Resources Defense Council, disputed McConnell's claims, saying the rule has had "virtually no impact on jobs." He argued that Republicans are invoking the CRA simply so they can "show something on coal," given Trump's campaign promises to revive the industry. But the fuel isn't as cheap, or as desirable, as it once was – and that's not because of the new regulations. "As everybody really knows, the number of jobs in the coal industry is not a factor of environmental rules, despite local claims to the contrary, but of the competitiveness of coal to natural gas," Slesinger said. "It's a myth that these are coal states anymore."

Coal production has fallen steadily since 2006 as cleaner-burning natural gas has become cheaper, according to the Energy Information Agency. Many industry analysts have expressed doubt about the fossil fuel's resurgence as other leading coal users, such as China, have vowed to end their reliance on coal in an effort to tackle climate change. Congress is expected to overturn the rule regardless of those other concerns. House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) sent out a press release ahead of Wednesday's anticipated vote saying the rule "*will*" be overturned and calling it "an ineffective attempt to improve the environment as mines saddled with this regulation already have virtually no off-site impact." "It's just another way the unaccountable bureaucracy is imposing all pain for no gain," he said.



Obviously Congressional Republicans have forgotten the Gold King Mine in the Bonita Peak Mining District in Colorado that spilled more than 3 million gallons of wastewater into western rivers. Within a day of the wastewater spill in August 2015, the Animas River between the communities of Silverton and Durango turned a sickly yellow. The accident was blamed on workers who damaged a plug that held the water back. The spill flooded a holding pond and sent water fouled with lead, arsenic, zinc, iron, cadmium and other toxins into tributaries to the Animas River.

In the days that followed, the contamination spread to rivers in New Mexico and Utah. "Listing the Bonita Peak Mining District is critical to addressing historic mining impacts in San Juan County and our downstream communities," Martha Rudolph, director of environmental programs for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, said in a statement. "We are committed to working closely with our federal and state partners to achieve an effective cleanup, while ensuring that all our affected communities have a voice in the process as this moves forward."

A year ago the Associated Press reported that the spill "dumped 880,000 pounds of metals" into the Animas River, and that "most of the metals settled into the riverbed." The metals considered are "cadmium, copper, lead, mercury, nickel, zinc, and possibly others." And although the water in the Animas River looks much clearer there are still concerns for the health of those who depend on the river. Obviously having not learned anything under President Trump's reckless disregard for any environmental oversight Congress current obsession to roll back protection for our rivers, without a doubt history will repeat itself, until the water table itself is contaminated creating a scarcity of clean water for both irrigation and drinking.

This is No Longer True

“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”



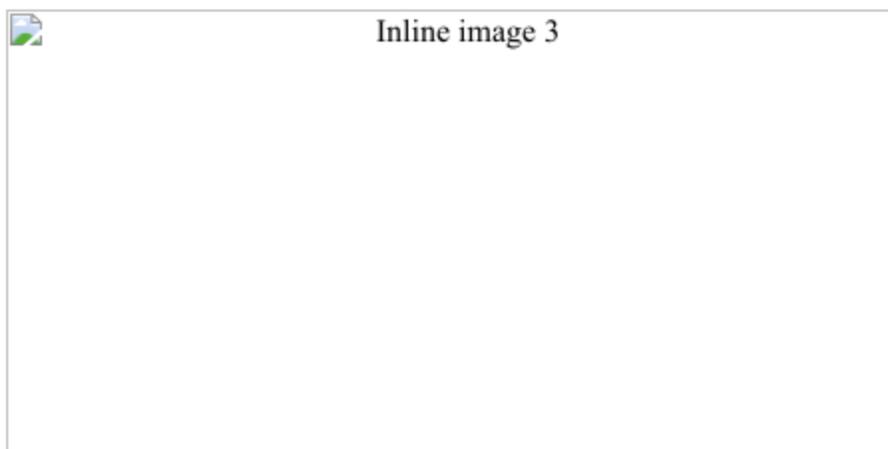
Inline image 2

And Why These 7 Countries

A week ago Friday, President Donald Trump banned nationals of seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States for at least the next 90 days by executive order. The order bars all people hailing from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen. Those countries were named in a 2016 law concerning immigration visas as "*countries of concern*." The executive order also bans entry of those fleeing from war-torn Syria indefinitely. Trump also stopped the admission of all refugees to the United States for four months. The order also calls for a review into suspending the Visa Interview Waiver Program, which allows travelers from 38 countries -- including close allies -- to renew travel authorizations without an in-person interview.

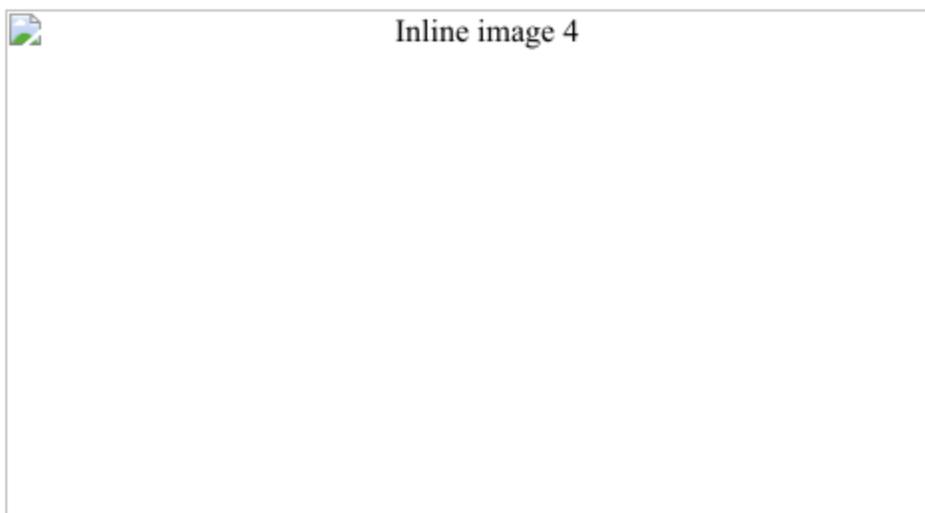
President Trump went before cameras to defend this executive order saying, “to keep radical Islamic Terrorist out of the United States of America.... We don’t want them here.” First of all, its roll out was so sloppy that even the President’s most ardent supporters were embarrassed. And aside from the Constitutionality concerns of the Executive Order, as it is widely seen as a Muslim ban with Rudy Giuliani going on Fox News, “What we did was, we focused on, instead of religion, danger,” the former New York City mayor said, in reference to the targeted nations: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. “Which is a factual basis, not a religious basis. ... It’s based on places where there are substantial evidence that people are sending terrorists into our country.” – Many terrorism experts

say that it plays directly into the hands of ISIS and Al Qaeda, who would like to see a religious war between Islam and The West.



But what confused me and many others were why these seven countries? Because after sifting through databases, media reports, court documents, and other sources, Alex Nowrasteh, an immigration expert at the libertarian Cato Institute, (a conservative think tank) has arrived at a striking finding: Nationals of the seven countries singled out by Trump have killed zero people in terrorist attacks on U.S. soil between 1975 and 2015. Again.... Zero.

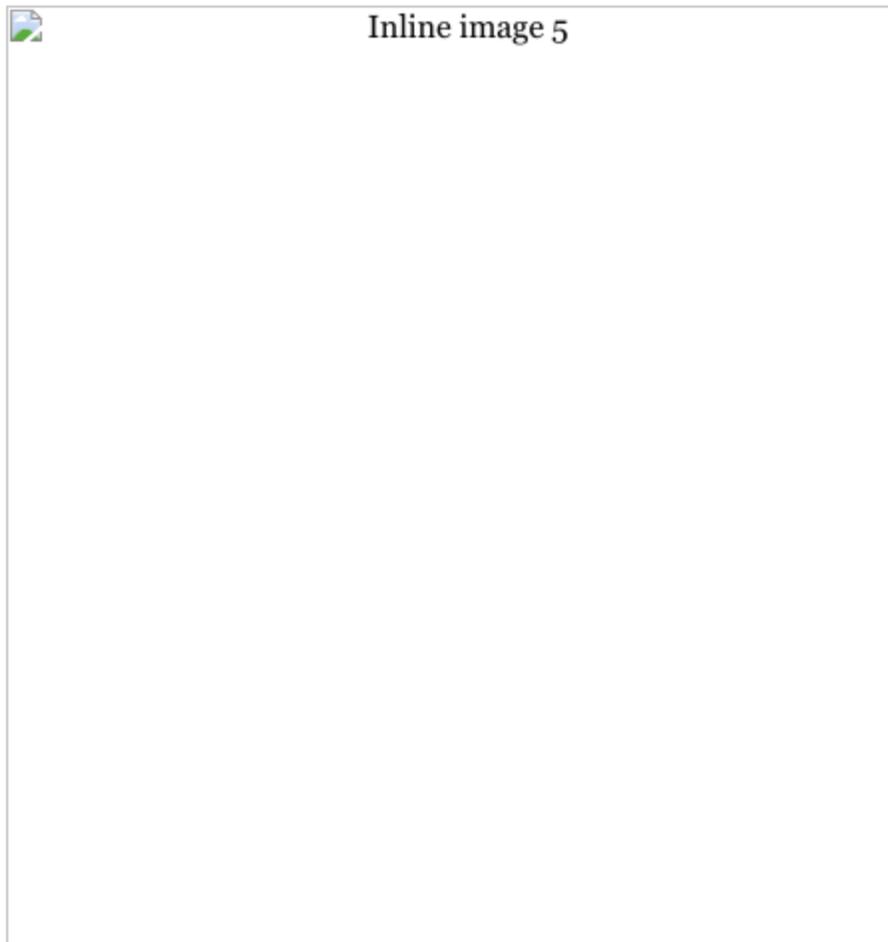
As for refugees, Nowrasteh writes, Trump's action "*is a response to a phantom menace.*" Over the last four decades, 20 out of 3.25 million refugees welcomed to the United States have been convicted of attempting or committing terrorism on U.S. soil, and only three Americans have been killed in attacks committed by refugees—all by Cuban refugees in the 1970s. Zero Americans have been killed by Syrian refugees in a terrorist attack in the United States. Zero Americans have been killed by Syrian refugees in a terrorist attack in the United States.

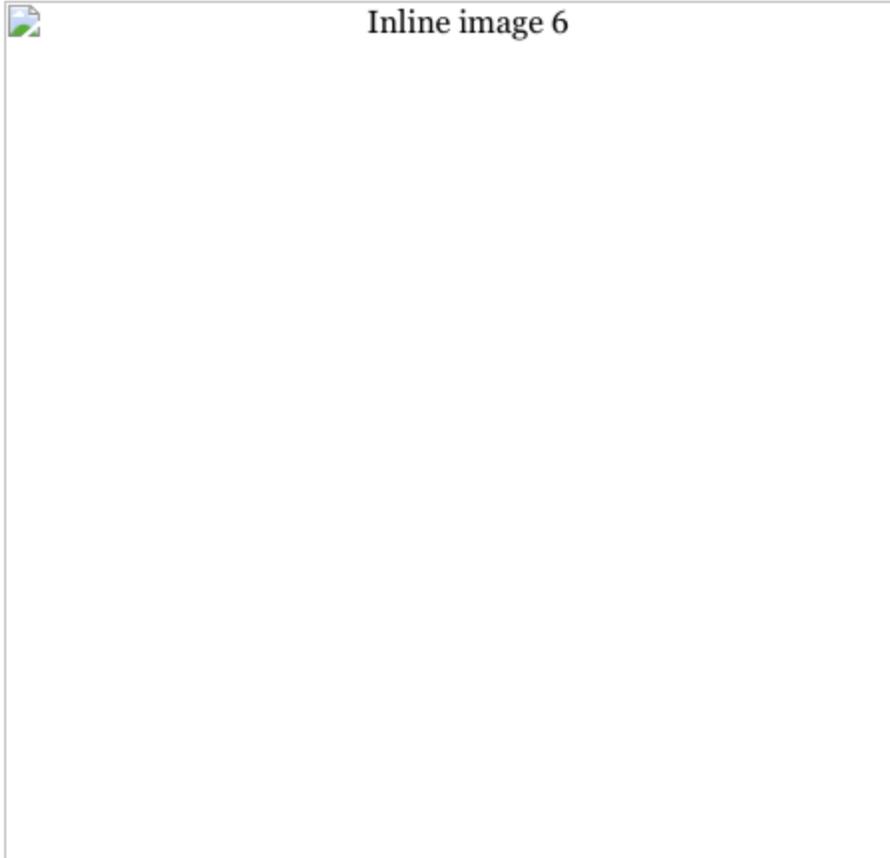


Between 1975 and 2015, the “annual chance of being murdered by somebody other than a foreign-born terrorist was 252.9 times greater than the chance of dying in a terrorist attack committed by a foreign-born terrorist,” according to Nowrasteh.

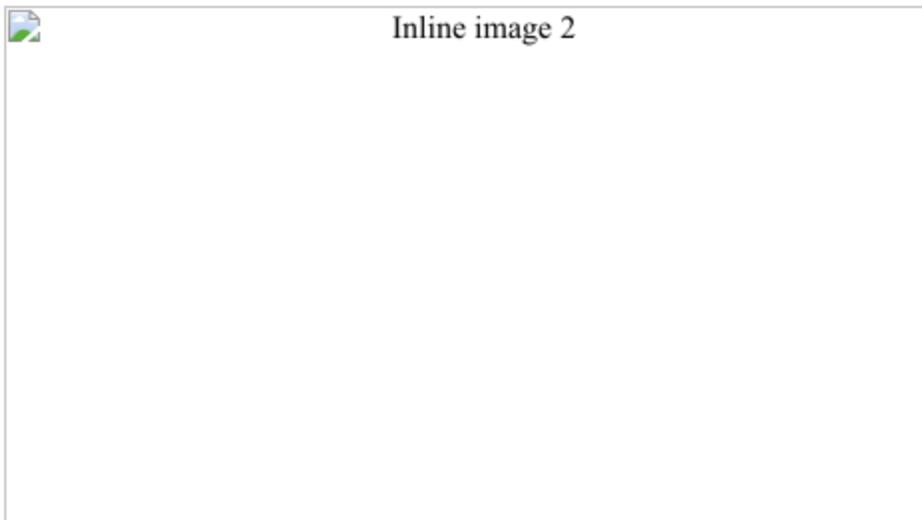
Nowrasteh has listed foreign-born individuals who committed or were convicted of attempting to commit a terrorist attack on U.S. soil by their country of origin and the number of people they killed. As in any exercise like this, the statistics are rough and directional rather than precise. For example, the San Bernardino attacker Tashfeen Malik, who was born in Pakistan but lived in Saudi Arabia most of her life, is counted as originating from Saudi Arabia. In the case of attacks perpetrated by multiple terrorists, like 9/11, each terrorist is assigned an equal number of victims.

Still, it’s worth noting that the countries at the top of the list, including Saudi Arabia and Egypt, are not included in Trump’s ban. I’ve bolded the countries included in Trump’s executive order.





Inline image 7



While during the past 40 years there was not one terrorist from the seven countries banned by President Trump's executive order, 2,369 U. S. citizens have been killed by terrorist from Saudi Arabia, 314 from U.A.E. and 162 from Egypt. Therefore as Fareed Zakaria said, "why certain countries are on or off this list is truly mysterious..... And none of the Muslim majority countries that have a Trump hotel or office are on the list." Zakaria, quoting the Cato report says that including 9/11 the chance of an American citizen being killed by a foreign terrorist on U.S. soil between 1975 and 2015 was 1 in 3.6 million per year. And being killed by a refugee is that same period is 1 in 3.64 billion per year.



Inline image 3

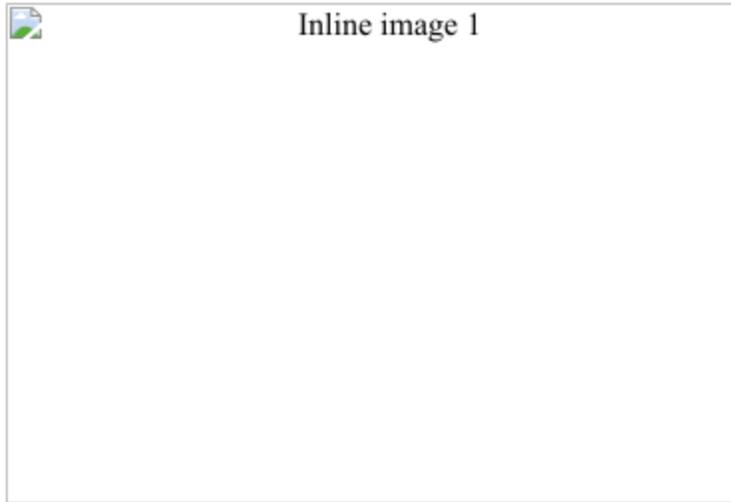
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This week Fareed Zakaria gave his take on why Trump's executive order on immigration is "fear mongering" that risks destroying the US's reputation as a beacon of hope. Along with me, Zakaria concluded that, "there is really no rational basis for this policy. And what explains it is President Trump's penchant to employ the exploitation of fear. From the birther campaign to the talk of Mexican rapist Trump has always trafficked fear mongering. This time to stoke those fears and present himself as the country's protector he chose to punish ordinary men, women and children who are fleeing terrorism and viles... who are willing to brave the odds and bear the hardships and separate from family and home, all to try to come to America. These people are the roadkill of Trump's posturing. But something else in being destroyed along with it. The image, reputation and goodwill of the United States as the beacon of the world. As someone noted over the past few days, Donald Trump seems to want to turn off that lamp on the Statue of Liberty." ***And this is my rant of the week....***

WEEK'S READINGS

College's hidden costs

What the admissions office doesn't tell you



The trips home for the holidays can add to the expense of your child's college experience. Along with paying for the cellphone and Uber and library fines. You might actually be relieved to see the graduation fees by the time you get there.

I know that this is still winter but since many families with seniors in high schools are already thinking of college in the fall, the hidden costs of college is something that you and they should start thinking about now. Whatever you think you know about college costs, you're wrong. It's going to cost more. Lots more. For many families, college's hidden costs will probably be a prime topic of discussion this Thanksgiving weekend, when students filter home — many for the first time since school started — for urgently needed refills on home-cooked grub, family face time and cold cash.

Take it from someone who has seen this process a college freshman first year several times. It is easy to think that you know what the first year at school would cost, but you will be dead wrong. You, however, don't have to be. Think of this as a guide to figuring out what college will actually cost you and your kid. This story isn't about the basics such as tuition, room and board. Most — but not all — colleges spell that out on their websites.

This is about everything else. The costs that you usually cannot pilfer from the 529 College Saving Plan account. Like the Uber rides to those off-campus parties. The off-campus food runs. Even orientation — with, of course, a stop at the college bookstore for sweatshirts.

On a monthly basis, these costs typically stack up to \$250 to \$500 a month, estimates Mark Kantrowitz, publisher of [College Cost Calculator](#), a website focused on how to pay for college. These costs may be close to what students pay for tuition. "If you don't budget for this, you are bound to get a call around the middle of the first semester for more money," Kantrowitz said. "Perhaps the goal of college should not just be about getting a good education but learning how not to run out of money."

The real costs of college are not for the meek of heart or weak of wallet. What most colleges post on their websites as the estimated "cost of attendance" is typically focused on tuition, room and board and books. At James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va., for example, that's listed at \$20,952 for an in-state undergraduate for the 2016-2017 school year. That adds up to just under \$84,000 over four years. Sorry to be the bearer of bad news. But if you factor in the top end of the "hidden" costs — as estimated by Kantrowitz — that four-year price tag suddenly balloons to nearly \$108,000. "The parents are probably the most surprised," said David Levy, editor of Edvisors, a website that assists families in planning and paying for college. "Students often have no idea how expensive it is because Mom and Dad are paying for it."

Not that Mom and Dad planned it this way. Nearly half of all parents of college students expect their children to pay for all or some of their costs, according to a recent Discover Student Loans survey of parents. That compares with 39 percent in 2012. Then reality sets in. Many students who plan to work get to school and find their class loads too heavy or available jobs too few.

Learning on the fly.

Let's take the story of a friend's daughter, Rachel, is a freshman at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona, one of those not-too-insanely-expensive California State colleges. Never mind that Rachel previously toured and applied to a handful of Virginia colleges including Virginia Commonwealth University and James Madison University. Her parents even sent a down payment to JMU shortly after Rachel was accepted there. Things change. During a gap year that Rachel mostly spent volunteering abroad, she had a change of heart. They then went through a second round of out-of-state college applications, and with Rachel's heart set on a Los Angeles lifestyle and a Left Coast learning style, Cal Poly won her over.

Before writing that first check to Cal Poly, during a family campus visit, they sat down with the school's associate director of financial aid, who figured, to the penny, that their daughter's freshman year would cost \$33,221. Wrong. Well, maybe if Rachel never flew home for vacation. And they never went to visit her. And if she never ate a bite off campus. And, well, don't just take it from their experience. Take it from the experts.

Here, in no particular order, are costs to consider:

- **Transportation.** Few college costs are more unpredictable — and unnerving — than transportation, Levy said. The typical student attending an out-of-state school requires at least two, and usually three, round-trip tickets home during the school year, he said. Never mind that these flights are often pegged around holidays when fares are at their peaks. Many students attending in-state schools want their own cars — whose annual costs are typically magnified by exorbitant campus parking fees and added costs for on-campus traffic violations. For those without cars, frequent Uber charges can quickly break the bank. Most student Uber accounts are set up to parent credit cards, noted Jodi Okun, founder of College Financial Aid Advisors. “For safety reasons, most parents are willing to pay these costs,” she said.

- **Mandatory fees.** Most colleges require students to pay a laundry list of mandatory fees each semester, which are seriously consequential when added together. At American University, for example, undergraduates each semester pay a \$120 student technology fee, a \$65 sports center fee, an \$88.50 undergraduate activity fee and a \$130 Metro University Pass fee. That comes to \$403.50 per semester; or \$807 annually. “Sometimes it feels like the college is nickeling and diming you,” Kantrowitz said.

- **Off-campus eats.** Forget the hundreds — if not thousands — of dollars you pay for the campus meal plan each semester. Your kid is going to spend at least \$765 eating off campus annually, according to a study by Farmers Financial Solutions. Since that study, crunched in 2011, the “*Starbucks factor*” has increased that figure, though it’s unclear by how much, said John Mueting, president of Farmers Financial Solutions, the financial services arm of Farmers Insurance. By Kantrowitz’s estimates, if your kid opts to eat a \$10 meal off campus every Friday night, over four years, that could cost upward of \$2,000.

- **Computer.** Few costs bear the instant bite of buying that new college laptop. If your kid wants a new Apple MacBook Air with the works and a warranty, it can cost close to \$2,000, Kantrowitz said. Levy strongly recommends checking first with the college bookstore, which typically offers fat educational discounts via major manufacturers. Best bet: Buy last year’s model, which typically will be on sale, or even a used one, he said. (Computer costs, by the way, can come out of 529 savings.)

- **Expensive majors.** Some majors cost more than others. Art majors will likely need to pay hundreds of additional dollars for materials each semester, Kantrowitz said. Majors in chemistry and physics will likely have costly lab fees. And some performing arts majors will have to pay extra for studio or practice room time.

- **Greek life.** Should your kid opt to join a fraternity or sorority, it’s gonna cost you. A spokesman for the National Panhellenic Conference declined to give an average cost of dues, saying that they vary greatly from campus to campus. But dues alone can stretch to \$1,200 per semester, said Jane Horowitz, a career launch coach for college students. Some schools even require students to live in sorority or fraternity houses to join. But the real financial pinch of Greek life is often the cost of clothes, she said. One of her client’s daughters had to buy seven dresses (at about \$150 each) after she was recruited to chair her sorority at a large, Southern university. The dresses alone cost more than \$1,000.

- **Internship.** “This is one of the biggest hidden costs of college,” Horowitz said. A typical summer internship — most of which are nonpaying gigs — can cost upward of \$5,000 in transportation, housing, food and other related costs. One of her clients recently spent more than \$10,000 on their kid’s 13-week summer internship at Sony in Los Angeles. “How do you put a price on this kind of experience, which your kid would never get in the classroom?” she asked.

- **Spring break.** This one’s a killer. A spring break vacation for a college student can easily cost in the \$2,000 range for a full week, Okun said. Students from the East Coast often head west, and students from the West Coast often head east or south to Mexico. Airfares jump at spring break time, as do hotel costs. “I talk to parents about making certain their students pay their fair share of the spring break costs,” Okun said.

- **Study abroad.** If your child plans to study abroad for even one semester, figure an additional \$10,000 in costs — excluding tuition, Horowitz said. Those costs include airfare, housing, food and any additional travel the student has in mind. “You don’t think of this as a cost of college, but for many people, it really is,” she said.

- **The Girlfriend/Boyfriend/Best Friend.** Be prepared to shell out money for airline tickets so that your child can bring home their significant other or best friend as well the additional costs of dating, and the outlays for maintaining the social relevance, which can include traveling to other colleges in the vicinity for club meets, sporting events, concerts, galas, etc.

- **Silly stuff.** Don't fall for the marketing hype that's certain to fill your inbox right after your kid enrolls at college. Within days of Rachel's registration at Cal Poly, her parents started receiving regular emails from Our Campus Market, a school-approved marketer that, for \$120, would send her bimonthly care packages loaded with Doritos, Cheez-Its and Snickers bars. The pitch almost makes it sound like by ignoring it, your kid will be the only student who doesn't get TLC from Mom and Dad. Levy strongly discourages these kinds of purchases. "What your kid probably wants most is a thoughtful letter from home with a picture of the family pet," he said.

Here are 10 additional college costs you probably hadn't thought about:

- **Annual boosts in tuition/housing.** These costs don't stay static. Most years, these increase by 1 percent to 3 percent.

- **Storage fees.** Don't forget about where your kid plans to store all of that college "stuff" over the summer. It's going to cost you to rent or share storage space. And then there's the cost of transporting it, if your kid doesn't have a car.

- **Room decoration.** No, you won't have to carpet or wallpaper your kid's dorm room, but even minimal decorations such as posters, lights and knickknacks have a price. Also, coffee makers, lights, waste baskets, blankets, sheets, towels, hair dryers, bathroom supplies, iron and ironing boards, etc. Once they move off campus, there's furniture and sometimes appliances to purchase.

- **Rental insurance.** Your home insurance policy may — or may not — cover your kid's college digs. Better check.

- **Changing majors.** This one can be a killer. Pay for a year or two of classes in one major, but then your kid changes to another. This move can cost many thousands of dollars in additional required classes. Much cheaper to change majors earlier than later.

- **Cellphone.** No matter what mobile phone plan your family is on, it's almost guaranteed that your kid will consume more data at college.

- **Personal hygiene.** College will likely be the first time your kid comes face to face with the high costs of keeping clean.

- **Late payments and fines.** Few college students are able to avoid the maze of late payments and fines at college. Those library fines can be particularly nasty.

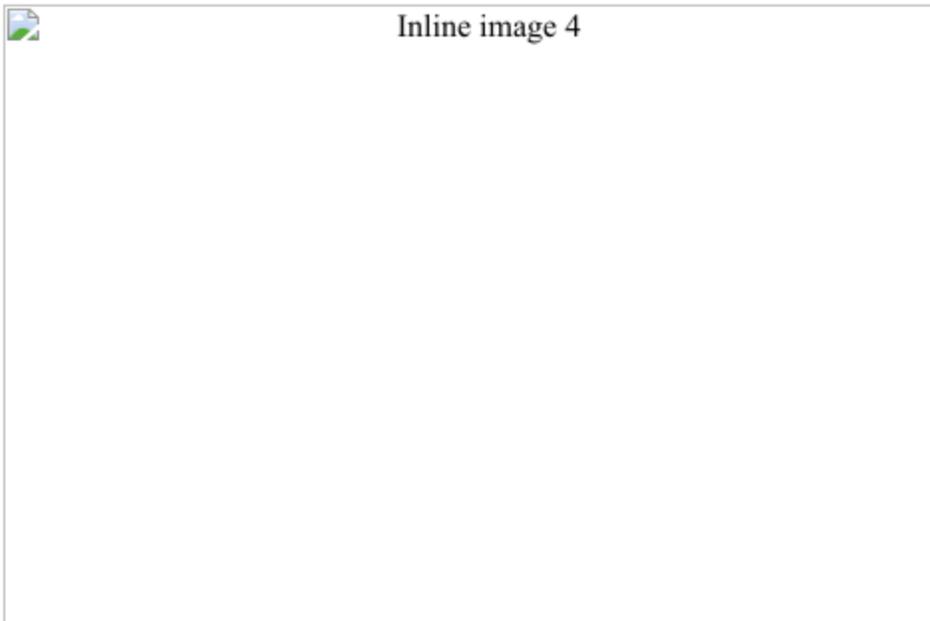
- **Printing and photocopying.** Your kid might need a printer — or plan to hook up to one in the dorm or elsewhere at school. Either way, it adds up.

- **Graduation fees.** It's not just the cap and gown that will cost you. So will the photos, celebration party and, of course, graduation gifts. Most parents are only too happy to pay this one.

In the end, Kantrowitz said, it's too easy to blame the colleges and everyone else instead of looking inward. Yes, many colleges understate the real costs of attendance. But parents and students have to do their homework, too. For that matter, these additional college costs should not all be looked at with dread or horror. "You can avoid some of them, but you don't really want to avoid all of them," Kantrowitz said. "If you do, your kid will miss out on the full college experience."

The Voter Fraud Fantasy

Shame on You



There are varying degrees of absurdity in the fallacies President Trump peddled during his first week in the Oval Office. Perhaps the most damaging was his insistence that millions of Americans voted illegally in the election he narrowly won.

Mr. Trump first made that false claim in late November, tweeting that he would have won the popular vote “if you deduct the millions of people who voted illegally.” On Wednesday, he announced that he intended to launch a “major investigation” into voting fraud and suggested the outcome may justify tightening voting rules.

What once seemed like another harebrained claim by a president with little regard for the truth must now be recognized as a real threat to American democracy. Mr. Trump is telegraphing his administration’s intent to provide cover for longstanding efforts by Republicans to suppress minority voters by purging voting rolls, imposing onerous identification requirements and curtailing early voting.

“This is another attempt to undermine our democracy,” said Representative Barbara Lee of California, one of the states where Mr. Trump falsely claimed results were tainted by large scale fraud. “It’s about not honoring and recognizing demographic change.”

The apparent source of Mr. Trump’s original claim of mass voter fraud was Gregg Phillips, a Texas man with a penchant for making wild allegations about voting fraud. Days before Mr. Trump’s tweet, Mr. Phillips claimed on Twitter that he had “verified more than three million votes cast by non--citizens.” State election officials across the political spectrum promptly rejected that assertion, noting that ballot box fraud in the United States is exceedingly rare.

On Friday, Mr. Trump tweeted that he was looking forward to seeing the results of an analysis of illegal votes, as promised by Mr. Phillips. Republican officials know the voter fraud claim is an indefensible lie. But few are challenging Mr. Trump or raising alarms about how severely this hurts our election system.

Voter suppression initiatives have grown increasingly common since the Supreme Court invalidated a central provision of the Voting Rights Act in 2013, making it easier for local authorities to tweak election rules in a manner that disenfranchises particular groups of people.

Under the Obama administration, the Justice Department aggressively fought these efforts. Lawsuits filed by civil rights advocates and the Justice Department led a federal appeals court in 2013 to strike down a North Carolina voter ID law that justices concluded had been designed to target African-American voters with “surgical precision.” Litigation in a similar Texas case is now on hold, pending guidance from the new attorney general.

If Mr. Trump’s attorney general nominee, Senator Jeff Sessions, is confirmed, the Justice Department will be likely to all but abandon enforcement of the Voting Rights Act. Mr. Sessions once called it a

“piece of intrusive legislation.” That would allow state and national lawmakers to impose even tighter voting requirements, harming minorities, the young and the elderly, who tend to vote Democratic.

Republicans may see these measures as a means of staying in power in the face of demographic changes. They should be ashamed of undermining the integrity of our system of government by trying to strip away a right Americans have fought for and died to secure.

The Editorial Board – New York Times – Jan. 27, 2017

In a country that claims to be the Citadel of modern democracy I wonder why so many Republicans are trying their hardest to suppress voter turnout. And the rational that all of the suspected illegal, (even if that truly existed) votes were only casted against Donald Trump and the Republican Party is eerily reminiscent of opposite claims by African potentates and North Korea’s dictator Kim Jong-il who sincerely believe that every vote cast in an election is for them. Therefore, I applaud the New York Times for calling out this gross injustice and hypocrisy being fostered by many Republicans and urge every American to demand increasing laws that make it easy of every American to vote, which as such, should be considered the bedrock of our democracy....

Griffith Park Turns 120

An urban oasis in the heart of Los Angeles

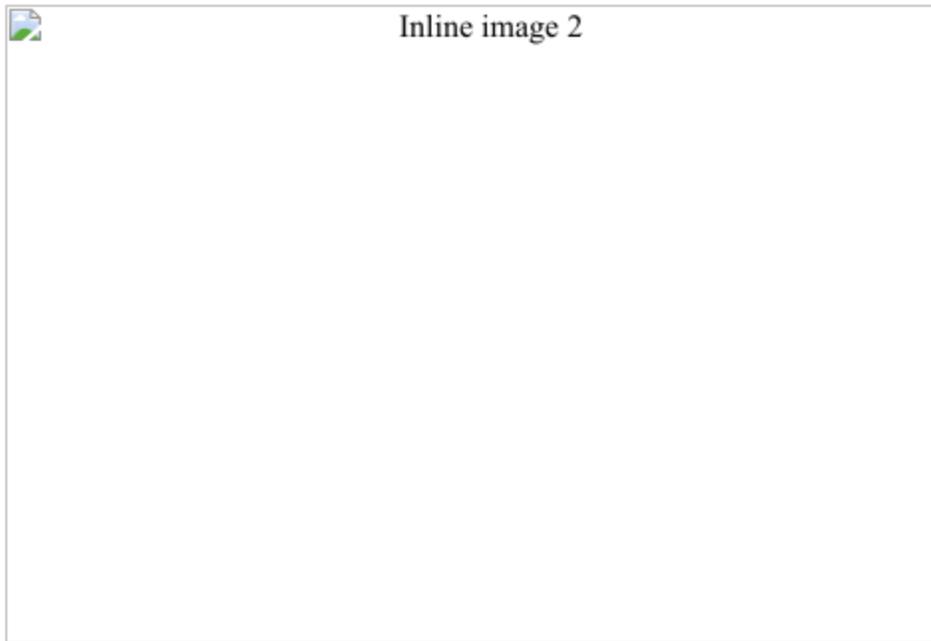


Inline image 5

Griffith Park is the largest municipal park in Los Angeles, located at the eastern end of the Santa Monica Mountains, in the Los Feliz neighborhood. The park covers 4,310 acres (1,740 ha) of land,

making it one of the largest urban parks in North America. It is the second-largest city park in California, after Mission Trails Preserve in San Diego, and the 11th largest municipally owned park in the United States. It has also been referred to as the Central Park of Los Angeles but is much larger, more untamed, and rugged than its New York City counterpart.

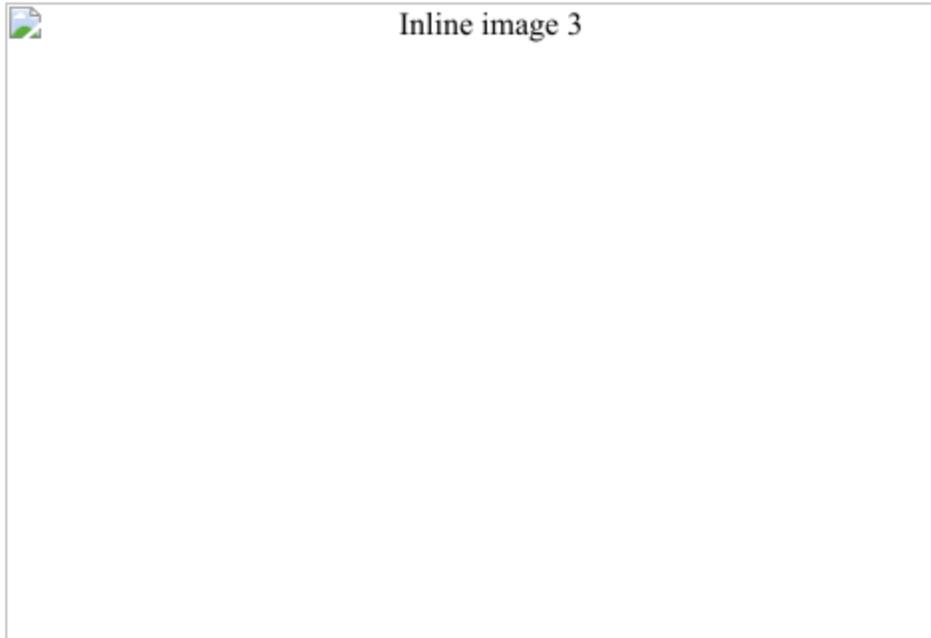
Its roots began as an ostrich farm in 1882, when after successfully investing in mining, Griffith J. Griffith purchased Rancho Los Feliz – near the Los Angeles River. After the property crash, Griffith donated 3,015 acres (1,220 ha) to the city of Los Angeles on December 16, 1896. Griffith was tried and convicted for shooting and severely wounding his wife in a 1903 incident. When released from prison, he attempted to fund the construction of an amphitheater, observatory, planetarium, and a girls' camp and boys' camp in the park. With his reputation in the city tainted by his crime, the city refused his money.



Griffith then set up a trust fund for the improvements he envisioned, and after his death in 1919 the city began to build what Griffith had wanted. The amphitheater, called the Greek Theatre, was completed in 1930, and Griffith Observatory was finished in 1935. Subsequent to Griffith's original gift further donations of land, city purchases, and the reversion of land from private to public have expanded the Park to its present size. In December, 1944 the Sherman Company gifted 444 acres of Hollywoodland open space to Griffith Park. This large, passive, eco-sensitive property borders the Lake Hollywood reservoir (west), the former Hollywoodland sign (north), and Bronson Canyon (east) where it connects into the original Griffith donation.

At over 4,000 acres, Griffith Park is truly a majestic urban parks in the United States. It holds many of Los Angeles' greatest treasures: the Greek Theatre, the Hollywood Sign, the Griffith Observatory, and a whole lot of vintage railcars. On any given day, both locals and tourists of all ages can be found hiking, biking, enjoying a picnic, watching a free Shakespeare play, meditating, taking in an incredible concert, or pondering the depths of outer space. Like most things of a certain age, the park has had its shining moments as well as some pretty grim situations. Having survived several major fires, there's been

disaster, crime, triumph, community, beauty, and achievement. There's even a fictitious curse that some swear by.



Attractions

- Autry National Center
- Bronson Canyon
- Greek Theatre (Los Angeles)
- Griffith Observatory
- Griffith Park & Southern Railroad
- Griffith Park Merry-Go-Round
- Griffith Park Zoo - closed in 1966 and now used as a hiking and picnicking area
- Heritage tree: a pine tree in memory of Beatle George Harrison was planted in 2004 near the observatory. It died after a beetle infestation, and as of 2014, plans have been made to replace it.
- The site of the Hollywood Sign on the southern side of Mount Lee is located on rough, steep terrain, and is encompassed by barriers to prevent unauthorized access. Local groups have campaigned to make tourist access to the sign difficult on grounds of safety, as the curving hillside roads in the area were not designed for so many cars and pedestrians. The Hollywood Sign Trust convinced Google and other mapping services to stop providing directions to the location of the sign, instead directing visitors to two viewing platforms, Griffith Observatory and the Hollywood and Highland Center. Another, less remote area from which the sign can be viewed is Lake Hollywood Park on Canyon Lake Drive.
- Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum
- Los Angeles Zoo
- Travel Town Museum

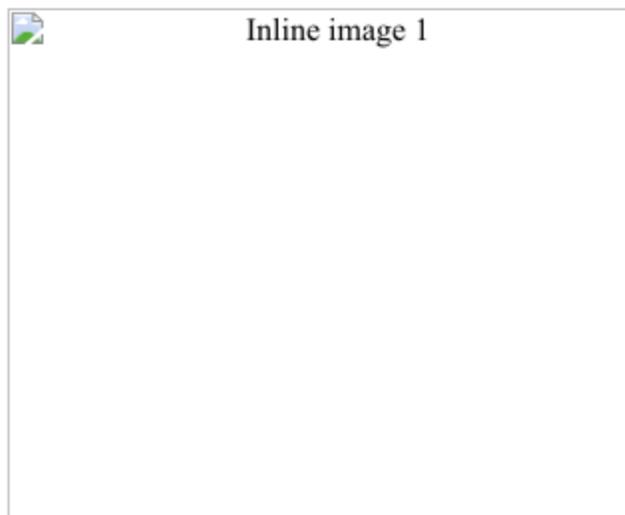
Other activities

Much of the park comprises wild, rugged natural areas with hiking and equestrian trails, and this terrain separates the park into many areas or "pockets" of activities. Within the various areas are concessions, golf courses, picnic grounds, pony and train rides, and tennis courts. In 2014, two baseball fields were proposed on the east side of Griffith Park that would remove 44 trees and replace four acres (1.6 ha) of picnic area, the largest picnic area in the park that is often used for large family gatherings, cultural fairs and festivals, reunions, and other special occasions. The plan may be altered to spare a sycamore that has been designated by the city as a "heritage tree", a living artifact of Los Angeles history. After its closure in 1966, the grounds of the Griffith Park Zoo were transformed into a recreation area. Some of the former animal enclosures were left in place, and picnic tables were installed.

Griffith Park is one of the busiest destinations in Los Angeles for on-location filming, averaging more than 300 production days. Projects in the past have included a number of major feature films including *Back to the Future*, *Short Cuts*, *War Games* and most recently *La La Land*, as well as television shows such as *Criminal Minds* and *The Closer* – and dozens of television commercials and music videos each year. With its wide variety of scenes and close proximity to Hollywood and Burbank, many different production crews have found new ways and angles to film the same spots and make them look different. One would be hard pressed to find a spot in Griffith Park which has not been filmed or taped.

For more information please feel free to download the attached article GRIFFITH PARK TURNS 120 THIS YEAR: HERE'S WHY IT'S LA'S MOST IMPORTANT PARK by Juliet Bennett Rylah.

The Benefits of Sulfur

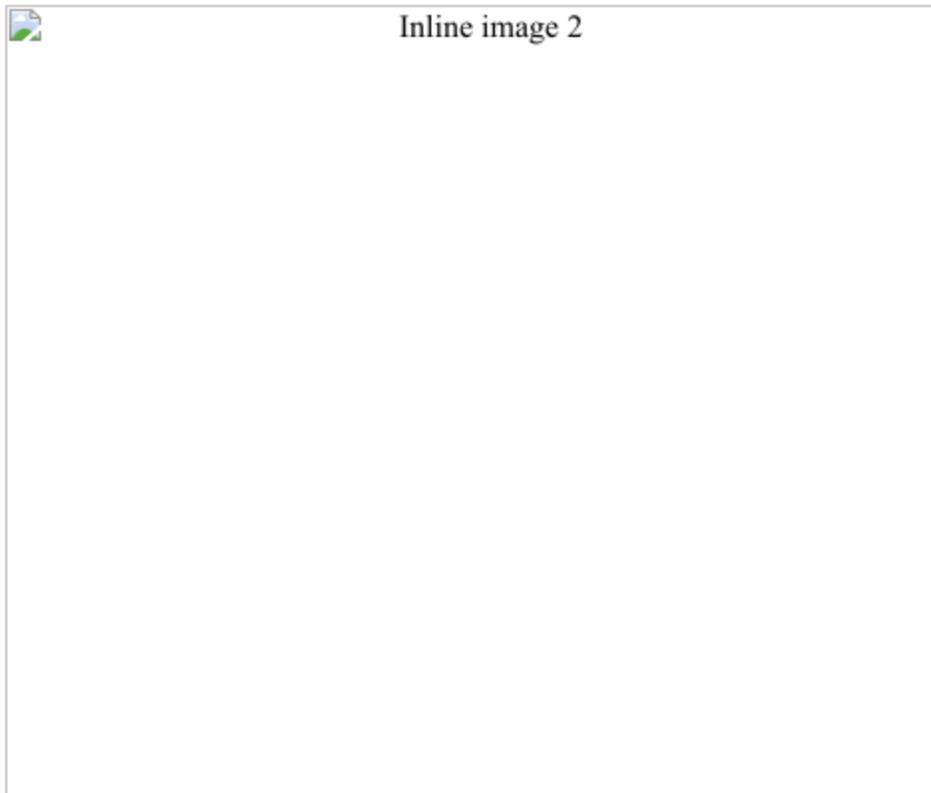


Sulfur is the third most abundant mineral in your body, based on percentage of total body weight. While close to half of it can be found in your muscles, skin and bones, sulfur plays important roles in hundreds of physiological processes. Sulfur makes up vital amino acids used to create protein for cells and tissues and for hormones, enzymes, and antibodies. Sulfur bonds are required for proteins to maintain their shape, and these bonds determine the biological activity of the proteins.

For example, hair and nails consist of a tough protein called keratin, which is high in sulfur, whereas connective tissue and cartilage contain proteins with flexible sulfur bonds, giving the structure its flexibility. With age, the flexible tissues in your body tend to lose their elasticity, leading to sagging and wrinkling of skin, stiff muscles and painful joints. A shortage of sulfur likely contributes to these age-related problems.

The Many Biological Roles of Sulfur

In addition to bonding proteins, sulfur is also required for the proper structure and biological activity of enzymes. If you don't have sufficient amounts of sulfur in your body, enzymes cannot function properly. A cascade of health problems may thus ensue, since your metabolic processes rely on biologically active enzymes. Sulfur also plays an important role in:



Sulfur, Cholesterol and Vitamin D Work in Tandem

Sulfur deficiency is quite common — in part due to demineralization of soils — and may be a contributing factor in health problems such as obesity, heart disease, Alzheimer's and chronic fatigue, just to name a few. Studies have also noted that sulfur is helpful for conditions such as skin disorders, arthritis and shingles, for example, suggesting sulfur plays an important role in these conditions as well. Importantly, are the connections between cholesterol, sulfur and vitamin D.

Some experts say that heart disease may actually be related to cholesterol sulfate deficiency, and explains how elevated LDL cholesterol is a sign of this deficiency. In short, high LDL (incorrectly referred to as "*bad*" cholesterol) is your body's way of compensating for cholesterol sulfate deficiency. When LDL is turned into plaque, blood platelets inside the plaque produce cholesterol sulfate, which your heart and brain needs for optimal function. This also explains why lowering LDL with statins can lead to heart failure.

Essentially, by elevating LDL, your body is protecting itself from the harmful effects of cholesterol sulfate deficiency. When you simply remove the LDL, you remove this "*backup*" mechanism aimed at keeping your heart going strong. As a result, heart failure becomes a distinct possibility.

How Sun Exposure Helps Optimize Cardiovascular Health

That said, high LDL IS correlated with cardiovascular disease, so the question then becomes: How can your body produce cholesterol sulfate without having to create harmful LDL? Under normal, healthy conditions, your skin synthesizes vitamin D₃ sulfate when exposed to sunlight. Vitamin D₃ sulfate is water soluble and can travel freely in your blood stream. If you have sufficient amounts of vitamin D₃ sulfate in circulation, your body does not need to produce more LDL to create sulfate-producing plaque.

In essence, sensible sun exposure may be an important part of heart and cardiovascular health. Vitamin D₃ supplements, on the other hand, are unsulfated. This is a significant drawback, as the unsulfated form needs LDL as a vehicle of transport. Some suspicion is that the oral non-sulfated form of vitamin D likely will not provide the same benefits as the vitamin D created in your skin from sun exposure, because it cannot be converted to vitamin D sulfate.

Sulfur-Rich Vegetables

Fibrous, non-leafy vegetables are rich in sulfur. Examples include:

- Cruciferous veggies⁷ such as cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, mustard greens and bok choy
- Alliums such as onions, shallots, garlic and leeks
- Edible stalks and stems such as celery, fennel and asparagus

Cruciferous vegetables have become well known for their anti-cancer properties, and the organosulfur compound sulforaphane is one of the primary compounds responsible for this effect. As noted by The World's Healthiest Foods: "... [S]ulforaphane increases the activity of the liver's Phase 2 detoxification enzymes. These enzymes ... are well known for their ability to clear a wide variety of toxic compounds from the body including not only many carcinogens, but also many reactive oxygen species, a particularly nasty type of free radical.

By jump starting these important detoxification enzymes, compounds in crucifers provide protection against cell mutations, cancer and numerous other harmful effects that would otherwise be caused by these toxins."

Other Sulfur-Rich Foods

Other foods that are high in sulfur include:

- Protein-rich animal products such as organic pastured egg yolks, grass-fed beef, organic pastured chicken and wild-caught fish
- Nuts such as walnuts, almonds and cashews
- Seeds such as sesame seeds and sunflower seeds
- Dairy products such as milk, cheese and sour cream (ideally from organic grass-fed cows)
- Certain fruits: coconut, bananas, pineapple and watermelon

Despite the fact that sulfur is found in many foods, it can still be a challenge to get sufficient amounts from your diet. Again, this is largely a problem stemming from the demineralization of soils in which the food is grown. Perhaps the best way to ensure sufficient amounts of sulfur from your diet is to cook down bones from organically raised animals into bone broth. Either drink the broth regularly, or use for soups and stews. The connective tissues are sulfur-rich, and when you slow-cook the bones, you dissolve these nutrients out of the bone and into the water.

Sulfur Supplements

Sulfur can also be obtained through supplementation with dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) or methylsulfonylmethane (MSM). DMSO is primarily used in veterinary medicine. In animals, DMSO has been found to support soft tissue health and helps heal soft-tissue injury. In humans, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved DMSO for intravesical use in the treatment of interstitial cystitis. DMSO can also be found in creams and oral supplements but are best avoided. Industrial DMSO is a byproduct of paper making, and may contain impurities. Great care is required to make sure you're getting a quality, pharmaceutical grade product, so do not use DMSO without medical supervision. DMSO may also interact with a number of medications. All in all, you're far better off using MSM, as it's far safer and doesn't appear to have any adverse drug interactions.

THIS WEEK'S QUOTE

The power of the people is always greater than the people in power.

Senator Cory Booker

THIS IS BRILLIANT

The Brilliant George Carlin on how politicians talk in Washington
DC



Inline image 2

Web Link:



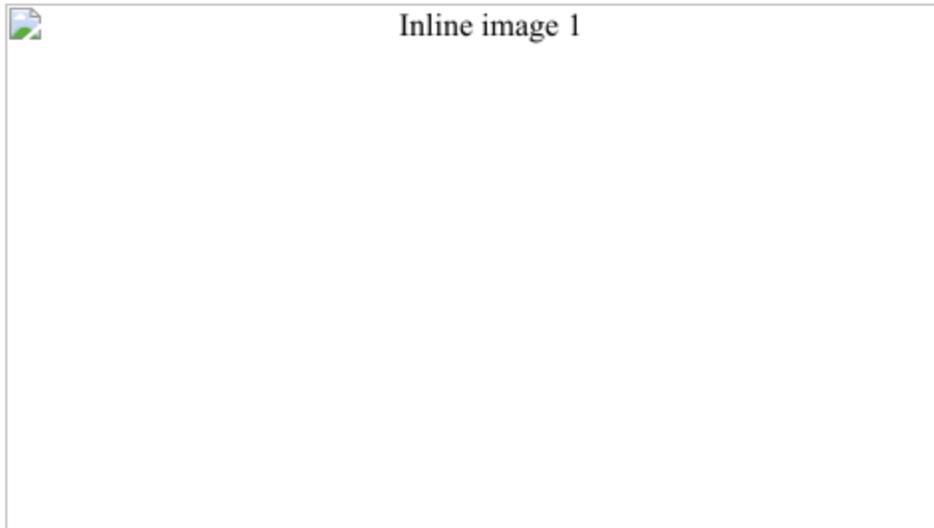
....Beyond Brilliant....

Enjoy.....

THINK ABOUT THIS

Born A Crime

Christiane Amanpour's interview with Trevor Noah



Web Link:



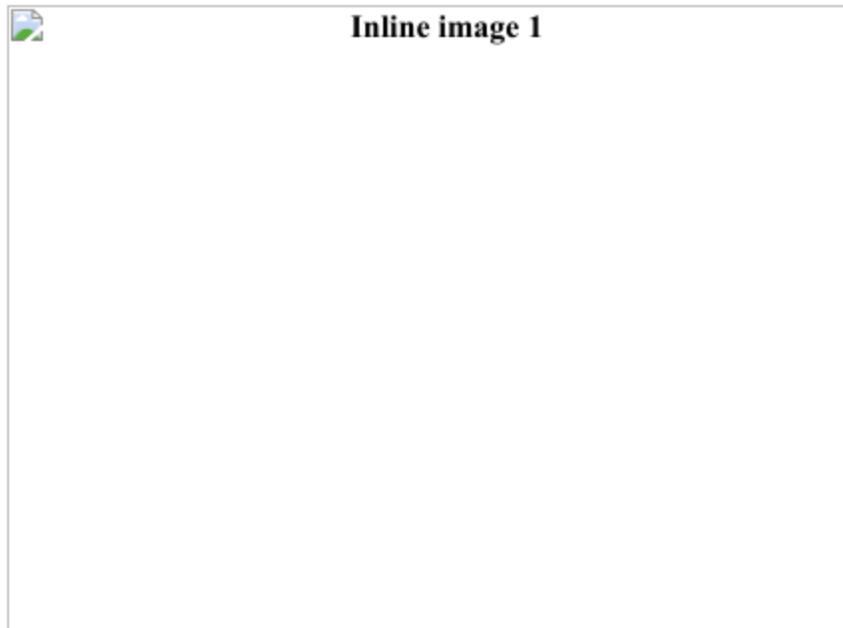
and <http://cnn.it/2gPvI18>

The South African comedian's parents had an interracial marriage during apartheid. "My mom saw my dad and she was like, 'that's the man ■ gonna break the law with.'" On how to combat *populist ideas* Noah says, "*Mockery is one the "most powerful"* tools to fight injustice, says The Daily Show host Trevor Noah. It "*imbues within that subject shame,*" and "*shame*" was a significant factor in ending apartheid, he tells me.

Please enjoy....

BEST VIDEO OF THE WEEK

One Dog Saving another Dog Who is Drowning



Web Link: [\[REDACTED\]](#)

Beyond Wonderful.....

THIS WEEK'S MUSIC

Serge Gainsbourg



This week you are invited to enjoy the music of **Serge Gainsbourg** (born Lucien Ginsburg 2 April 1928 – 2 March 1991) was a French singer, songwriter, pianist, film composer, poet, painter, screenwriter, writer, actor, and director. Regarded as one of the most important figures in French popular music, he was renowned for his often provocative and scandalous releases, as well as his diverse artistic output, which embodied genres ranging from jazz, mambo, world, chanson, pop and yé-yé, to rock and roll, progressive rock, reggae, electronic, disco, new wave, and funk. Gainsbourg's varied musical style and individuality make him difficult to categorize although his legacy has been firmly established and he is often regarded as one of the world's most influential popular musicians.

His lyrical work incorporated a vast amount of clever word play to hoodwink the listener, often for humorous, provocative, satirical or subversive reasons. Common types of word play in his songs include mondegreen, onomatopoeia, rhyme, spoonerism, dysphemism, paraprosokeia and pun. Through the course of his career, Gainsbourg wrote over 550 songs, which have been covered more than a thousand times by a wide range of artists. Since his death, Gainsbourg's music has reached legendary stature in France. Gainsbourg has also gained a cult following in the English-speaking world, with numerous artists influenced by his arrangements.

Born in Paris, France, Gainsbourg was the son of Jewish Ukrainian migrants, Joseph Ginsburg (28 December 1898, in Kharkov, now Ukraine then Russian Empire – 22 April 1971) and Olga (1894 – 16 March 1985), who fled to Paris after the 1917 Russian Revolution. Joseph Ginsburg was a classically trained musician whose profession was playing the piano in cabarets and casinos; he taught his children, Gainsbourg and his twin sister Liliane to play the piano. Gainsbourg's childhood was profoundly affected by the occupation of France by Germany in World War II. The identifying yellow

star Jews were required to wear became a symbol and haunted Gainsbourg and which in later years he was able to transmute into creative inspiration.

During the occupation, the Jewish Ginsburg family was able to make their way from Paris to Limoges, traveling under false papers. Limoges was in the Zone libre under the administration of the collaborationist Vichy government and still a perilous refuge for Jews. After the war, Gainsbourg obtained work teaching music and drawing in a school outside of Paris, in Mesnil-Le-Roi. The school was set up under the auspices of local rabbis, for the orphaned children of murdered deportees. Here Gainsbourg heard the accounts of Nazi persecution and genocide, stories that resonated for Gainsbourg far into the future. Before he was 30 years old, Gainsbourg was a disillusioned painter but earned his living as a piano player in bars.

Gainsbourg changed his first name to Serge, feeling that this was representative of his Russian background and because, as Jane Birkin relates: "Lucien reminded him of a hairdresser's assistant." He chose Gainsbourg as his last name, in homage to the English painter Thomas Gainsborough, whom he admired. He married Elisabeth "Lize" Levitsky on 3 November 1951 and divorced in 1957. He married a second time on 7 January 1964, to Françoise-Antoinette "Béatrice" Pancrazzi (b. 28 July 1931), with whom he had two children: a daughter named Natacha (b. 8 August 1964) and a son, Paul (born in spring 1968). He divorced Béatrice in February 1966.

In 1958 Serge Gainsbourg hit paydirt with the first song from his first album. It was not your usual chart fodder – especially in the 1950s – recounting the quotidian existence of a Metro inspector who spends his days punching holes in ticket stubs; existential angst from all "*les petit trous*" leads him to contemplate putting a hole in his own head. Fast-paced, catchy and witty, *Le poinçonneur des Lilas* was a strong debut, though following the relatively auspicious welcome from critics and the public, ■ soon be cast into the dark again and forced to eke out a living and career that would stutter and stop/start for another decade.

By 1963 Gainsbourg's career as a frontman was floundering. His star quality was in doubt, with critics cruelly rounding on his looks, paying particular attention to his ears. The writing for others was going well though, especially songs for Juliette Gréco, darling of the Rive Gauche and venerated as the thinking person's alternative to all the throwaway pop that was suddenly prevalent. Her rendition of *La Javanaise* (a pun on a forgotten Javanese dancing craze that doesn't really translate, inspired by his mentor Boris Vian) was well received, though it is Gainsbourg's version of the moving and poetic hymn to love that has endured.

Even after becoming a household name, Gainsbourg continued to write for other artists, nearly always younger women. He wrote *Comment te dire adieu* for Françoise Hardy and latterly a whole album for Vanessa Paradis and a Bowie tribute with a feeble *franglais* pun (*Beau oui comme Bowie*) for Isabelle Adjani. Punning is an incurable illness, and Gainsbourg's became more frequent and more deranged as his career progressed, sagging under the weight of his alcoholism.

In late 1967 he had a short but ardent love affair with Brigitte Bardot, to whom he dedicated the song and album *Initials BB*. In mid-1968 Gainsbourg fell in love with the younger English singer and actress Jane Birkin, whom he met during the shooting of the film *Slogan*. Their relationship lasted over

a decade. In 1971 they had a daughter, the actress and singer Charlotte Gainsbourg. Although many sources state that they were married, according to their daughter Charlotte this was not the case. Birkin left Gainsbourg in 1980.

Birkin remembers the beginning of her affair with Gainsbourg: he first took her to a nightclub, then to a transvestite club and afterwards to the Hilton hotel where he passed out in a drunken stupor. Birkin left Gainsbourg when pregnant with her third daughter Lou by the film director Jacques Doillon. His last partner was Bambou (Caroline Paulus, grandniece of German field marshal Friedrich Paulus of Stalingrad fame). In 1986, they had a son, Lucien (known as Lulu). In 2010, Lise Lévitzy published a book called "*Lise et Lulu*" which raises the possibility of Gainsbourg being bisexual.

Serge Gainsbourg is described on his fan's website as the dirty old man of popular music; a French singer/songwriter and provocateur notorious for his voracious appetite for alcohol, cigarettes, and women, his scandalous, taboo-shattering output made him a legend in Europe but only a cult figure in America, where his lone hit "Je T'Aime...Moi Non Plus" stalled on the pop charts -- fittingly enough -- at number 69.

Having met Gainsbourg in 1979 in the South of France when we were both staying in the same hotel in Cannes, for a brief time we became fast friends as one can when you run into bored celebrities looking for some fresh air. I found him to be larger than life although he was small in stature. What I enjoyed was his irreverence against the conventional and he enjoyed my parody of him, "*je'taime, I love her but you love him*" complete with cigarette in hand. On the 20th anniversary of his death, the UK Guardian newspaper described Serge Gainsbourg as France's answer to David Bowie, Mick Jagger and John Lennon rolled into one smoke cloud of controversy. With this said, you are again invited to enjoy the France's bad boy of music, the one and only Serge Gainsbourg.

Serge Gainsbourg – *Bonnie and Clyde* -- https://youtu.be/xFqo_020gHE

Serge Gainsbourg – *Sorry Angel* -- <https://youtu.be/P88gVhLXFGY>

Serge Gainsbourg – *Aux Enfants de la Chance* -- <https://youtu.be/5bcCyYd07hk>

Serge Gainsbourg – *Hey Man Amen* -- <https://youtu.be/eJVZfgAH-jc>

Serge Gainsbourg – *Love On The Beat* -- <https://youtu.be/ESPQHdTM5KU>

Serge Gainsbourg –  *The Boy* -- <https://youtu.be/KsfbKeWwjv8>

Serge Gainsbourg – *Harley David Son of a Bitch* -- <https://youtu.be/r15jIMeGluk>

Serge Gainsbourg – *Mon Légionnaire* -- <https://youtu.be/rqwccUIR5IU>

Serge Gainsbourg – *Couleur Café* -- https://youtu.be/dKmr_ZBj6HY

Serge Gainsbourg – *Initials BB* -- <https://youtu.be/BOyLzo873rQ>

Serge Gainsbourg – *Je suis Venu te Dire Que J* -- <https://youtu.be/xLCj3XpBEQ0>

Serge Gainsbourg – *La Javanaise* -- <https://youtu.be/TT6jibchW70>

Serge Gainsbourg – *You're Under Arrest* -- <https://youtu.be/ydWcNr2EIRs>
Jane Birkin & Serge Gainsbourg – *Je T'aime,...Moi Non Plus* -- <https://youtu.be/k3Fa4lOQfbA>
Serge Gainsbourg – *la Chanson de Prévert* -- <https://youtu.be/IzuTdVJG-ck>
Serge Gainsbourg – *Melody Nelson* -- https://youtu.be/cIDuE4U_fZg
Serge Gainsbourg – *L'Hôtel Particulier* -- <https://youtu.be/Et0NCm1q4Mo>
Serge Gainsbourg – *L'anamour* -- <https://youtu.be/yi-FZ37CLj0>
Serge Gainsbourg – *La Noyée* -- <https://youtu.be/4oMrPdOQYr0>
Serge Gainsbourg – *Le Poinçonneur des Lilas* -- <https://youtu.be/E8ZCvYg5-ZQ>
Serge Gainsbourg – *Requiem Pour Un Con* -- <https://youtu.be/C3vZ2-cwPhQ>
Serge Gainsbourg – *Danger* -- <https://youtu.be/AJxe1h3sFJ0>
Serge Gainsbourg & Charlotte Gainsbourg – *Lemon Incest* -- <https://youtu.be/gWJdB68W9Io>

I hope that you enjoyed this week's offerings and wish you and yours a great week....

Sincerely,

Greg Brown

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