

From: Gregory Brown <[REDACTED]>

To: undisclosed-recipients;

Bcc: jeevacation@gmail.com

Subject: Greg Brown's Weekend Reading and Other Things.. 3/13/2016

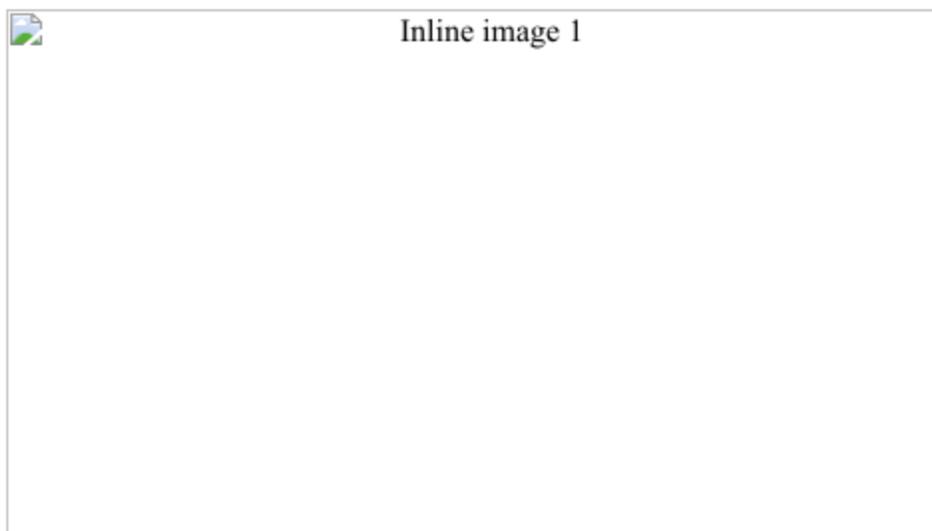
Date: Sun, 13 Mar 2016 09:29:07 +0000

Attachments: Toots_Thielemans_bio.docx; Black_Panther_Party_or_BPP.docx

Inline-Images: image.png; image(1).png; image(2).png; image(3).png; image(4).png; image(5).png; image(6).png; image(7).png; image(8).png; image(9).png; image(10).png; image(11).png; image(12).png; image(13).png; image(14).png

DEAR FRIEND.....

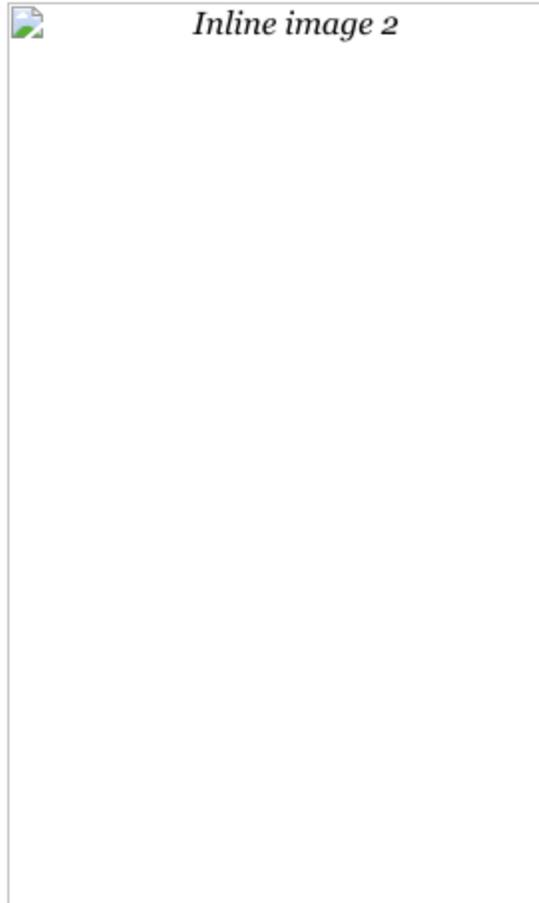
The Black Panthers



But how much do you know about the group that revolutionized revolution?

Whether it was because of **Black History Month** or Beyoncé's much-talked-about Super Bowl performance, where the Houston singer evoked images of the **Black Panthers**, somehow they became of interest again in the mainstream. At the same time **PBS** aired Stanley Nelson's documentary **The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution**, about the group that was founded 50 years ago by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, as social media began discussing the documentary, often in relation to the **Black Lives Matter** movement, which many say is reminiscent of it. Coming of age in the 1960s and being profoundly inspired and affected by the **Civil Rights** and **Black Power Movements**, I was well aware of the Black Panthers, SDS and other revolutionary groups dedicated to change what they called, "*the status quo of the subjugation of the disenfranchise in America.*" But I did not march to their drum beat or believed in their relevance.

Back in the day, the **Black Panther Party** was called "*the greatest threat to the internal security of the country*" by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. And even now, some conservatives make similar comments about Black Lives Matter activists. Both the Black Panther Party and Black Lives Matter were not afraid to speak up for black people, and both have been labeled terrorist groups by some. If your knowledge of the Black Panthers is limited, or if you know someone who could use some educating on the matter, Beyoncé performance does not tell the story nor does most of the arguments pro and con, as history is always rewritten by the winners, with the losers romanticizing their struggle. *So here is my take....*



The **Black Panther Party** or **BPP** (originally the **Black Panther Party for Self-Defense**) was a revolutionary black nationalist and socialist organization active in the United States from 1966 until 1982, with its only international chapter operating in Algeria from 1969 until 1972. Original six members of the Black Panther Party included Elbert "*Big Man*" Howard, Huey P. Newton (Defense Minister), Sherwin Forte, Bobby Seale (Chairman), Reggie Forte and Little Bobby Hutton (Treasurer). In Nelson's film (which I strongly urge everyone to see), one of the commentators describe Huey Newton as the visionary of the party, Bobby Seale was the personality and Eldridge Cleaver (who was a literary star after the publication of *Soul on Ice*) made the party credible to Black intellectuals, white leftist intellectuals and many in the mainstream, who thought they understood what he was talking about because he had an incredible ability to encapsulate a thought in a few sentences and form them into an artistic statement that stabbed right into the heart of the enemy. At the same time Eldridge would say crazy "shit", including challenging then Governor Ronald Reagan to a duel, after calling him a punk, sissy and coward – echoing in a way the bluster of today's Donald Trump.

Web Link: <https://youtu.be/ZMnc2KjS7Vw>

At its inception on October 15, 1966, the Black Panther Party's core practice was its armed citizens' patrols to monitor the behavior of police officers and challenge police brutality in Oakland, California. In 1969, community social programs became a core activity of party members. The Black Panther Party instituted a variety of community social programs, most extensively the Free Breakfast for Children Programs, and community health clinics.

Federal Bureau of Investigation Director J. Edgar Hoover called the party "*the greatest threat to the internal security of the country*", and he supervised an extensive program (COINTELPRO) of surveillance, infiltration, perjury, police harassment, and many other tactics designed to undermine Panther leadership, incriminate party members, discredit and criminalize the Party, and drain the organization of resources and manpower. The program was also accused of using assassination against Black Panther members.

Government oppression initially contributed to the growth of the party as killings and arrests of Panthers increased support for the party within the black community and on the broad political left, both of whom valued the Panthers as powerful force opposed to de facto segregation and the military draft. Black Panther Party membership reached a peak in 1970, with offices in 68 cities and thousands of members, then suffered a series of contractions. After being vilified by the mainstream press, public support for the party waned, and the group became more isolated. In-fighting among Party leadership, caused largely by the FBI's COINTELPRO (*'counter-intelligence programs'*) operation, led to expulsions and defections that decimated the membership. Popular support for the Party declined further after reports appeared detailing the group's involvement in illegal activities such as drug dealing and extortion schemes directed against Oakland merchants. By 1972 most Panther activity centered on the national headquarters and a school in Oakland, where the party continued to influence local politics. Party contractions continued throughout the 1970s and by 1980 the Black Panther Party had just 27 members.

The history of the Black Panther Party is controversial. Scholars have characterized the Black Panther Party as the most influential black movement organization of the late 1960s, and "the strongest link between the domestic Black Liberation Struggle and global opponents of American imperialism". Other commentators have described the Party as more criminal than political, characterized by "*defiant posturing over substance*". Whichever story you embrace, through the travels of Newton, Cleaver and others the Black Panthers was one of the few if the only home grown revolutionary group to spread its gospel internationally, inspiring a number of other counter-culture and radical groups.

Background



Inline image 3

Black Panther Party founders Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton standing in the street, armed with a Colt .45 and a shotgun.

The sweeping migration of black families out of the South during World War II transformed Oakland and cities throughout the West and the North. A new generation of young blacks growing up in these cities faced new conditions, new forms of poverty and racism unfamiliar to their parents, and sought to develop new forms of politics to address them. Black Panther Party membership "*consisted of recent migrants whose families traveled north and west to escape the southern racial regime, only to be confronted with new forms of segregation and repression*". In the early 1960s, the insurgent Civil Rights Movement had dismantled the Jim Crow system of racial caste subordination using the tactics of non-violent civil disobedience, and demanding full citizenship rights for black people. But not much changed in the cities of the North and West. As the wartime jobs which drew much of the black migration "*fled to the suburbs along with white residents*", the black population was concentrated in poor "*urban ghettos*" with high unemployment, and substandard housing, mostly excluded from political representation, top universities, and the middle class. Police departments were almost all white. In 1966, only 16 of Oakland's 661 police officers were African American.

Insurgent civil rights practices proved incapable of redressing these conditions, and the organizations that had "led much of the nonviolent civil disobedience" such as **SNCC** and **CORE** went into decline. By 1966 a "**Black Power ferment**" emerged, consisting largely of young urban blacks, posing a question the **Civil Rights Movement** could not answer: "*how would black people in America win not only formal citizenship rights, but actual economic and political power?*" Young black people in Oakland and other cities developed a rich ferment of study groups and political organizations, and it is out of this ferment that the Black Panther Party emerged.

In late October 1966, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale founded the **Black Panther Party** (originally the **Black Panther Party for Self-Defense**). In formulating a new politics, they drew on their experiences working with a variety of Black Power organizations. Newton and Seale first met in 1962 when they were both students at Merritt College. They joined Donald Warden's **Afro-American Association**, where they read widely, debated, and organized in an emergent Black Nationalist tradition inspired by Malcolm X and others. Eventually dissatisfied with Warden's '*accommodationism*', they developed a revolutionary anti-imperialist perspective working with more active and militant groups like the **Soul Students Advisory Council** and the **Revolutionary Action Movement**. While bringing in a paycheck, jobs running youth service programs at the **North Oakland Neighborhood Anti-Poverty Center** allowed them to develop a revolutionary nationalist approach to community service, later a key element in the Black Panther Party's "community survival programs."

Dissatisfied with the failure of these organizations to directly challenge police brutality and appeal to the "*brothers on the block*", Huey and Bobby sought to take matters into their own hands. After the police killed Matthew Johnson, an unarmed young black man in San Francisco, Newton observed the violent rebellion that followed. He had an epiphany that would distinguish the Black Panther Party from the multitude of organizations seeking to build **Black Power**. Newton saw the explosive rebellious anger of the ghetto as a force, and believed that if he could stand up to the police, he could organize that force into political power. Inspired by Robert F. Williams' armed resistance to the KKK (and Williams' book *Negroes with Guns*), Newton studied California gun law until he knew it better than many police officers. Like the **Community Alert Patrol** in Los Angeles after the Watts Rebellion, he decided to organize patrols to follow the police around to monitor for incidents of brutality. But with a crucial difference: his patrols would carry loaded guns.

On October 29, 1966, **Stokely Carmichael** – a leader of **SNCC** – championed the call for "**Black Power**" and came to Berkeley to keynote a Black Power conference. At the time, he was promoting the armed organizing efforts of the **Lowndes County Freedom Organization (LCFO)** in Alabama and their use of the Black Panther symbol. Newton and Seale decided to adopt the **Black Panther** logo and form their own organization called the **Black Panther Party for Self-Defense**. Newton and Seale decided on a uniform of blue shirts, black pants, black leather jackets, black berets. Sixteen-year-old Bobby Hutton was their first recruit.

Late 1966 to early 1967

Chronology

- October 15, 1966: The BPP is founded. A few months later, they began their first "*police*" patrols.
- January 1967: The BPP opens its first official headquarters in an Oakland storefront, and published the first issue of *The Black Panther: Black Community News Service*.
- February 1967: BPP members serve as security escorts for Betty Shabazz.
- April 1967: Denzil Dowell protest in Richmond.
- May 2, 1967: Thirty people representing the BPP go to state capitol with guns, and achieve the Party's first national media attention.

The initial tactic of the party utilized contemporary open-carry gun laws to protect Party members when policing the police. This act was done in order to record incidents of police brutality by distantly following police cars around neighborhoods. When confronted by a police officer, Party members cited laws proving they have done nothing wrong and threatened to take to court any officer that violated their constitutional rights. Between the end of 1966 to the start of 1967, the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense's armed police patrols in Oakland black communities attracted a small handful of members. Numbers grew slightly starting in February 1967, when the party provided an armed escort at the San Francisco airport for Betty Shabazz, Malcolm X's widow and keynote speaker for a conference held in his honor.

From the beginning, the Black Panther Party's focus on militancy came with a reputation for violence. The Panthers employed a California law that permitted carrying a loaded rifle or shotgun as long as it was publicly displayed and pointed at no one. Carrying weapons openly and making threats against

police officers, for example, chants like "*The Revolution has come, it's time to pick up the gun. Off the pigs!*", helped create the Panthers' reputation as a violent organization.

The black community of Richmond, California, wanted protection against police brutality. With only three main streets for entering and exiting the neighborhood, it was easy for police to control, contain, and suppress the majority African-American community. On April 1, 1967, a black, unarmed twenty-two-year-old construction worker named Denzil Dowell was shot dead by police in North Richmond. Dowell's family contacted the Black Panther Party for assistance after county officials refused to investigate the case. The Party held rallies in North Richmond that educated the community on armed self-defense and the Denzil Dowell incident. Police seldom interfered at these rallies because every Panther was armed and no laws were broken. The Party's ideals resonated with several community members, who then brought their own guns to the next rallies.

Awareness of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense grew rapidly after their May 2, 1967, protest at the California State Assembly. On May 2, 1967, the California State Assembly Committee on Criminal Procedure was scheduled to convene to discuss what was known as the "*Mulford Act*", which would make the public carrying of loaded firearms illegal. Eldridge Cleaver and Newton put together a plan to send a group of 26 armed Panthers led by Seale from Oakland to Sacramento to protest the bill. The group entered the assembly carrying their weapons, an incident which was widely publicized, and which prompted police to arrest Seale and five others. The group pleaded guilty to misdemeanor charges of disrupting a legislative session.

In May 1967, the Panthers invaded the State Assembly Chamber in Sacramento, guns in hand, in what appears to have been a publicity stunt. Still, they scared a lot of important people that day. At the time, the Panthers had almost no following. Now, (a year later) however, their leaders speak on invitation almost anywhere radicals gather, and many whites wear "*Honkeys for Huey*" buttons, supporting the fight to free Newton, who has been in jail since last Oct. 28 (1967) on the charge that he killed a policeman ...

Ten-point program

The Black Panther Party first publicized its original Ten-Point program on May 15, 1967, following the Sacramento action, in the second issue of the *Black Panther* newspaper. The original ten points of "What We Want Now!" follow:

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.
2. We want full employment for our people.
3. We want an end to the robbery by the Capitalists of our Black Community.
4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.
5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present day society.

6. We want all Black men to be exempt from military service.
7. We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of Black people.
8. We want freedom for all Black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.
9. We want all Black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their Black Communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.
10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

At its beginnings, the Black Panther Party reclaimed black masculinity and traditional gender roles. A notice in the first issue of *The Black Panther*, the Panthers' newspaper, applauded the Panthers — by then an all-male organization — as "the cream of Black Manhood...there for the protection and defense of our Black community". Scholars consider the Party's stance of armed resistance highly masculine, with the use of guns and violence affirming proof of manhood. In 1968, the Black Panther Party newspaper stated in several articles that the role of female Panthers was to "*stand behind black men*" and be supportive.

By 1969, the Black Panther Party newspaper officially stated that men and women are equal and instructed male Panthers to treat female Party members as equals, a drastic change from the idea of the female Panther as subordinate. That same year, Deputy Chairman Fred Hampton of the Illinois chapter conducted a meeting condemning sexism. After 1969, the Party considered sexism counter-revolutionary.

The Black Panthers adopted a 'womanist' ideology in consideration of the unique experiences of African-American women, affirming that racism is more oppressive than sexism. Womanism was a mix of Black Nationalism and the vindication of women, putting race and community struggle before the gender issue. Womanism posited that traditional feminism failed to include race and class struggle in its denunciation of male sexism and was therefore part of white hegemony. In opposition to some feminist viewpoints, womanism promoted a gender role point of view that men are not above women, but hold a different position in the home and community, so men and women must work together for the preservation of African-American culture and community.

From this point forward, the Black Panther Party newspaper portrayed women as revolutionaries, using the example of party members such as Kathleen Cleaver, Angela Davis and Erika Huggins, all political and intelligent women. The Black Panther Party newspaper often showed women as active participants in the armed self-defense movement, picturing them with children and guns as protectors of the home, the family and the community.

This had direct implications at every level for Black Panther women. From 1968 to the end of its publication in 1982, the head editors of the Black Panther Party newspaper were all women. In 1970,

approximately 40% to 70% of Party members were women, and several chapters, like the Des Moines, Iowa, and New Haven, Connecticut, were headed by women.

Late 1967 to early 1968

Chronology

- April 25th, 1967: Publication of first issue of the Black Panther newspaper
- August 1967: The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) directs its program "COINTELPRO" to "neutralize" what they call "*black nationalist hate groups*".
- October 28, 1967: Huey Newton allegedly kills police officer John Frey. At this time there were fewer than one hundred Party members.
- Early Spring 1968: Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice* is published.
- April 4, 1968: Martin Luther King is assassinated. Riots break out nationwide
- April 6, 1968: A team of Panthers led by Eldridge Cleaver ambushes Oakland police officers. Panther Bobby Hutton is killed.

COINTELPRO document outlining the FBI's plans to 'neutralize' Jean Seberg for her support for the Black Panther Party, by attempting to publicly "*cause her embarrassment*" and "*tarnish her image*".

In August 1967, the **Federal Bureau of Investigation** (FBI) instructed its program "COINTELPRO" to "neutralize" what the FBI called "*black nationalist hate groups*" and other dissident groups. In September 1968, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover described the Black Panthers as "*the greatest threat to the internal security of the country*". By 1969, the Black Panthers and their allies had become primary COINTELPRO targets, singled out in 233 of the 295 authorized "*Black Nationalist*" COINTELPRO actions. The goals of the program were to prevent the unification of militant Black Nationalist groups and to weaken the power of their leaders, as well as to discredit the groups to reduce their support and growth. The initial targets included the **Southern Christian Leadership Conference**, the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee**, the **Revolutionary Action Movement** and the **Nation of Islam**. Leaders who were targeted included the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Stokely Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, Maxwell Stanford and Elijah Muhammad.

Part of the COINTELPRO actions were directed at creating and exploiting existing rivalries between Black Nationalist factions. One such attempt was to "*intensify the degree of animosity*" between the **Black Panthers** and the **Blackstone Rangers**, a Chicago street gang. They sent an anonymous letter to the Ranger's gang leader claiming that the Panthers were threatening his life, a letter whose intent was to induce "*reprisals*" against Panther leadership. In Southern California similar actions were taken to exacerbate a "*gang war*" between the Black Panther Party and a group called the US Organization. It was alleged that the FBI had sent a provocative letter to the US Organization in an attempt to increase existing antagonism between US and the Panthers.

COINTELPRO also aimed to dismantle the Black Panther Party by targeting the social/community programs they endorsed, one of the most influential being the **Free Breakfast for Children Program**. The success of the **Free Breakfast for Children Program** served to "shed light on the government's failure to address child poverty and hunger—pointing to the limits of the nation's **War on Poverty**". The ability of the Party to organize and provide for children more effectively than the U.S. government led the FBI to criticize the program as a means of exposing children to **Panther Propaganda**. In response to this, as an effort of disassembling the program, "Police and Federal Agents regularly harassed and intimidated program participants, supporters, and Party workers and sought to scare away donors and organizations that housed the programs like churches and community centers".

1969

Chronology

- Early 1969: In late 1968 and January 1969, the BPP began to purge members due to fears about law enforcement infiltration and various petty disagreements.
- January 14, 1969: The Los Angeles chapter gets into a shootout with members of the competing US Organization, and two Panthers are killed.
- January 1969: The Oakland BPP begins the first free breakfast program for children.
- March 1969: There is a second purge of BPP members.
- April 1969: Twenty-one members of the New York chapter are indicted and jailed for a bombing conspiracy.
- May 1969: Two more southern California Panthers are killed in violent disputes with US Organization members.
- May 1969: Members of the New Haven chapter torture and murder Alex Rackley, who they suspected of being an informant.
- July 17, 1969: Two policemen are shot and a Panther is killed in a gun battle in Chicago.
- Late July 1969: The BPP ideology undergoes a shift, with a turn toward self-discipline and anti-racism.
- August 1969: Bobby Seale is indicted and imprisoned in relation to the Rackley murder.
- October 18, 1969: A Panther is killed in a gunfight with police outside a Los Angeles restaurant.
- Mid-to-late 1969: COINTELPRO activity increases.
- November 13, 1969: A Panther is killed in a gunfight with police in Chicago.
- December 4, 1969: Fred Hampton and Mark Clark are killed by law enforcement in Chicago.
- Late 1969: David Hilliard, current BPP head, advocates violent revolution. Panther membership is down significantly from the late 1968 peak

COINTELPRO's most egregious act occurred in Chicago, on December 4, 1969, two Panthers were killed when the Chicago Police raided the home of Panther leader Fred Hampton. The raid had been orchestrated by the police in conjunction with the FBI. Hampton was shot and killed, as was Panther guard Mark Clark. A federal investigation reported that only one shot was fired by the Panthers, and police fired at least 80 shots. Hampton was subsequently shot twice in the head at point blank range while unconscious. He was 21 years old and unarmed at the time of his death. Coroner reports show that Hampton was drugged with a powerful barbiturate that night and all indicators point toward FBI infiltrator William O'Neal as the source of the drugging. Former FBI agent Wesley Swearingen asserts that the Bureau was guilty of a "*plot to murder*" the Panthers. Cook County State's Attorney Edward Hanrahan, his assistant and eight Chicago police officers were indicted by a federal grand jury over the raid, but the charges were later dismissed. In 1979 civil action, Hampton's family won \$1.85 million from the city of Chicago in a wrongful death settlement.

1970 & 1971

Chronology

- January 1970: Leonard Bernstein holds a fundraiser for the BPP, which was notoriously mocked by Tom Wolfe in *Radical Chic & Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers*.
- Spring 1970: The Oakland BPP engages in another ambush of police officers with guns and fragmentation bombs. Two officers are wounded.
- May 1970: Huey Newton's conviction is overturned, but he remains incarcerated.
- July 1970: Newton tells *The New York Times* that "*we've never advocated violence*".
- August 1970: Newton is released from prison.
- January 1971: Newton expels Geronimo Pratt who goes underground. Newton also expels two of the New York 21 and his own secretary, who flee the country.
- February 1971: a fall-out between Newton and Cleaver ensues after they argue during a live broadcast link-up. Newton expels Cleaver and the entire international section from the party.
- Spring 1971: the Newton and Cleaver factions engage in retaliatory assassinations of each other's members, resulting in the deaths of four people.
- May 1971: Bobby Seale is acquitted of ordering the Rackley murder, and returns to Oakland.
- Mid-to-late 1971: nationally, hundreds of Party members quit the BPP.
- Late-September 1971: Newton visits and stays in China for 10 days.

The Black Panthers greatest accomplishments were their **Survival Programs**. Inspired by Mao Zedong's advice to revolutionaries in *The Little Red Book*, Newton called on the Panthers to "*serve the people*" and to make "*survival programs*" a priority within its branches. The most famous of their programs was the Free Breakfast for Children Program, initially run out of an Oakland church.

The **Free Breakfast For Children** program was especially significant because it served as a space for educating youth about the current condition of the Black community, and the actions that the Party was taking to address that condition. "While the children ate their meals, members of the Party taught them liberation lessons consisting of Party messages and Black history." Through this program, the Party was able to influence young minds, and strengthen their ties to communities as well as gain widespread support for their ideologies. The breakfast program became so popular that the Panthers Party claimed to have fed twenty thousand children in the 1968-69 school year.

Other survival programs were free services such as clothing distribution, classes on politics and economics, free medical clinics, lessons on self-defense and first aid, transportation to upstate prisons for family members of inmates, an emergency-response ambulance program, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and testing for sickle-cell disease.

1972–74

Chronology

- Early 1972: Newton shuts down chapters around the country, and calls the key members to Oakland.

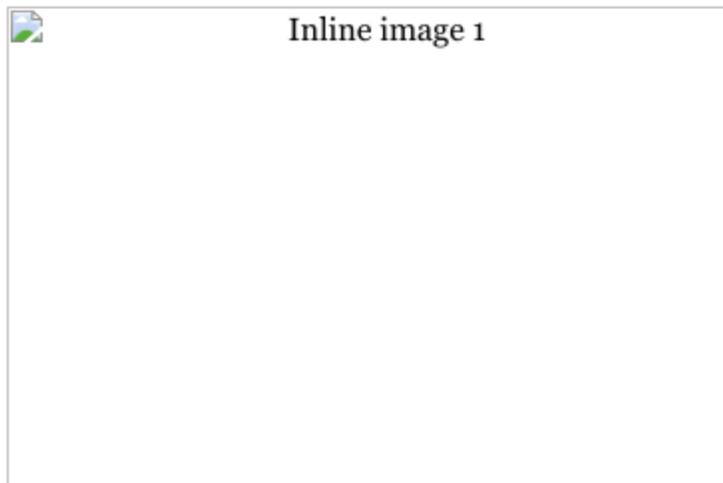
- Mid-1972: BPP members or supporters win a number of minor offices in the Oakland city elections.
- 1973: The BPP focuses nearly all of its resources on winning political power in the Oakland city government. Seale runs for mayor; Elaine Brown runs for city council. Both lose, and many Party members resign after the losses.
- Early 1974: Newton embarks on a major purge, expelling Bobby and John Seale, David and June Hilliard, Robert Bay, and numerous other top party leaders. Dozens of other Panthers loyal to Seale resigned or deserted.
- August 1974: Newton murders Kathleen Smith, a teenage prostitute. He flees to Cuba. Elaine Brown takes over the leadership in his absence.
- December 1974: accountant Betty van Patter is murdered, after threatening to disclose irregularities in the Party's finances.

Although COINTELPRO and other police actions hasten the demise of the Black Panthers, it was the egos and rivalry within the leadership that led to a split between Cleaver, coupled with reckless thug behavior that sucked the life out of the movement and eventually led to its death. The split turned violent, as the Newton and Cleaver factions carried out retaliatory assassinations of each other's members, resulting in the deaths of four people. Although it is nice to romanticize the good that the Black Panthers did through their Survival Programs and inspiration to hundreds of thousands and possibly millions of young people across America and elsewhere, the reality is their playing protector and provider to *'the community'* was a failed noble experiment in spite of the fervent dedication of its members, supporters and admirers.

So True



Holly Cow it's Alive



Clarence Thomas speaks in Supreme Court for first time in 10 years

Imagine this, until a week ago, neither Justices Sonia Sotomayor nor Elena Kagan, the Court's youngest members on the Supreme Court who sit on opposite ends of the bench, and who both often take aggressive tones with the lawyers had never heard Clarence Thomas ask a question in the courtroom. (Yes, Thomas did break his silence last year to utter a single stray wisecrack, but that hardly counts as participation.) Thomas is well known for his reticence during oral argument, famously going ten years without asking a question from the bench. This ten-year period lasted from February 22, 2006, when he asked a question during a death penalty case, to February 29, 2016, when he asked several questions in a case regarding whether persons convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence should be permanently barred from firearm possession.

The morning's first session was nearly over when Ilana Eisenstein, the assistant solicitor general arguing the government's position, asked if any of the justices had any more questions for her. That's when Thomas leaned forward and, in his booming baritone, launched a line of inquiry so far unexplored in the hour long hearing. *"Can you give me another area [of law] where a misdemeanor violation suspends a constitutional right?"* Thomas asked Eisenstein, who was arguing that a federal ban on gun ownership for people who are convicted of low-level domestic violence offenses at the state level should apply if the offense was committed *"recklessly."*

A strange silence fell over the courtroom. For what seemed like five minutes straight, and in the course of no less than 10 questions, Thomas really wanted to get to the bottom of whether the federal gun prohibition for domestic violence violators -- known as the Lautenberg Amendment -- infringed on a fundamental right. He wanted to know "how long" the suspension of Second Amendment rights was for people prohibited under federal law to possess firearms, and he pressed Eisenstein to name any other legal analog where the federal government could permanently curtail constitutional rights following a conviction for an unrelated offense. *"Let's say that a publisher is reckless about the use of*

children, and what could be considered indecent displays and that that triggers a violation of, say, a hypothetical law against the use of children in these ads," he said. After that setup, he asked: **"Could you suspend that publisher's right to ever publish again?"**

The case, *Voisine v. United States*, didn't arrive at the Supreme Court as a Second Amendment case; the issue was only secondary to the case and no other justice addressed it. But Thomas, a staunch defender of the right to bear arms, seemed interested in the implications for gun owners who otherwise may be stuck with long-term consequences as the result of a domestic violence incident. "Did the defendant use a weapon?" Thomas asked, appearing to worry whether suspending someone's right to own a gun indefinitely when the offense "is not directly related" to the suspension violates the Constitution.

Thomas is known for not speaking during Supreme Court oral arguments -- a practice for which he has offered various rationales over the years. Some have argued that Thomas broke his apparent vow of silence in 2013, when he seemed to crack a joke under his breath about Ivy League schools. But that hardly counted as active questioning during oral arguments. If anything, Thomas' questions on Monday could be read as a sign that he misses his late colleague Antonin Scalia -- whose empty seat, ceremonially draped in black, is directly next to his. The last time the Supreme Court declined to review a case involving the Second Amendment -- an assault weapons ban out of Illinois -- both Thomas and Scalia dissented together.

Justice Stephen Breyer, as if attempting to respond to Thomas' concerns, suggested that there was no need to decide now a "major question" of constitutional law -- that the court was only called on to determine "what Congress intended" with the federal gun ban for certain domestic violence perpetrators. But if the issue arose again in a future case, Breyer said, then the court might then have to step in. "We don't have to decide that here," he said.

Clarence Thomas (born June 23, 1948) succeeded "the great" Thurgood Marshall, to become the second African American to serve on the Court. Thomas grew up in Savannah, Georgia, and was educated at the College of the Holy Cross and at Yale Law School. In 1974, he was appointed an Assistant Attorney General in Missouri and subsequently practiced law there in the private sector. In 1979, he became a legislative assistant to Senator John Danforth (R-MO) and in 1981 was appointed Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education. In 1982, President Ronald Reagan appointed Thomas Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

In 1990, President George H. W. Bush nominated Thomas for a seat on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. He served in that role for 16 months and on July 1, 1991, was nominated by Bush to fill Marshall's seat on the United States Supreme Court. Thomas's confirmation hearings were bitter and intensely fought, centering on an accusation that he had sexually harassed — or engaged in unseemly behavior toward — attorney Anita Hill, a subordinate at the Department of Education and subsequently at the EEOC. The U.S. Senate ultimately confirmed Thomas by a vote of 52–48.

Since joining the Court, Thomas has taken a 'textualist' approach, seeking to uphold what he sees as the original meaning of the United States Constitution and statutes. On a court that included the late

Antonin Scalia, Thomas is generally viewed as its most conservative member. A strong supporter of the 2nd and 10th Amendments, Thomas has often approached federalism issues in a way that limits the power of the federal government and defends the rights of state and local governments. At the same time, Thomas' opinions have generally supported a strong executive branch within the federal government.

Thomas voted most frequently with Chief Justice Rehnquist and Justice Scalia in his early tenure on the Supreme Court. On average, from 1994 to 2004, Scalia and Thomas had an 87% voting alignment, the highest on the Court, followed by Ginsburg and Souter (86%). Scalia and Thomas's agreement rate peaked in 1996, at 98%. By 2004, with the Court becoming more and more Conservative other pairs of justices were observed to be more closely aligned than Scalia and Thomas. Still in 2006, Thomas voted with Scalia 91 percent and with Justice John Paul Stevens the least, 36% of the time.

As for Thomas, he is physically transformed from his infamous confirmation hearings, in 1991—a great deal grayer and heavier today, at the age of sixty-five. He also projects a different kind of silence than he did earlier in his tenure. In his first years on the Court, Thomas would rock forward, whisper comments about the lawyers to his neighbors Breyer and Kennedy, and generally look like he was acknowledging where he was. These days, Thomas only reclines; his leather chair is pitched so that he can stare at the ceiling, which he does at length. He strokes his chin. His eyelids look heavy. Every schoolteacher knows this look. It's called "not paying attention."

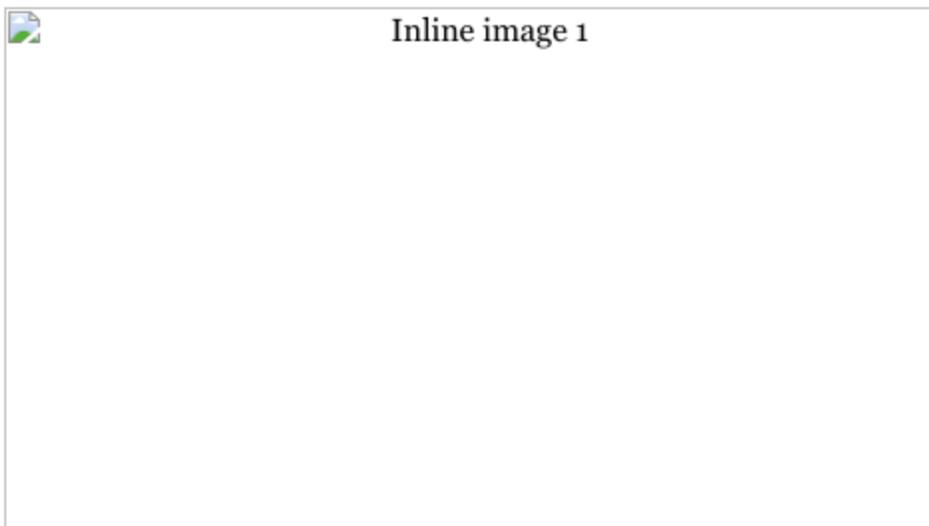
Thomas also had a nearly seven-year streak of not speaking at all in any context, finally breaking that silence on January 14, 2013, when he was understood to have joked that a law degree from Harvard may be proof of incompetence. He has given many reasons for his silence, including self-consciousness about how he speaks, a preference for listening to those arguing the case, and difficulty getting in a word. Thomas' speaking and listening habits may have also been influenced by his Gullah upbringing, during which time his English was relatively unpolished. In 2000, he told a group of high school students that "*if you wait long enough, someone will ask your question.*"

We can disagree about whether Thomas's performance makes him a good Justice or a bad one. But as his employers, we all can expect from him the best that he can give. A President appointed him, a Senate majority confirmed him, and he now plays a central role in our democracy. It seems both infuriating and sad that he would choose to play it less fully than he might. His silence may perhaps not fairly be called a disgrace; but each day it persisted represented a lost chance to serve his country and his Court. But worse grounds to criticize Thomas is that his opinions aren't influential, and that they show an often shocking disregard of a judge's duty to precedent — and sometimes, well, silly — see his faux-historical dissent in *Brown v Entertainment Merchants Association*.

I would have ended this piece here except that Clarence Thomas can speak and speak eloquently, as he did when he eulogized his friend Antonin Scalia, reading holy scripture from the letter of Saint Paul to the Romans on February 20, 2016 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C. And yes he has spoken at the Supreme Court since February. But my real criticism of Thomas is that in his he votes against common sense, and against the interests of the average citizen, how else can his Citizens United vote be defended? Again..... Whether or not you believe Thomas' ten-year silence is a "*disgrace*," you should concede that it has been a lost opportunity for all of us.

He Quotes Mussolini and Praises Putin

Yet the Media Makes Excuses for Him and His Supporters



Trump's racism and xenophobia violates America's core beliefs — yet the media and many Americans are okay with it.

The rise of Donald Trump to the presumptive Republican standard bearer for president in 2016 is an indictment of, and a profound danger to, the American republic. The Founding Fathers were afraid of the excitability of the voters and their vulnerability to the appeal of demagogues. That is the reason for a Senate (which was originally appointed), intended to check those notorious hotheads in Congress, who are elected from districts every two years. But it isn't only the checks and balances in government that are necessary to keep the republic. It is the **Fourth Estate**, i.e. the press, it is the country's leaders and it is the general public who stand between the republic and the rise of a Mussolini.

The notables have been shown to be useless. Donald Trump should have been kicked out of the Republican Party the moment he began talking about violating the Constitution. The first time he hinted about assaulting the journalists covering his rallies, he should have been shown the door. When he openly advocated torture ("*worse than waterboarding*"), he should have been ushered away. When he began speaking of closing houses of worship, he should have been expelled. He has solemnly pledged to violate the First, Fourth and Eighth Amendments of the Constitution, at the least. If someone's platform is unconstitutional, it boggles the mind that a major American party would put him or her up for president. How can he take the oath of office with a straight face? The party leaders were afraid he'd mount a third-party campaign. But who knows how that would have turned out? Someone with power needs to say that Trump is unacceptable and to define him out of respectable politics, the same way David Duke is treated (Trump routinely retweets Duke fellow-travellers).

Then there is the mass media. As Amy Goodman has pointed out, corporate television has routinely pumped Trump into our living rooms. They have virtually blacked out Bernie Sanders. Trump seems to have connived to have 10 or 15 minutes at 7:20 every evening on the magazine shows. Chris Matthews of Hardball obligingly cut away to Il Duce II's rants and gave away his show to him on a nightly basis.

Not long ago, extremely powerful television personalities and sportscasters were abruptly fired for saying things less offensive than Trump's bromides. Don Imus was history for abusive language toward women basketball players. But Trump's strident attack on Megyn Kelly as a menstruating harridan was just allowed to pass. Jimmy "the Greek" Snyder was fired by CBS for saying African-Americans were 'bred' to be better athletes. But Trump issued a blanket characterization of undocumented Mexican labor migrants as rapists, thieves and drug dealers. Of course this allegation is untrue.

As American academic, commentator and Professor of History at the University of Michigan Juan Cole wrote that he was appalled at the discourse on MSNBC during the coverage of the Nevada caucus and the South Carolina Primaries, when one reporter tried to assure us that Trump voters were not actually voting for racism and bullying politics, they were just upset. But polling in South Carolina demonstrated that Trump voters were significantly to the right of most Republicans on some issues. In South Carolina, 38 percent of Trump voters wished the South had won the Civil War, presumably suggesting that they regretted the end of slavery. Another MSNBC reporter helpfully explained that Trump voters feel that "*political correctness*" has gone too far. But what does Trump mean by "*political correctness*"? He means sexism and racism. So what is really being said is that Trump supporters resent that sexist and racist discourse and policies have been banned from the public sphere.

There is ample proof that Trump's use of "political correctness" identifies it with sexist and racist remarks and actions. Yet another asserted that "*some of*" Trump's positions "*are not that extreme.*" Exhibit A was his praise for Planned Parenthood. But he wants to outlaw abortion, i.e. overturn the current law of the land, which is extreme. (A majority of Americans support the right to choose, so he is in a minority).

And this discourse was on the liberal leaning MSNBC, not FOX or CNN. Chris Matthews explained to us that people hoped he would do something for the country rather than for the government. But Trump has made it very clear that he is not interested in a significant proportion of the people in the country. He is a white nationalist, and his message is that he will stand up for white Christian people against the Chinese, the Mexicans and the Muslims. Just as Adolph Hitler hoped for an alliance with Anglo-Saxon Britain on racial grounds (much preferring it to the less white Italy), the only foreign leader Trump likes is the "*white*" Vladimir Putin. That he won the evangelical vote again in Nevada is helpful for us in seeing that American evangelicalism itself is in some part a form of white male chauvinist nationalism and only secondarily about religion.

By the way, the idea that Trump won the Latino vote in Nevada is nonsense. In one of a number of fine interventions at MSNBC, Lawrence O'Donnell pointed out that something on the order of 1,800 Latinos voted in the Nevada GOP caucuses, of whom perhaps 800 voted for Trump, i.e. 44 percent of this tiny group. Trump lost the vote of even this small group of hard right Latinos, since 56 percent of them voted for someone else. There are 800,000 Latinos in the state of Nevada (pop. 2.8 million). In

2012, 70 percent of Latinos voted for Barack Obama, while Mitt Romney got 25 percent. My guess is that Trump can't and won't do nearly as well among them as Romney did.

We can expect that Trump's campaign might skew up his Latino numbers, but does he really need the help, acquiesced or ignorance of MSNBC. During this current silly season media coverage beyond the horse races, has receive dreadful coverage, as the press and by party leaders are speaking in such a way as to naturalize the creepy, weird and completely un-American positions Trump, Cruz and other have taken. This is how the dictators came to power in the 1920s and 1930s. Good people remained silent or acquiesced. People expressed hope that something good would come of it. Mussolini would wring the laziness out of Italy and make the trains run on time.

Recently television commentator and journalist Tavis Smiley, confronted his peers, arguing why the media must challenge Trump.

Web Link: 

I urge you to listen to Travis Smiley describe – that the media's job is not only to cover people and incidents but to explain and call accountable those who lie, mislead, distort and demonize, as well as those who say and promote offensive and racist policies. And when the media is only covering the horse race to generate ratings and sales and doesn't get to the truth of the matter and all that matters (to networks, pundits and journalist) that those being covered are rising in the polls – when they are appealing to the dark side of America, the media is not doing its job when they let Trump and others get away with that.

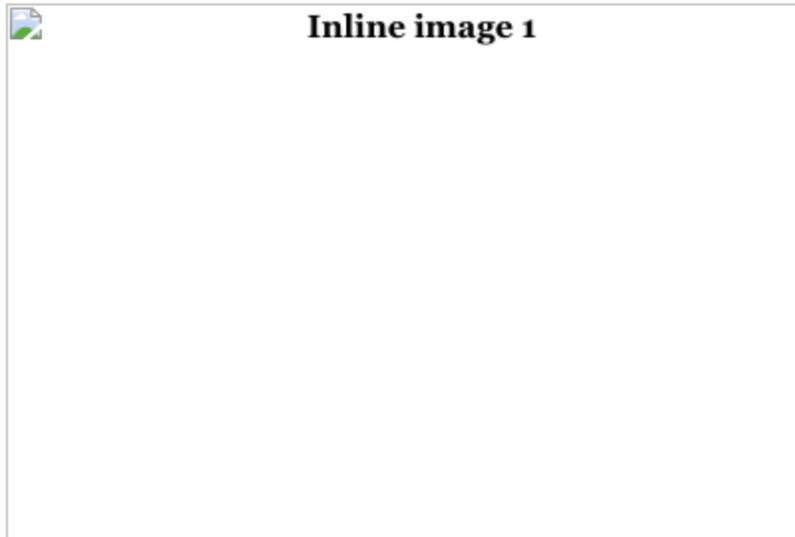
Smiley ends by quoting Dr. Martin Luther King.

- Cowardice asks if it is safe
- Expediency asks if it is politic
- Vanity asks if it is popular
- And Conscience asks is it right.

And every now and then we have to take a position that is neither popular, politic nor convenient. But we do it because our conscience tells us that it is right. If our conscience doesn't say to us, that this is not the right direction for America to demonize people – to appeal to racist elements, then something is wrong with America.... What kind of nation that we are going be? What kind of country we want to be? What kind of people do we want to be? Because those are the questions. When Benjamin Franklin was asked by a lady after the Constitutional Convention what sort of government the US had, he said, "*A Republic, Madame, if you can keep it.*" As Juan Cole (who inspired this piece) asked, "*You have to wonder if we can keep it.*"

WHY?

The Gun Industry's Plan To Make It Easier To Buy A Silencer



I was in totally disbelief when I read that the U.S. gun industry is lobbying to legalize silencers for hunting by rebranding them as hearing-protection devices in an endeavor to roll back regulations in more than a dozen states that date to the 1930s. Gun advocates are now pressing Congress to repeal a Depression-era law that requires a months-long screening process for silencer buyers – far more scrutiny than gun buyer's face. Sales of silencers - or "*suppressors*," as the industry prefers to call them – are booming. The number of silencers registered with the U.S. government more than doubled to 792,282 in February 2015 from 360,534 in March 2012, according to the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

Despite their name, silencers can only quiet a gunshot to the level of a jackhammer – not much use for James Bond-style hit jobs. Silencers are rarely used in crimes, according to a 10-year study published in 2007 by the Western Criminology Review. Researchers estimated silencers were involved in 30 to 40 of the 75,000 federal criminal cases filed each year. The study found only two federal cases involving a silencer used in murders. Penalties for misuse are steep. People found guilty of using a silencer in a violent crime under federal law face a minimum of 30 years in prison.

Arizona Republican Representative Matt Salmon said silencers could allow soldiers and hunters to avoid the kind of hearing damage that has forced him to wear a hearing aid after 50 years of shooting guns. "*If we have something that mitigates that kind of hearing loss, we ought to be encouraging it*," Salmon said. In October, he introduced legislation that would replace the silencer screening process with a simpler background check. The lobbying push alarms some legislators and game wardens who believe quieter guns could make it harder to catch criminals and poachers. "*What legitimate reason does a person have to be wandering around the streets of a big city with a silencer?*" said Joe Mullery, a Democrat who represents a high-crime Minneapolis district in the Minnesota state legislature.

In Augusta, Maine, police chief Robert Gregoire said silencer-equipped gunshots may sound further away than a typical gunshot, making it hard to track hunters in unauthorized areas. Also, he now

cannot block silencer sales for residents he suspects may not use them responsibly. A hunter himself, Gregoire said he saw little reason to encourage silencer use. "I don't think they're necessary for home protection and I don't think they're necessary for hunting," he said

Silencers have been tightly regulated since 1934, when Congress restricted access to machine guns, sawed-off shotguns and other weapons used by gangs. Those wishing to buy a silencer must pay a \$200 fee - the equivalent of \$3,500 at the time the law was passed - submit fingerprints and a photograph, and secure the approval of their local police chief. Approval by ATF typically takes four to nine months. Despite these hurdles, silencers have grown in popularity. Inflation has eroded the price of a permit. And a new generation of manufacturers has developed lighter and more affordable products. Prices range from about \$200 to nearly \$2,000.

Despite their new popularity, silencers don't appear to be turning up much on the streets. Police in Philadelphia and Richmond, Virginia, two high-crime cities in the eastern U.S., haven't encountered silencers at crime scenes or during investigations, according to spokespeople for the departments. Silencers were used by a former Los Angeles police officer in a 2013 killing spree, according to the Police Foundation - one reason the law-enforcement research group wants to keep restrictions in place. Industry officials point out that silencer-equipped handguns are difficult to conceal, reducing their appeal for criminals. That could change: one manufacturer, SilencerCo, is developing a handgun with built-in noise reduction that it sees as a future mainstay of the industry.

'Silencers' Are Hardly Silent

On a recent Saturday at the National Rifle Association's headquarters outside Washington, D.C., Knox Williams screwed a black canister on the end of a Remington hunting rifle and sighted a target 60 feet (18 meters) away. When he pulled the trigger, the resulting crack was still loud enough to require all those nearby to wear ear protection. But it lacked the chest-thumping force of a conventional shot. As head of the American Suppressor Association, an industry lobbying group, Williams spends much of his time demonstrating that silencers aren't silent. They can help muffle the sound of a bullet leaving the barrel of a gun, but they can't do anything about the "crack" of a bullet breaking the sound barrier. "These things aren't what gun control advocates think they are," he said.

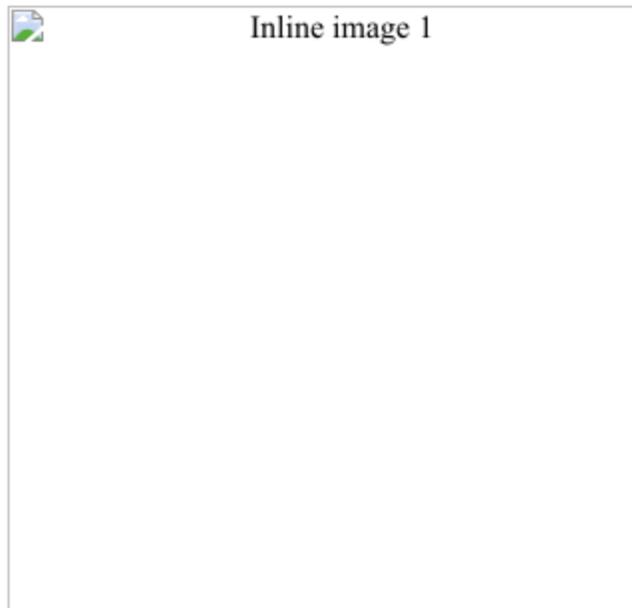
His group, founded in 2011, has helped to persuade 16 states to legalize hunting with silencers and 13 states to pass laws preventing local police chiefs from blocking silencer applications. He's now targeting 12 states that either outlaw silencer ownership entirely or prohibit it for hunting. Many silencer-friendly laws have passed by wide margins, sometimes over the objections of law enforcement officials. In Congress, Salmon's Hearing Protection Act has attracted 51 co-sponsors and support by the NRA and other industry groups. But it's unclear whether it will advance. Salmon has announced he will retire at the end of the year, and Congress is unlikely to pass controversial legislation ahead of November general elections.

One new rule change hasn't gone the industry's way. In July, the Obama administration will make it more difficult to buy silencers through a legal trust, a method of purchase that allowed one person to share the device. The rules will require people listed on the trust to submit fingerprints and photographs. That has only goosed sales further. The Silencer Shop, an online retailer, says it is now selling 6,000 units per month, double its usual figure. Again, what legitimate reason does a person

have to be wandering around the streets of a big city with a silencer?... **and this is my rant of the week....**

WEEK'S READINGS

Strong Link Found Between Dementia, Common Anticholinergic Drugs



The link was found in a wide range of anticholinergics, from tricyclic antidepressants like doxepin (Sinequan), to first-generation antihistamines like chlorpheniramine (Chlor-Trimeton), Benadryl, and antimuscarinics for bladder control like oxybutynin (Ditropan).

There is a strong and possibly irreversible link between Alzheimer's disease and many commonly used medications for insomnia, allergies, and depression, according to a large recent JAMA Internal Medicine study. Three years of taking either daily Benadryl, Advil PM, Tylenol PM, or Motrin PM, for example, is associated with about a ten percentage point increase in the probability of experiencing dementia or Alzheimer's compared to no use. This risk association is "*significant*," Malaz Boustani, M.D., M.P.H., told Drug Discovery & Development ("DD&D").

The new study

Many groups have suggested such links. But for the current study, the team of senior author Eric Larson, M.D., M.P.H., of the University of Washington (UW), engaged in longer follow up (over seven

years), and utilized a tighter assessment of use. The study followed some 3,500 Group Health participants, average age 73, with the Adult Changes in Thought (ACT) study, which is a Group Health/UW project funded by the National Institute on Aging.

The group showed for the first time a dose response; that is, that Alzheimer's risk may grow with higher use. For instance, it found people taking a minimum of 25 mg of an anticholinergic called diphenhydramine (or one Advil PM, Tylenol PM, Motrin PM, or Benadryl pill) a day for three to 12 months increased their relative risk for dementia by 19 percent; one to three years, 23 percent; three to seven years, 54 percent compared to no use (if the statistically significant increase occurred among the latter group).

Furthermore, this was the first study to find that dementias associated with anticholinergics may not be reversible even years after drug use stops. Wrote Boustani and the Indiana University Center for Aging Research's Noll Campbell, Pharm.D. in a JAMA editorial: "The risk for dementia was consistent when comparing participants with recent and past heavy use of such medications with nonusers, suggesting that the adverse cognitive effects are permanent. Other studies have consistently shown similar results."

Alternatives

Lead author Shelly Gray, who is director of the geriatric pharmacy program at the UW School of Pharmacy, found the link in a wide range of anticholinergics, from tricyclic antidepressants like doxepin (Sinequan), to above-mentioned "PM" products with diphenhydramine, to first-generation antihistamines like chlorpheniramine (Chlor-Trimeton) and Benadryl, and antimuscarinics for bladder control like oxybutynin (Ditropan). The team came to the conclusion, for example, that people taking at least 10 mg/day of doxepin, 4 mg/day of chlorpheniramine, or 5 mg/day of oxybutynin for more than three years are at greater risk for developing dementia.

Gray herself was surprised by the findings. "There was one prior study that examined this study question, but we thought we might not find these medications were related to dementia because we had a better study design, and were able to better adjust for some health conditions that might be confounders through use of statistical methods," she told DD&D. "We know that anticholinergics are related to impaired cognition acutely when people take these medicines. They feel a little groggy, less attentive, etc. But these are reversible changes. This study suggests these medicines are also related to dementia, or irreversible cognitive changes."

Substitutes are available for some of the problems addressed by anticholinergics. Those suffering from depression can take a selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitor (SSRI) like citalopram (*Celexa*) or fluoxetine (*Prozac*). Those with allergies can take a second-generation antihistamine like loratadine (*Claritin*). Behavioral changes can help urinary incontinence.

Boustani, who is also a professor of medicine at Indiana University, told DD&D that, when it comes to insomnia medications, "basically any cold medications that make you sleepy might contain

anticholinergics, so stay away from drugs that make you sleepy.” NyQuil is an exception, he said. It makes people sleepy, but does not contain an anti-cholinergic. Still, “if your solution for a sleep problem is a pill, a quick fix, do you want that?” Any drug taken for a long time could come with problems. “I tell people, if they have to take any such drug for more than 30 days, they should think about alternatives. Maybe you should just take it easy. Maybe you should adopt Grandma’s Remedy of hot milk, hot tea, and rest. Physical fitness is always good. Mindfulness, reflection, physical fitness, tea.”

The cause

The cause of this potential link is unknown. Anticholinergics can block the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. “But there are many hypotheses” as to why anticholinergics can lead to Alzheimer’s, Boustani told DD&D. “The current medication for Alzheimer’s, Aricept, does the opposite of what Benadryl does, for example. We think that same pathway is involved. So anticholinergics may reduce the function of acetyl receptors, and may end up killing the brain cells.”

Gray told DD&D she agreed that “we do not yet know the mechanism by which anticholinergics may increase risk for dementia. It is possible that long term use of these medications leads to changes in the brain similar to those seen with Alzheimer’s disease, such as neuritic plaques and neurofibrillary tangles. In animal models, procedures that blocked transmission through these kinds of pathways increased the concentration of beta-amyloid, a main ingredient in the plaques found in the brains of patients with Alzheimer’s disease.”

Nothing is likely to be fully nailed down anytime soon as it would be unethical to do a gold standard clinical trial. Clinical trials can be done to prove benefit. But to prove a deficit would mean doctors would have to assign patients to take say, Advil PM, every night for three years to assess damage.

The recent trial also did not factor in two other classes of common drugs tapped by the American Geriatrics Society as associated with cognitive problems: benzodiazapines (recently found to hamper rodent neurogenesis) and histamine receptor antagonists.

But even given these limitations, this trial, with its seven years of data, was “very, very good,” Boustani said. Via computerized dispensing, doses and uses were well established. Potential confounding variables—like people taking anticholinergics for depression or insomnia precisely because they were in the grips of an undiagnosed dementia already — were weeded out.

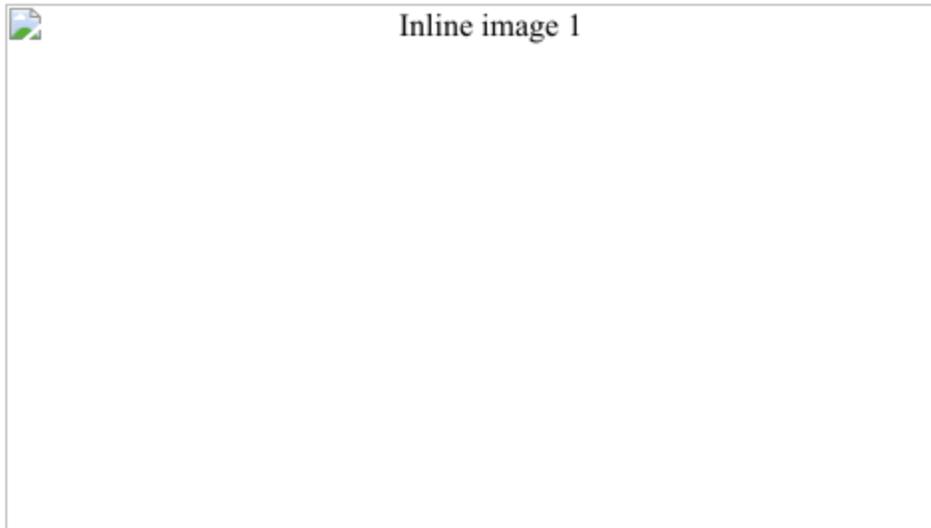
Boustani’s crew is working on a mobile application to help people figure out what drugs to avoid. In the meantime, he directs clinicians and patients to a chart by the Aging Brain Care website that lists drugs containing anticholinergics.

Gray’s group is in the process of “examining whether these medications are related to changes in the brain of a subsample of this study cohort that has been autopsied after death,” she told DD&D. “We

will be examining whether those who used anticholinergics had higher plaques, tangles and other markers of cerebrovascular disease than those who did not use these medications.”

Cynthia Fox – Drug Discovery & Development – 04/30/2015

MATTHEWS: Let me finish tonight with the problem facing Republicans. It`s called Donald Trump.



You went along with him when he trashed the president as an illegal alien, when Trump again and again accused Barack Obama of being born outside the country, of being because of that, being an illegitimate holder of his office.

Well, the monstrosity of that indictment needed to be felt and understood by the Republican big shots back when they had a chance to do something about it. Did they truly believe Trump`s birther charge, do they think the president`s mother had slipped over to Kenya, had her son, named him Barack Hussein Obama and then whisked him back stateside to get him prepped for the country`s highest office? Did they really believe the birth certificate and the birth announcements in the Honolulu newspapers were a fraudulent caper meant to get her son, her infant son to get all cleaned up to be president? Did they?

And if they didn't, why didn't they say so? Why did the top Republican in the country, the speaker of the House John Boehner, when asked about members of his caucus who had taken up the birther cause, fob off the question by saying it wasn't his job to tell people what to think?

And why didn't the party leadership draw the line when Trump did the same birther number on Senator Ted Cruz or when he tested the same power of suggestion on Marco Rubio? Well, now, they've

got him. They've got a likely nominee for president who if he gets sworn in next January will have ridden a cart to the U.S. capital with a man he had dismissed as an illegal immigrant, that`s if Trump gets that far.

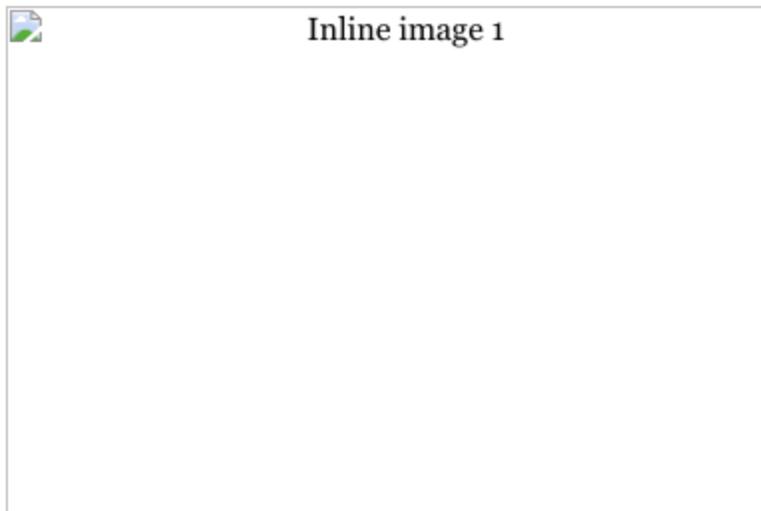
Long before then, the party needs to ask itself something more basic, yes, more basic, than who it wants as our next president. Has it no decency?

And that`s HARDBALL for now. Thanks for being with us.

Hardball with Chris Matthews – Let Me Finish – Transcript 3/2/2016

Should You Let Your Rechargeable Batteries Drain Completely Before Recharging Them?

Or is that an outdated practice?



It seems like there`s always contradictory tech advice going around: always let your batteries drain completely before recharging them so they`ll last longer, plug your batteries in when they`re between 25 and 75 percent full for maximum battery life, plug your batteries in whenever you feel like it.

How can you know which advice is best?

It turns out that the third suggestion is the most accurate; it really doesn't make a difference when you decide to recharge your batteries. So how did the rumors start?

It used to be that most rechargeable batteries were nicad (nickel cadmium) and nickel-metal hydride where a *“build-up of crystals on the electrodes in the battery, leaving less room for the chemical reactions to take place there during charging”* could cause your batteries to charge to a lesser and lesser extent, especially if you recharged them before they were fully drained, according to an ABC News article.

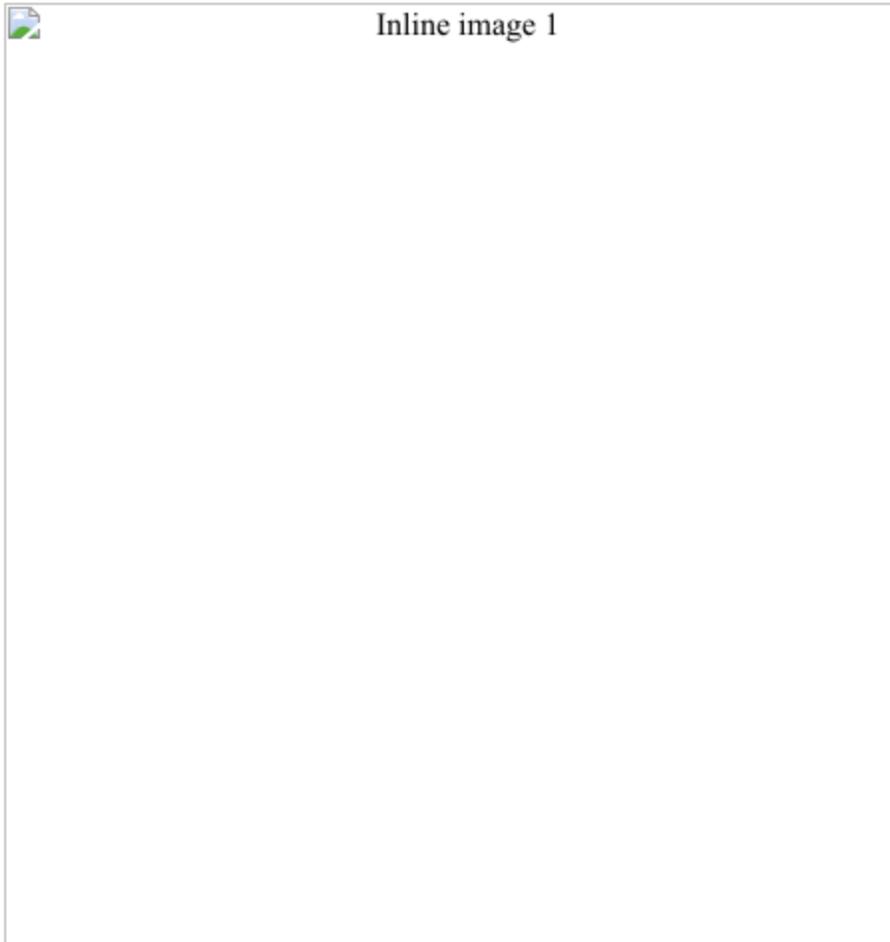
However, this isn't a problem for the lithium ion batteries found in your computer and smartphone these days. In fact, letting your battery drain completely would destroy it. Don't worry though; your devices have a safety mechanism that stops that from happening.

How does your rechargeable battery work? A chemical reaction happens inside it, which causes positively charged ions to travel through your battery and negatively charged electrons to travel through your device. When you plug it in to recharge it, the energy provided makes these chemical reactions happen in reverse so that your battery can start over again.

However, lithium batteries aren't perfect. Some of the positive ions don't get sent back to the negative electrode when the battery is recharged so it holds less and less of a charge over time. Furthermore, as the battery ages, the lithium particles clump together which means that there is less surface area for the chemical reaction to happen as the battery is being used.

Every once in a while, it could be worth letting your battery go down to what it calls zero percent, simply to recalibrate the battery reading level — it has nothing to do with the battery's actual life. When your batteries do eventually die, make sure to dispose of them responsibly at a recycling facility.

Elizabeth Knowles – The Science Explorer – February 17, 2016



This stunning visualization breaks down some of the ingredients in your favorite processed foods.

Web Link: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

Scary sounding ingredients. Although experts for the process food industry say that there is no scientifically proven benefit to eating organic and that it is all in your mind, few if any of these types of ingredients have little if any nutritional benefits. Obviously these kinds of ingredients make it possible for food manufacturers to produce tasty foods at low prices, that attract people who cannot afford to eat organic or to cook from scratch as, and no-one can deny it. Still, the abundance of sugar and salt, as well as sketchy ingredients should be of serious concern to people trying to eat healthy.

THIS WEEK'S QUOTE

I've Learned That.....

I've learned that I like my teacher because she cries when we sing "Silent Night". Age 5

I've learned that our dog doesn't want to eat my broccoli either. Age 7

I've learned that when I wave to people in the country, they stop what they are doing and wave back. Age 9

I've learned that just when I get my room the way I like it, Mom makes me clean it up again. Age 12

I've learned that if you want to cheer yourself up, you should try cheering someone else up. Age 14

I've learned that although it's hard to admit it, I'm secretly glad my parents are strict with me. Age 15

I've learned that silent company is often more healing than words of advice. Age 24

I've learned that brushing my child's hair is one of life's great pleasures. Age 26

I've learned that wherever I go, the world's worst drivers have followed me there. Age 29

I've learned that if someone says something unkind about me, I must live so that no one will believe it. Age 30

I've learned that there are people who love you dearly but just don't know how to show it. Age 42

I've learned that you can make someone's day by simply sending them a little note. Age 44

I've learned that the greater a person's sense of guilt, the greater his or her need to cast blame on others. Age 46

I've learned that children and grandparents are natural allies. Age 47

I've learned that no matter what happens, or how bad it seems today, life does go on and it will be better tomorrow. Age 48

I've learned that singing "Amazing Grace" can lift my spirits for hours. Age 49

I've learned that motel mattresses are better on the side away from the phone. Age 50

I've learned that you can tell a lot about a man (or woman) by the way he handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage and tangled Christmas tree lights. Age 51

I've learned that keeping a vegetable garden is worth a medicine cabinet full of pills. Age 52

I've learned that regardless of your relationship with your parents, you miss them terribly after they die. Age 53

I've learned that making a living is not the same thing as making a life. Age 58

I've learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance. Age 62

I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands. You need to be able to throw something back. Age 64

I've learned that if you pursue happiness, it will elude you. But if you focus on your family, the needs of others, your

work, meeting new people, and doing the very best you can, happiness will find you. Age 65

I've learned that whenever I decide something with kindness, I usually make the right decision. Age 66

I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one. Age 82

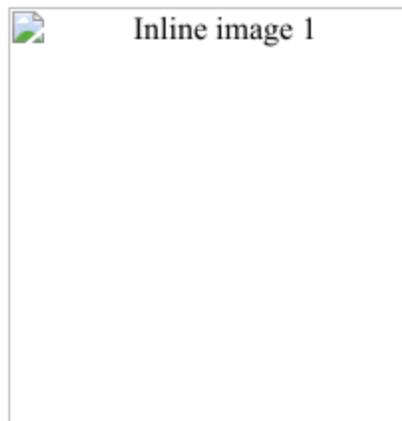
I've learned that every day you should reach out and touch someone. People love that human touch - holding hands, a warm hug, or just a friendly pat on the back. Age 90

*I've learned that I **still** have a lot to learn.* Age 92, and beyond...

I've learned that you should pass this on to someone you care about. Sometimes they just need a little something to make them smile. Hope it will anyway.

THIS IS BRILLIANT

Apple Pickin' Time



Can you get 50% in the pail ?

THIS ONE WILL DRIVE YOU NUTS!!

Let's go, it's Apple pickin' time!

This will keep you busy for a while....

CLICK HERE

Web Link: <http://www.ferryhalim.com/orisinal/g2/applegame.htm>

THINK ABOUT THIS

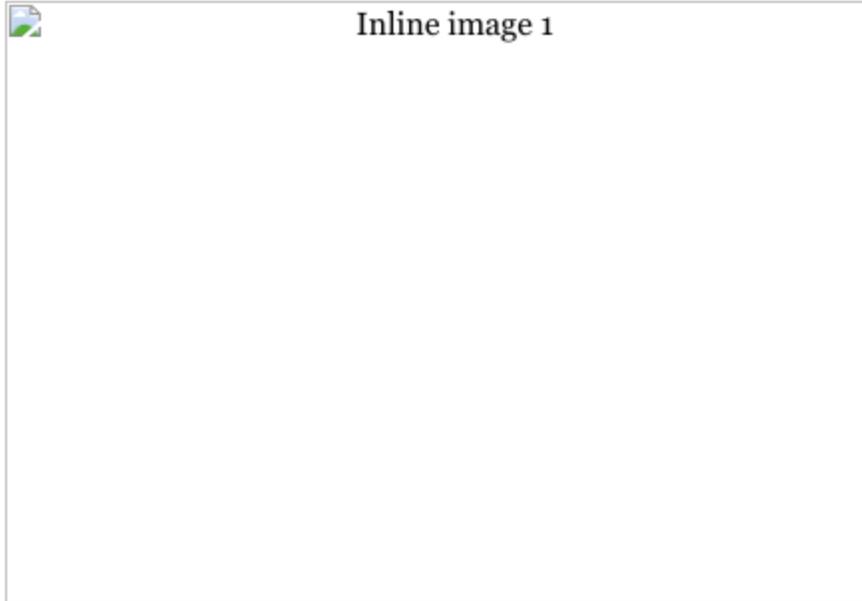
Child Poverty Rates in Industrialized Counties



BEST VIDEO OF THE WEEK

Love Songs for God

Andrae Sanders

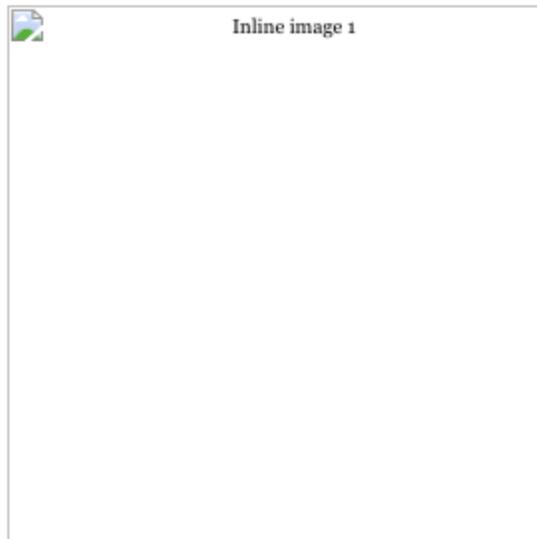


Web Link: [REDACTED]

Whether or not you are religious.... I promise that you will enjoy...

THIS WEEK'S MUSIC

Toots Thielemans



This week you are invited to enjoy the music of master harmonica player and guitarist **Jean-Baptiste "Toots" Thielemans**, born in Brussels on April 29, 1922 who was also made a **Baron** by the King of Belgium in 2001, just a few days past 80.

His first instrument was the accordion. Then, in an ornate movie palace (still standing, though no longer a cinema) on the same street, Thielemans first heard the harmonica on a film soundtrack. His early inspiration on the guitar, in the early 1940s, was Django Reinhardt. As for his singular technique of whistling an octave above his guitar, it's said that comes from *Slam Stewart* (1914-87), the humming virtuoso bassist.

Toots Thielemans did it all — the guitar, the whistling, the harmonica. (He struggled with asthma to do so.) Now, he sticks to the instrument he can carry in his pocket. As he said from the stage in English, "I try to sing almost bel canto with this toothbrush!"

Thielemans started his career as a guitar player. In 1949 he joined a jam session in Paris with Sidney Bechet, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, Max Roach and others. In 1949 and 1950 he participated in European tours with Benny Goodman, making his first record in Stockholm with fellow band member, tenor saxophonist Zoot Sims. In 1951 he became a band member of the singer-songwriter and compatriot Bobbejaan Schoepen. (At the time, he was still performing strictly as a guitarist.)

He moved to the US in 1952 where he was a member of Charlie Parker's All-Stars and worked with Miles Davis and Dinah Washington. From 1952 to 1959 he was a member of the George Shearing Quintet, primarily playing guitar but also being featured on harmonica both in performances and on recordings. He has also played and recorded with Ella Fitzgerald, Jaco Pastorius, Stephane Grappelli, Édith Piaf, J.J. Johnson, Michael Franks, Peggy Lee, John Williams, Quincy Jones, Oscar Peterson, Bill Evans, Paul Simon, Billy Joel, The Happenings, Astrud Gilberto, Shirley Horn, Elis Regina, Joe Pass, and others.

From the early 1950s, Thielemans lived and worked in the U.S., where he became a citizen in 1957. Two early thrills were jamming with Miles Davis in Paris in 1949 and — a few years later — working a week in Philadelphia in the Charlie Parker All Stars, again with Davis. (Toots recalled in a recent article in *Le Vif* that Parker protected him from Davis. But when Davis remarked that Toots was Caucasian, Toots himself responded, no, "I come from Belgium.")

Four of Toots' first five tunes were recorded by Miles Davis in a short span: "*On Green Dolphin Street*" (1958), "*All Blues*" (early 1959), "*I Loves You, Porgy*" and "*Summertime*" (both 1958, for *Porgy and Bess*). "*Days of Wine and Roses*" was the other number. A jazz standard by Toots Thielemans is "*Bluesette*," where he used whistling and guitar in unison. First recorded by him in 1962, with lyrics added by Norman Gimbel, the song became a major worldwide hit. He worked both as a bandleader and as a sideman, notably on many projects with composer/arranger Quincy Jones. He has performed on many film soundtracks, such as *Midnight Cowboy*, *Cinderella Liberty*, *Jean de Florette*, *The Sugarland Express*, *The Yakuza*, *Turkish Delight*, the 1972 version of *The Getaway*, *French Kiss*, *Dunderklumpen!*, and in various TV programs, including *Sesame Street*, whose closing credits (which did not list him accordingly) featured his performance, on harmonica, of the show's theme, the Belgian TV series *Witse*, and the Dutch TV series *Baantjer*. He composed the music for the 1974 Swedish film *Dunderklumpen!*, in which he also provided the voice of the animated character *Pellegnillot*. His

whistling and harmonica playing can be heard on *Old Spice* radio and TV commercials that have been made over the years.

During the 1980s he performed with bassist and composer/bandleader Jaco Pastorius in ensembles ranging from duet to the Word of Mouth Big Band. In 1983 he contributed to Billy Joel's album *An Innocent Man*, and his trademark harmonica can be heard on "*Leave A Tender Moment Alone*." (The two later collaborated on this selection in concert, and this was recorded on video.) A year later, he appeared on the Julian Lennon song "*Too Late for Goodbyes*" from the album *Valotte*. In 1984, he recorded the final album of Billy Eckstine (*I Am a Singer*), featuring ballads and standards arranged and conducted by Angelo DiPippo. In the 1990s, Thielemans embarked on theme projects that included world music. In 1998 he released a French-flavoured album titled "*Chez Toots*" that included the *Les moulins de mon cœur* (*The Windmills of Your Mind*) featuring guest singer Johnny Mathis.

Apart from his popularity as an accomplished musician, he is well liked for his modesty and kind demeanor. In his native Belgium, he is also popular for describing himself as a Brussels "*ket*," which means "*street kid*" in old Brussels slang. He received a joint honorary doctorate from the **Université libre de Bruxelles** and the **Vrije Universiteit** Brussel, Belgium, and in 2001, Thielemans was ennobled a baron by King Albert II of Belgium. In 2005 he was nominated for the title of the Greatest Belgian. In the Flemish version he finished in 20th place, and in the Walloon version he came 44th. In 2009, he became an **NEA Jazz Master**, the highest honor for a jazz musician in the United States.

On 23 January 2009, he joined Philip Catherine on stage at the Liberchies church (Belgium) in memory of the 100th anniversary of Django Reinhardt's birth. In 2012, the Jazz at Lincoln Center concerts in New York celebrated his 90th birthday with Herbie Hancock, Eliane Elias, Kenny Werner, Marc Johnson, Oscar Castro-Neves, and Dori Caymmi. He performed for the occasion and left the stage standing among his friends. Because of health issues, Thielemans announced his retirement on 12 March 2014, cancelling all scheduled concerts. ***With this you are again invited to enjoy one of the greatest harmonica players ever Baron Toots Thielemans....***

Toots Thielemans – ***Velas*** -- <https://youtu.be/wmkuwVb6Ysw>

Toots Thielemans – ***Days of Wine and Roses*** -- https://youtu.be/qPCyQK0a_T8

Toots Thielemans – ***Midnight Cowboy*** -- <https://youtu.be/Eu0hO3BpFpg>

Toots Thielemans – ***Imagine*** -- <https://youtu.be/8UpQSKsxhCc>

Toots Thielemans – ***Smile*** -- https://youtu.be/MBcgc31s_m8

Toots Thielemans – ***I Loves You Porgy & Summertime*** -- <https://youtu.be/uS0RH-P2Uic>

Toots Thielemans – ***Hard To Say Goodbye*** -- <https://youtu.be/ihy6w1wq3Xo>

Toots Thielemans – ***The Shadow of Your Smile*** -- https://youtu.be/SsQSAq_nC40

Toots Thielemans – ***Meditation & Submarine For Sale*** -- <https://youtu.be/t84G688kVR4>

Toots Thielemans & Trijntje Oosterhuis – ***What a Wonderful World*** -- https://youtu.be/Prxevl_neFY

Quincy Jones & Toots Thielemans – **Eyes Of Love** -- <https://youtu.be/IA36Anlf1bw>
Toots Thielemans & Stevie Wonder – **Bluesette** -- https://youtu.be/Uzln9jXrX_g
Toots Thielemans & Eliane Elias – **Moments** -- <https://youtu.be/YpHmWXCwREQ>
Bill Evans & Toots Thielemans – **Jesus' Last Ballad** -- <https://youtu.be/ToND0PqRrPE>
Toots Thielemans & Milton Nascimento – **Fruta Boa** -- <https://youtu.be/4zou8ifjUL0>
Jaco Pastorius & Toots Thielemans – **Sophisticated Lady** -- https://youtu.be/___WTZNkU06A
Jaco Pastorius & Toots Thielemans – **plays Ellington** -- <https://youtu.be/3Exfgv2pzGg>
Jaco Pastorius & Toots Thielemans – **Three Views Of A Secret** -- <https://youtu.be/yBhoDaS5SKQ>
and <https://youtu.be/O6VehyiTOTI>
Pat Metheny and Toots Thielemans – **Back In Time** -- <https://youtu.be/dzYLLetk6-I>
Peggy Lee & Toots Thielemans – **Makin'Whoopee** -- <https://youtu.be/O1Ypdsam6wE>
Quincy Jones & Toots Thielemans – **Velas** -- <https://youtu.be/Qvc077Z4YyU>
Quincy Jones featuring Toots Thielemans & Patti Austin – **Setembro** -- <https://youtu.be/I968O-ZzWOo>

BONUS

Rachelle Ferrell & George Benson, Toots Thielemans – **Everything Must Change** -- <https://youtu.be/E1S7IMOZfXI>

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

Sincerely,

Greg Brown

--

Gregory Brown
Chairman & CEO
GlobalCast Partners, LLC

US: [REDACTED]
Tel: [REDACTED]
Fax: [REDACTED]
Skype: [REDACTED]