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**Subject:** Greg Brown's Weekend Reading and Other Things... 1/03/2016

**Date:** Sun, 03 Jan 2016 18:48:03 +0000

**Attachments:** Natalie\_Cole\_bio.docx

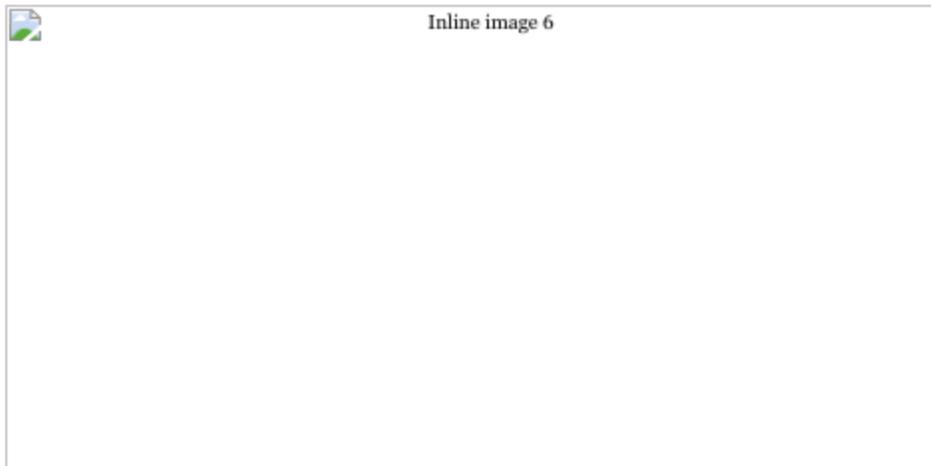
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**DEAR FRIEND.....**

## Policing the Police

Here's What Happens When You Complain To Cops About Cops



**The internal affairs division usually decides the officer did nothing wrong.**

If you Google Internal Affairs, Police, Police Reform, St. Louis County Police, Police Misconduct, Police Abuse, Police Accountability, Police Brutality, Ferguson, as well as Freddie Gray, Tamir Rice and Sandra Bland (who was pulled over by a Texas trooper on July 10, reportedly after failing to signal a lane change. The trooper and arrested on a charge of assaulting an officer who claimed that she kicked him) and was one of the five black women (**Raynette Turner, Joyce Curnell, Ralkina Jones, Kindra Chapman and Sandra Bland**), who died in police custody in just the month of July, it is

easy to conclude that for some reason that both black men and women are being targeted and arrested at will. And if you then delve a little further you will find that in almost every case the police officers involved were totally exonerated by their departments or police review boards. But had can this be when we have seen as a result of numerous videos taken by people standing by, the police accounts often significantly differ from what can be seen in the videos?

As an example, let's look at the case of journalist Ryan Reilly who inside a McDonald's in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson on Aug. 13, 2014, was forcefully arrested, his head slammed against a door as he was being escorted by a St. Louis police officer out of the restaurant (and sarcastically apologized for it), when he repeatedly requested his name or badge number. His arrest, and that of The Washington Post's Wesley Lowery at the same time, dramatically increased attention on the flawed and unconstitutional tactics used by police in Ferguson following the death of 18-year-old Michael Brown. Seeing this being played over and over then-Attorney General Eric Holder said journalists shouldn't be "harassed" while covering a story, and President Barack Obama said police "should not be bullying or arresting journalists."

Not naïve, he knew police officers are rarely punished. And what happened to him hardly compared to the abuses he and other journalist witnessed inflicted upon people who didn't have the benefit of a national media platform, he thought, the St. Louis County Police Department would take such high-profile misconduct seriously. So with that in mind, and at the suggestion of a St. Louis County Police Department spokesman, he filed a complaint with the department's internal affairs office about a week after my arrest.

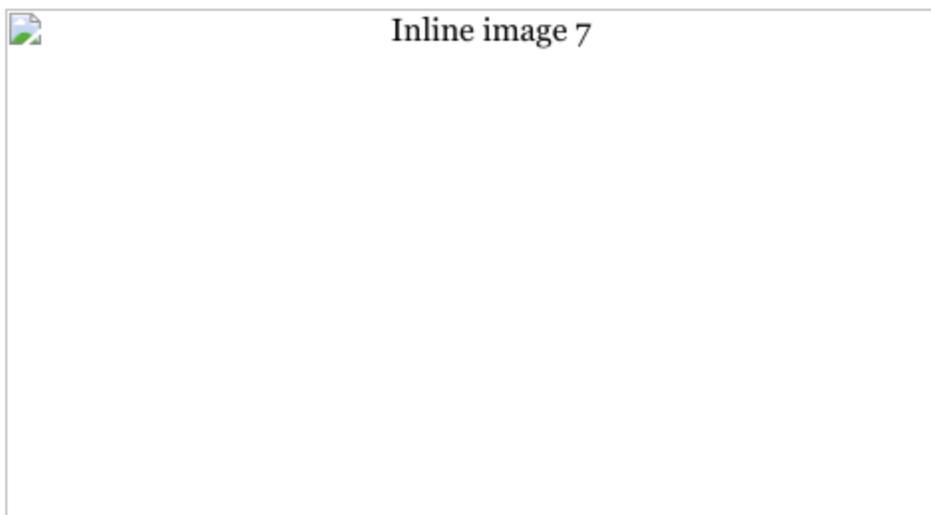
Going to internal affairs, otherwise known as the Bureau of Professional Standards, seemed like the logical step. I was most interested in the name of the officer who arrested me and an apology, both of which I anticipated receiving within 90 days, the time frame in which St. Louis County aims to process citizen complaints. And now, more than a year later both he and Wesley are still facing charges. Like other Americans who file complaints with internal affairs departments, he found there are no national or state standards governing the internal affairs process, little transparency about what happens when a citizen files a complaint, and lots of uncertainty about the outcome. Complaint procedures can seem - - and often explicitly are -- designed to protect cops rather than fairly adjudicate citizen complaints. Most people who go through the process don't get an apology, let alone accountability. And in some places -- including St. Louis County, where I was arrested -- citizens' faith in police is so damaged that many don't bother filing complaints in the first place.

The roughly 18,000 state and local law enforcement agencies operating across the United States employ more than 1.1 million people, the vast majority of whom are sworn officers. Most of those agencies have some process allowing citizens to file complaints against those officers. But "*there's really no good research on internal affairs units, which is amazing,*" said Samuel Walker, a nationally recognized expert on policing who has worked with departments across the country. "*Do they report directly to the chief? How are they selected? How many investigators do they have, given the size of the department? There's a really critical void in our understanding of what they do, what kinds of training they get.*"

As one critic of the police review system described, the country is in a "*total fog of ignorance*" when it comes to how internal affairs divisions work, Walker said, and that adds to the "*deep distrust*" that some people have in the police. "*They see officers they know have engaged in excessive force and so on, and they see them still on the force and not disciplined.*" There's a lot of variation in how

departments around the U.S. handle complaints. *"From the agencies I've worked with, I've never seen any two that look very much alike,"* said George Fachner, a research scientist at the CNA Corporation who has studied police policies on use of force and misconduct. *"There's really no general practice, other than the fact that agencies tend to have an internal affairs unit and they tend to investigate officers for misconduct. Once you get past that, you're going in a lot of different directions."*

In New York City, which has some 34,500 uniformed officers, the independent Civilian Complaint Review Board issues monthly reports on how many complaints it receives, how long the investigations take, and what percentage are found credible. In small police departments with only a handful of officers, police chiefs investigate and decide whether punishment is appropriate. Some police departments have internal affairs divisions that work alongside civilian review boards, others have civilian review boards that serve as a check on the activity of the internal affairs division, and still others have oversight groups that operate independently of the police. Some civilian review systems use civilian volunteers; others have full-time professionals.



Even basic statistics on the number of complaints against police are hard to come by. A federal survey found that just 8 percent of the use-of-force complaints received by large state and local law enforcement agencies in 2002 were deemed credible -- they were *"sustained,"* in cop lingo. Most experts who have studied internal affairs think that rate is much lower than it would be if the process weren't in many ways designed to protect officers. *"It's a horrible, horrible situation we've got ourselves in, where it's always the police officer who is telling the truth -- because we know that isn't true,"* said Geoffrey Alpert, a University of South Carolina professor who co-wrote a book on police accountability systems with Jeff Noble, a former deputy police chief. *"So many of these things we've seen on video lately ... you read the report and that's not what the video shows."*

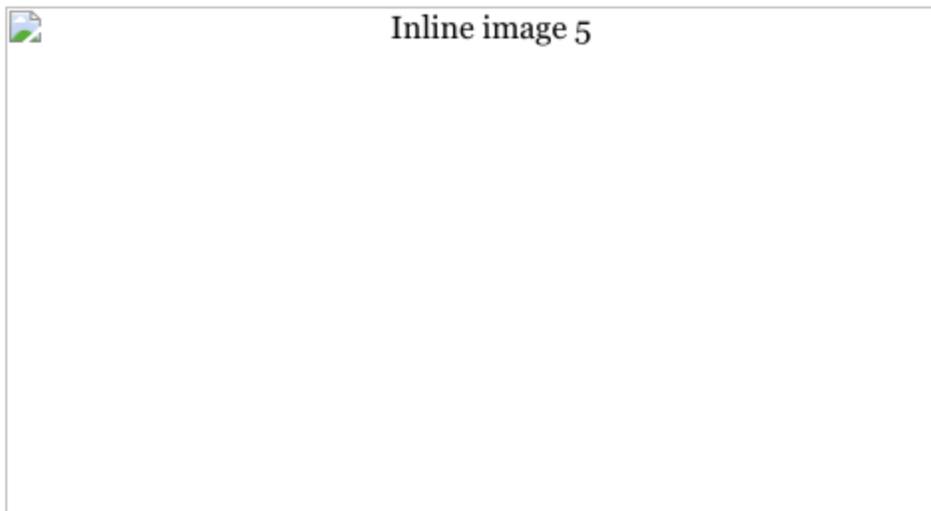
*"It's a horrible, horrible situation we've got ourselves in, where it's always the police officer who is telling the truth -- because we know that isn't true."*

- Geoffrey Alpert

Even basic assumptions about police disciplinary systems -- that citizen oversight results in more accountability, for example -- arise more out of anecdotal evidence and conventional wisdom than any type of formal study. Federal investigations into police departments suggest that when a law enforcement agency has problems, failures in the internal affairs process usually play a role.

The Ferguson Police Department, for example, lacked *"any meaningful system for holding officers accountable when they violate law or policy,"* actively discouraged citizens from filing complaints, and assumed officers were telling the truth and complainants were not *"even where objective evidence indicates that the reverse is true,"* according to a U.S. Department of Justice investigation. In Cleveland, where just 51 officers from a force of 1,500 were disciplined *"in any fashion in connection with a use of force incident"* over 3.5 years, those investigating the use of force admitted to DOJ that they conducted their inquiries with the *"goal of casting the accused officer in the most positive light possible."*

The Albuquerque Police Department failed to *"implement an objective and rigorous internal accountability system,"* according to a DOJ report. In New Orleans, just 5.5 percent of civilian complaints were sustained by a team that had no special training in internal affairs, another federal investigation found. In Newark, New Jersey, barely 5 percent of civilian complaints were sustained between 2010 and 2012, according to a DOJ report. Investigators in Newark *"routinely failed to probe officers' accounts or assess officer credibility."* They gave weight to the criminal history of complainants but discounted the disciplinary history of officers, including one officer with 40 use-of-force incidents over six years, the federal investigators found.

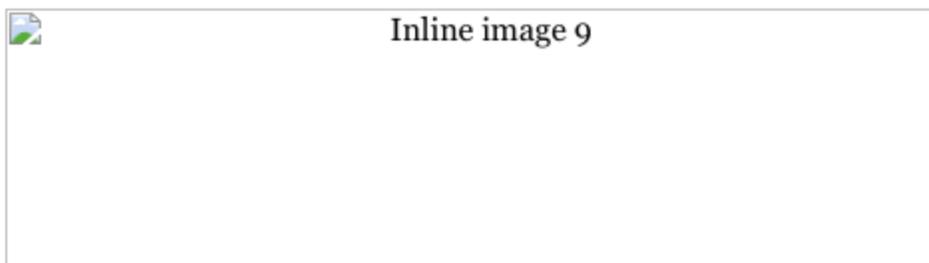


The federal study of citizen complaints pointed to the influence of police unions as one factor: Complaints were sustained 15 percent of the time at law enforcement agencies that had to collectively bargain with employees, more than twice the 7 percent rate at agencies that didn't collectively bargain. Ultimately, the strength of an internal affairs process depends on the person in charge, experts say. *"It really comes down to whether a police chief wants to do the right thing. In some jurisdictions, not so much. In other jurisdictions, people are real standouts,"* said Jeff Noble, the former deputy chief of the Irvine Police Department in California who has written extensively on police misconduct, including the book with Alpert.

*"It really comes down to whether a police chief wants to do the right thing."*

- Jeff Noble

One major hurdle for police accountability is that citizens often don't bother to file complaints because they don't think their concerns would be taken seriously. There is little motivation for police departments to encourage civilians to complain, experts say, and many internal affairs officers either implicitly or explicitly make it difficult for citizens to air their grievances.



In 2013, the year before the unrest in Ferguson, the St. Louis County Police Bureau of Professional Standards received 69 citizen complaints, about the same number it had received in prior years. Officials reported that number as an accomplishment, citing the gap between the number of complaints and the numbers of arrests (more than 26,000) and citizen contacts (more than 1.6 million) as proof that police personnel "continue serving the community in a very professional manner" and the agency "has continued to take positive measures to reduce and eliminate citizen complaints."

By that logic, 2014 -- the year that St. Louis County Police led the initial law enforcement response to the unrest in Ferguson -- was a fantastic success for the agency: Only 26 citizens filed complaints, a stunning 62 percent drop from the previous year. Given the extraordinarily controversial -- and unconstitutional -- tactics deployed by police officers during the Ferguson protests, it's unlikely those figures mean anything at all. St. Louis County Police reported receiving just a single formal complaint about officer behavior during the protests of August 2014. An after-action report pointed to two factors for that: It was "*difficult or impossible to lodge complaints*," and there was "*a lack of confidence*" in the complaint process. But even the low number of citizen complaints received in the years before the Ferguson protests -- 64 in 2012 and 69 in 2013 -- is nothing to brag about, experts say. "I would be suspicious of those numbers," Noble said. "That's just too many officers, 800 officers -- you're only getting 60 complaints? The first thing I would want to look at is their complaint policy. What are they required to accept as a complaint? Who is required to accept it?"

Noble said he once worked with a city police department that had close to 2,000 officers. That agency claimed it received only 30 complaints over the course of a year, less than half the number of complaints typically received in a year by his former department in Irvine, which had a force of just 200. "*I mean, that's just laughable. It's absurd. What it tells me is that they're not classifying everything as a complaint, they're not accepting, they're discouraging*," Noble said. One federal survey found that among individuals who reported having force used against them or being threatened with force in 2008, 84 percent felt that police had acted improperly, but only 14 percent of that group actually filed a complaint. "If you don't get many complaints at a department, that might mean that, yes, the department is very good, officers are performing well," said Walker, the policing expert. "*But it could also mean that trust in the complaint process is so deep that nobody bothers to complain.*"

The first sign that Reilly's complaint to the St. Louis County Police Department might not be taken seriously came just after he finished filling out the complaint form. He told the official who accepted his complaint at the Office of Professional Standards that while the officer in question had refused to identify himself, Reilly had photos of him on his iPhone. He also tweeted the photos, assuming that they would want to pull the images from his device or have him send the original files via email. But the office wasn't going to make it easy. Instead, he was told to turn in printed copies. So he pulled out

his phone, mapped the route to the nearest copy center, walked there to print out the photos and then walked back to drop them off. An initial letter acknowledging my complaint was followed by months of silence. The department failed to meet its goal of responding within 90 days. Six months passed, then eight, then 10. In the meantime, several public records requests failed to unearth the name of the officer who arrested me.

A few months ago, Reilly was finally able to confirmed his name -- Michael McCann -- after it came up in a lawsuit filed against the police by other people he'd arrested. With a bit of digging, Reilly learned that McCann had previously been suspended without pay by the St. Louis County Police after he allegedly crashed his patrol car through a fence in a residential neighborhood and fled the scene. In June, more than 10 months after his arrest, Reilly received a letter from St. Louis County Police Chief Jon Belmar. In the letter, which was carefully vetted by St. Louis County lawyers, Belmar wrote that a "*very thorough investigation*" had produced "*conflicting versions of what occurred.*"

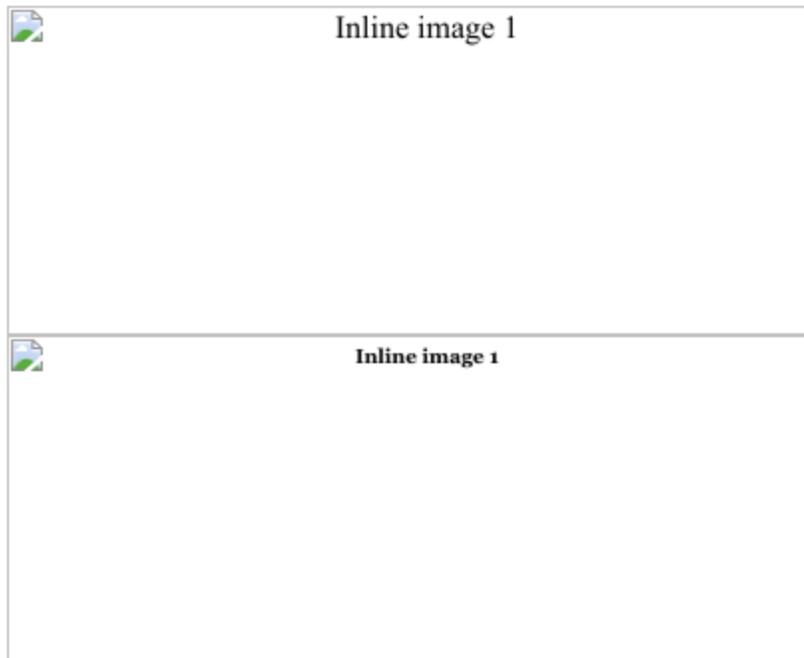
McCann had denied slamming my head against the door, and Belmar's internal affairs team claimed that the McDonald's security footage did not definitively show what had happened. So Belmar -- "*based on the absence of conclusive facts*" -- had ordered the investigation closed. "*I would, however, like to thank you for bringing this matter to my attention,*" he wrote. A recent independent assessment of Belmar's department found a "*pattern of light discipline in investigations involving ethical failings and untruthfulness.*" In August, a few weeks after Reilly was charged, the St. Louis County Police Department promoted Michael McCann to sergeant. Based upon the recommendation of the St. Louis County Police Department, the St. Louis County Counselor's Office filed charges against Wesley Lowery and Ryan Reilly in August 2015 for allegedly "*trespassing*" and "*interfering*" with police officers nearly a year earlier. Lowery and Reilly have said they were wrongfully arrested since the day they were taken into custody, and are fighting the charges.

Ryan Reilly was not a Michael Brown or Freddie Gray, he was a white journalist representing a major newspaper and not participating in any of the protesting that he was covering. Yet, even knowing this, the St. Louis Police Department protected the police officer instead of trying to figure out what went wrong so that changes could be made and it doesn't happen again. If people like Ryan Reilly can't get justice from the Police Misconduct, Police Abuse, Police Accountability, Police Brutality, Internal Affairs, Police, Police Reform of the St. Louis County Police Department, then what chance does the families of Michael Brown, Freddie Gray, Sandra Bland and the tens of thousands of others who don't have the resources and where withal to even try to get a modicum justice from the system.

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## We Can Do It Too

**Uruguay currently generates nearly 95% electricity from clean energy**



At the climate summit in Paris in December, the South American nation of Uruguay has announced that it gets an enviable 94.5 percent of its electricity from renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar. And they've done it without government subsidies or raising the price for consumers. In fact, electricity prices are now cheaper than they've ever been for the 3.4 million people living in Uruguay, which eliminates one of the main excuses people have for not being able to transition away from fossil fuels: it costs too much. And before you say that such a dramatic shift isn't feasible for larger economies, Uruguay has made the transition without any crazy new technology or radical investment. In fact, national director of energy, Ramón Méndez, told the climate summit delegates that the formula is incredibly replicable, and is simply a result of: "clear decision-making, a supportive regulatory environment and a strong partnership between the public and private sector".

Anyone can do it.

"What we've learned is that renewables is just a financial business," said Méndez. "The construction and maintenance costs are low, so as long as you give investors a secure environment, it is a very attractive."

One of the biggest changes over the past 10 years is how many wind farms have popped up all over the countryside, with wind energy now providing the largest portion of electricity. Uruguay is naturally a pretty windy place, which is attractive to wind energy companies, but what's been even more appealing is that the country has offered foreign investors a fixed state utility price for 20 years. "*As a result, foreign firms are lining up to secure wind farm contracts,*" writes Jonathan Watts for The Guardian. "The competition is pushing down bids, cutting electricity generating costs by more than 30 percent over the past three years."

But perhaps what's most unique about the Uruguayan model is that they've kept their mix of renewables incredibly diverse, steering clear of relying heavily on one form of energy generation over another. This means that they're better able to withstand changes to the climate, with Méndez

explaining that by having wind farms feed into hydro plants, they've been able to reduce their vulnerability to drought by 70 percent.

Of course, things aren't perfect. While 95 percent of Uruguay's electricity comes from renewable sources, that's not the only sector in the country that uses energy. The transport sector, for example, is still reliant on oil. So when you look at the energy use of the country as a whole, adding the transport sector into the mix, renewables only provide 55 percent, with oil still makes up the other 45 percent. However, that's still pretty impressive when you consider the fact that 15 years ago, oil accounted for 27 percent of Uruguay's imports. And if you look at the worldwide total energy breakdown, only 12 percent comes from renewables on average.

Uruguay is now hoping to make changes in its transport sector too, and it's moving quickly once again. As part of the climate summit, Méndez pledged to cut Uruguay's carbon emissions by 88 percent in the next two years compared to 2009 to 13 – it's one of the most ambitious nation pledges so far, and proves that Uruguay is serious about reducing its impact on the planet. But despite all the environmental perks, the bottom line is that transitioning to renewable energy sources makes financial sense for countries, and it's safe to say that Uruguay is now killing it. "For three years we haven't imported a single kilowatt hour," said Méndez. "We used to be reliant on electricity imports from Argentina, but now we export to them. Last summer, we sold a third of our power generation to them."

In May 2015 the Hawaii Legislature passed a bill with the goal of generating 100 percent of the state's electricity by renewables by 2045. If achieved, it will make Hawaii the first state in the US to run entirely on sustainable energy sources. As of today, the world is on track to get 26% of its power from renewables by 2020. Consequently for those who want to believe in American exceptionalism, the goal of the country generating all of its electricity from renewables is one of the priorities that we should embrace, as it will also generate hundreds of thousands if not millions of new jobs, as well lowering our carbon foot print, lowering our energy cost and make us totally energy independent.

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So True



Inline image 1

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## If You Really Want to Understand Racial Economic Inequality

Tim wise says whites had a 400 year head start.



Inline image 1

Web Link: <https://youtu.be/6JErESW-CQI>

Tim Wise is an activist and writer who fights for racial justice. And though he hasn't said anything that over the centuries our Black leaders haven't already said, it is important to hear it from an articulate and thoughtful white face since there is a large group of people (white and black) who only accepts the truth when a white face behind it. This is something that he points out before every lecture he gives on racial injustice. It would be definitely worth your time to check out his lectures on YouTube.

The problem is white people often take videos (and discussions) like this as personal attacks which instinctively makes them feel that they defend themselves against. Instead of looking at this from a personal view, they should try to look at it from a perspective as a whole – the systems put in place by our government have not given the same opportunities to blacks as they did whites. Americans should realize that our systems are ingrained with racism. This doesn't mean that every white person is racist or every white person has benefitted from the opportunities. But on a large scale we are not treated as equal. As comedian Chris Rock use to tell his white audiences that although he is famous and wealthy not one of them would exchange their white skin for his. So if you are white, please don't see this as an indictment that you have to defend. Ask yourself, if this is true how can we change it?

This is why I and others respect Tim Wise, he speaks the truth. The illusion that white people have that they pulled themselves up by the bootstraps without big government programs is BS. Starting back in the 1630s/1640s there was a government program (Headright Program) that allowed male heads of households from England who entered the United States to claim 50 acres of land and the tools needed to work it for nothing. That was called Nation Building but if you were to give out 50 acres of land and tools to Blacks people would call it reparations or welfare. The Homestead Act of 1862 gave 240 million acres to white settlers, which the free market could have never done. The market and small government can't take other people's land and give it to you. As Wise points out, "only a very large government with guns is capable of doing that."

The creation of the Housing Authority which guaranteed loans to the working class of which more than 98% went to white families. This add up to \$120 billion head start that people of color were unable to participate in. Black and Brown returning vets were excluded from the VA programs, which in theory was available to all returning veterans from the WWII and the Korean War, but in practice a disproportional number of benefits went to white, because returning Black and Brown vets were able to get jobs that would allow them to qualify like their white counterparts. So you have all of these programs, Homestead Act, VA, FHA, GI Bill and going back to the Headright Program pumping hundreds of billions if not trillions of dollars of wealth into white families before people of color were allow to widely participate in these type of government programs.

As Wise points out, government was never small for white people like him. And taxes were not lower back them. Because in 1958 the highest

Federal income tax rate was 91% and it is 36% today. And the middle class was upset then. For the first 20 years Social Security excluded eight out every ten Blacks because you couldn't get Social Security if you were a agricultural or domestic worker, which was almost 80% of the Blacks in the country. This is the legacy and history about how wealth was created in America and little has changed.

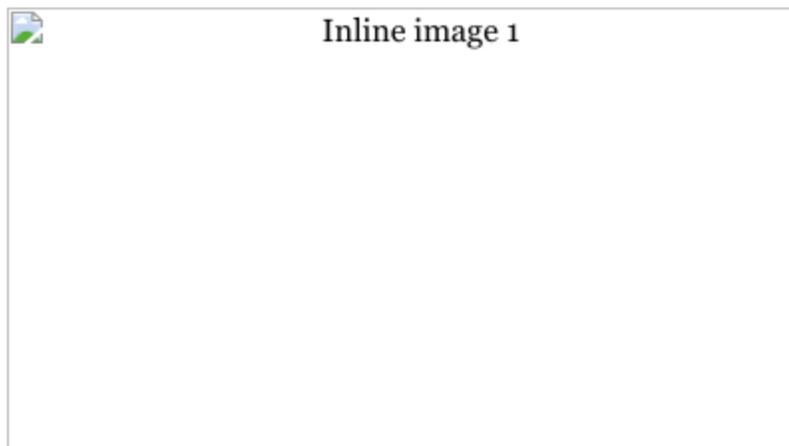
And the idea that we have a President who is black, billionaires who are black and the Los Angeles Dodgers just hired their first manager who is black signals that we are living in a post-racial society is not true because individual accomplishment is not an indication that there is no longer racism in America. Today Black college graduates are twice as likely to be unemployed than their white counterparts. Latino college graduates are two-thirds likely to be unemployed than white college graduates. Asian college graduates are 15% more likely to be out-of-work than their white peers. And when people of color regardless to their educational accomplishments they are out of work for much longer, on average seven to nine additional weeks relative to white folks.

There is undeniable systemic racism today in America whether you want to believe it or not that can't be washed away with a wish, as it is something that we as a nation has to accept and work together to fix because expecting people of color to fix it alone is a fantasy, as they don't have the power. It is important to understand that white privilege is real and has it have given white people a leg up over people of color long before Donald Trump made any disparaging remarks and Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio and Ben Carson began basking in their own deniability. The fact that today people of color on average pay higher interest than their white counterparts, you need to recognize what this costs and means to their families over a lifetime. Finally it I not that this money denied to people of color has been shared with other white people, it hasn't, as the richest people control more than half of the country's wealth which they horde, taking it out of circulation hurting the economy as a whole. Although this last reference was not in the video, Wise talks about the multiplier effect – 1000 millionaires will buy more homes, cars, televisions and send more children to colleges than any single billionaire. For that reason I urge everyone to LISTEN to Tim Wise's video as it speaks truth....

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## America has to Stop Pretending

That it is Policeman of the World



As Bernie Sanders lamented in a recent Democratic Primary Debate: "The United States of America cannot succeed, or be thought of as the policeman of the world," the senator from Vermont explained. "...that when there's an international crisis all over the world ... hey, just call up the American military and the American taxpayers, they're going to send the troops. And if they have to be in the Middle East

for 20 or 30 years no problem. [...] I believe that countries like Saudi Arabia and Qatar have got to step up to the plate, have got to contribute the money that we need, and the troops that we need, to destroy ISIS with American support.”

When moderator Martha Raddatz countered that the Obama "administration has tried that over and over again." And asked "what's your plan B?" Sanders rejected the premise of her question. "My plan is to make it work," he explained, implying that the Obama administration had not made a serious effort to shift the burden to others. He said, to much applause, that he would: "tell Saudi Arabia that instead of going to war in Yemen, they, one of the wealthiest countries on Earth, are going to have to go to war against ISIS [and] tell Qatar, that instead of spending \$200 billion on the World Cup, maybe they should pay attention to ISIS, which is at their doorstep.”

This is one area where Sanders separates himself from all of the Republicans running for 2016 Presidency (sans Rand Paul), as well as really differentiates himself from both President Obama and Hillary Clinton who has moved in his direction on domestic policy, but remains a leading advocate for the view that America can and must be the world's policeman. Her responses in the debate sounded suspiciously like those in the Republican ones. Judging from the audience reaction, there is considerable sympathy for Sanders's perspective.

Christopher Preble (Vice President for Defense and Foreign Policy Studies, Cato Institute) recently wrote in the Huffington Post – We shouldn't, however, hold our breath that a strategic shift is in the offing. The Saudis, Qataris, and others in the region (like much of the world) are unlikely to change course and take responsibility for their security, because they believe that Uncle Sam will keep doing it for them. They know that Bernie Sanders won't be elected president of the United States. And they have good reason to doubt that any other serious critics of U.S. foreign policy will be either.

This is true despite the fact that Americans strongly resist Washington's impulse to solve all the world's problems. In the most recent survey by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, just 38 percent of Americans agreed that "*Defending our allies' security*" should be a very important foreign policy goal for the United States. The two major parties are almost certain to produce nominees who believe that it should be. The leading Democrats and Republicans disagree on a number of issues, but not on the key tenets of U.S. foreign policy.

Sen. Sanders's frustration with this state of affairs is real, but so is the danger that the foreign policy status quo is producing the worst possible outcome: a deepening set of security challenges, too few international players willing or able to address them, and a growing gap between the American people and the elites who profess to serve them. This creates a single point of failure in the international system -- the United States. If Americans fail to act in any part of the world, for whatever reason, other countries that are in a better position to address proximate challenges are effectively paralyzed. Problems that might have been contained at a local or regional level only fester and grow.

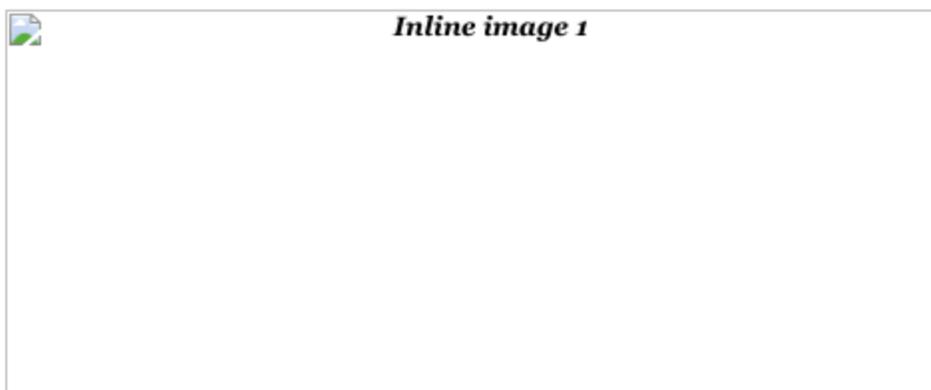
There are viable alternatives out there, but we need a serious discussion of these alternatives in order to bring them before the American people. Bernie Sanders isn't enough. Until the American people and politicians realize that war is never a solution, regime change doesn't work, destabilizing entire regions as well as causing the death of tens of millions of people around the world.... This round robin

of bipartisan consensus that drives U.S. foreign policy idiocy will continue..... ***And this is my rant of the week and the first rant of 2016....***

## WEEK'S READINGS

### Look at Who's Buying Our Government

Just 158 families have provided nearly half of the early money for efforts to capture the White House.



#### ***And These Investors Definitely Want Something in Return***

Thanks to the Citizens United Supreme Court ruling our political leaders on almost every level are up for sale, with no better example being the White House where just 158 families have provide nearly half of all the seed money raised to support Democratic and Republican presidential candidates. These fat cats, along with companies they own or control, contributed \$176 million in the first phase of the campaign, according to a New York Times investigation. No longer the privy of traditional old wealth, these donors' fortunes reflect the shifting composition of the country's economic elite. Most built their own businesses, parlaying talent and an appetite for risk into huge wealth: They founded hedge funds in New York, bought up undervalued oil leases in Texas, made blockbusters in Hollywood. More than a dozen of the elite donors were born outside the United States, emigrating from countries like Cuba, the old Soviet Union, Pakistan, India and Israel.

But regardless of industry, the families investing the most in presidential politics overwhelmingly lean right, contributing tens of millions of dollars to support Republican candidates who have pledged to pare regulations; cut taxes on income, capital gains and inheritances; and shrink entitlement programs. While such measures would help protect their own wealth, the donors describe their embrace of them more broadly, as the surest means of promoting economic growth and preserving a system that would allow others to prosper, too. One Dallas investor whose family put \$5 million

behind Gov. Rick Perry of Texas and now, after Mr. Perry's exit, is being courted by many of the remaining candidates, "It's a lot of families around the country who are self-made who feel like over-regulation puts these burdens on smaller companies." Yet few of these people support programs that might favor our shrinking middle class, as they would like to not only preserve the trickle down economics that have enabled them to accumulate vast wealth, they still want more. Which is why they are so eager to invest in politics.

In marshaling their financial resources chiefly behind Republican candidates, the donors are also serving as a kind of financial check on demographic forces that have been nudging the electorate toward support for the Democratic Party and its economic policies. Two-thirds of Americans support higher taxes on those earning \$1 million or more a year, according to a June New York Times/CBS News poll, while six in 10 favor more government intervention to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. According to the Pew Research Center, nearly seven in 10 favor preserving Social Security and Medicare benefits as they are. But as the campaign unfolds, Republicans are far outpacing Democrats in exploiting the world of "*super PACs*," which, unlike candidates' own campaigns, can raise unlimited sums from any donor, and which have so far amassed the bulk of the money in the election. And with the exception of Israel and pro life campaigns, these super PAC's have focused on candidates and issues that almost exclusively favor the wealthy, large corporations and Wall Street.

In a nation that is being remade by the young, by women, and by black and brown voters, these donors are overwhelmingly white, rich, older and male. Other than for the occasional window dressing, these donors have all but ignored the issues favored by Hispanic voters, women and African-Americans, whom without their support no candidate can win the White House. And one of the reason is that they see themselves and are a class apart, distant from much of America while geographically, socially and economically intermingling among themselves. Nearly all the neighborhoods where they live would fit within the city limits of New Orleans. But minorities make up less than one-fifth of those neighborhoods' collective population, and virtually no one is black. Their residents make four and a half times the salary of the average American, and are twice as likely to be college educated.

Most of the families are clustered around just nine cities. Many are neighbors, living near one another in neighborhoods like Bel Air and Brentwood in Los Angeles; River Oaks, a Houston community popular with energy executives; or Indian Creek Village, a private island near Miami that has a private security force and just 35 homes lining an 18-hole golf course. Sometimes, across party lines, they are patrons of the same symphonies, art museums or at-risk youth programs. They are business partners, in-laws and, on occasion, even poker buddies.



Inline image 2

More than 50 members of these families have made the Forbes 400 list of the country's top billionaires, marking a scale of wealth against which even a million-dollar political contribution can seem relatively small. The Chicago hedge fund billionaire Kenneth C. Griffin, for example, earns about \$68.5 million a month after taxes, according to court filings made by his wife in their divorce. He has given a total of \$300,000 to groups backing Republican presidential candidates. That is a huge sum on its face, yet is the equivalent of only \$21.17 for a typical American household, according to Congressional Budget Office data on after-tax income. The donor families' wealth reflects, in part, the vast growth of the financial-services sector and the boom in oil and gas, which have helped transform the American economy in recent decades. They are also the beneficiaries of political and economic forces that are driving widening inequality: As the share of national wealth and income going to the middle class has shrunk, these families are among those whose share has grown.



Inline image 3

Nicholas Confessore, Sarah Choen and Karen Yourish pointed out in their recent article in the New York Times -- The accumulation of wealth has been particularly rapid at the elite levels of Wall Street, where financiers who once managed other people's capital now, increasingly, own it themselves. Since 1979, according to one study, the one-tenth of 1 percent of American taxpayers who work in finance have roughly quintupled their share of the country's income. Sixty-four of the families made their wealth in finance, the largest single faction among the super-donors of 2016. But instead of working their way up to the executive suite at Goldman Sachs or Exxon, most of these donors set out on their own, establishing privately held firms controlled individually or with partners.

In finance, they started hedge funds, or formed private equity and venture capital firms, benefiting from favorable tax treatment of debt and capital gains, and more recently from a rising stock market and low interest rates. In energy, some were latter-day wildcatters, early to capitalize on the new drilling technologies and high energy prices that made it economical to exploit shale formations in North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas. Others made fortunes supplying those wildcatters with pipelines, trucks and equipment for "*fracking*." In both energy and finance, their businesses, when successful, could throw off enormous amounts of cash — unlike industries in which wealth might have been tied up in investments. Those without shareholders or boards of directors have had unusual freedom to indulge their political passions. Together, the two industries accounted for well over half of the cash contributed by the top 158 families.



Inline image 4

"When I look at these families, these are highly successful people, they're used to moving mountains, and they love to beat the conventional wisdom," said David McCurdy, a former Oklahoma congressman who is now president of the American Gas Association. Indeed, while blue-chip corporations largely shy away from super PACs, wary of negative publicity about unlimited campaign spending, these families have poured millions of dollars into such efforts. Some are even betting on candidates shunned by their party's traditional donor establishment. The three families who have provided the largest donations in the campaign to date — the Wilks family of Texas, which made

billions providing trucks and equipment in the shale fields; the Mercers of New York, headed by the hedge fund investor Robert Mercer; and Toby Neugebauer, a Texas-born private equity investor — have backed Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, a socially conservative Tea Party firebrand disdained by Republican leaders.

*“Making a big bet on something before anyone else really grasps it. That is what success has in common in energy and in equities,”* said Tim Phillips, the president of Americans for Prosperity, a conservative advocacy group with ties to Charles G. and David H. Koch. A number of the families are tied to networks of ideological donors who, on the left and the right alike, have sought to fundamentally reshape their own political parties. More than a dozen donors or members of their families have been involved with the twice-yearly seminars hosted by the Kochs, whose organizations have pressed the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other business groups to eliminate the Export-Import Bank. They include Mr. Deason and his wife; the brokerage pioneer Charles Schwab, whose wife, Helen, is among the donors; and Karen Buchwald Wright, whose family company makes compressors used to extract and transport natural gas.

*“Most of the people at the Koch seminars are entrepreneurs who have built it from the ground up — they built it themselves,”* said Mr. Deason, who said he supported eliminating corporate subsidies and welfare, including those that benefit his own investments. Another group of the families, including the hedge fund investor George Soros and his son Jonathan, have ties to the Democracy Alliance, a network of liberal donors who have pushed Democrats to move aggressively on climate change legislation and progressive taxation. Those donors, many of them from Hollywood or Wall Street, have put millions of dollars behind Hillary Rodham Clinton. The families who give do so, to some extent, because of personal, regional and professional ties to the candidates. Jeb Bush’s father made money in the oil business, while Mr. Bush himself earned millions of dollars on Wall Street. Some of the candidates most popular among ultra-wealthy donors have also served in elected office in Florida and Texas, two states that are home to many of the affluent families on the list.



Inline image 5

*Two of the donors live on Indian Creek Island Road in Florida, the most expensive street in the United States, according to Zillow.*

But the giving, more broadly, reflects the political stakes this year for the families and businesses that have moved most aggressively to take advantage of Citizens United, particularly in the energy and finance industries. The Obama administration, Democrats in Congress and even Mr. Bush have argued for tax and regulatory shifts that could subject many venture capital and private equity firms to

higher levels of corporate or investment taxation. Hedge funds, which historically were lightly regulated, are bound by new rules with the Dodd-Frank regulations, which several Republican candidates have pledged to roll back and which Mrs. Clinton has pledged to defend. We know that the master puppet makers such as Sheldon Adelson and the Koch Brothers have made it abundantly clear what they expect for their financial support but we also have to realize that these other donors who mostly reject raising the minimum wage are also expecting something in return for their \$250,000 - \$500,000 and \$5 million contributions to politicians. The real outcome of Citizen United is that it is now giving us the best government that money can buy and these are some of the people who are purchasing seats at the table.

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## Top 10 Breakthroughs for 2015

As this is the first week of 2016, here are Peter Diamandis (Chairman/CEO, XPRIZE) *top 10 picks for 2015 technology breakthroughs*. These genius inventions are sending us careening into a world of abundance, bold visionaries and accelerating exponential change. In creating this list Mr. Diamandis and his team reviewed over 100 prospects as we created this list. And the countdown is...

### (#10) NASA Confirms Evidence of Water of Mars



**What happened:** This year, NASA announced that their "Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (MRO) has provided the strongest evidence yet that liquid water flows intermittently on present-day Mars." Using an imaging spectrometer on the MRO, NASA identified hydrated minerals with patterns unique to flowing water.

**Why it's important:** Based on what we know about living organisms, you need to have water to have life. In my opinion, our next Mars mission, scheduled to land on Mars in 2020, will discover that life exists there now. This is just the beginning of a much larger initiative around the Red Planet. Once we detect life we will determine if it is identical to that of Earth (based on the same coding system, DNA) and whether it has a common origin.

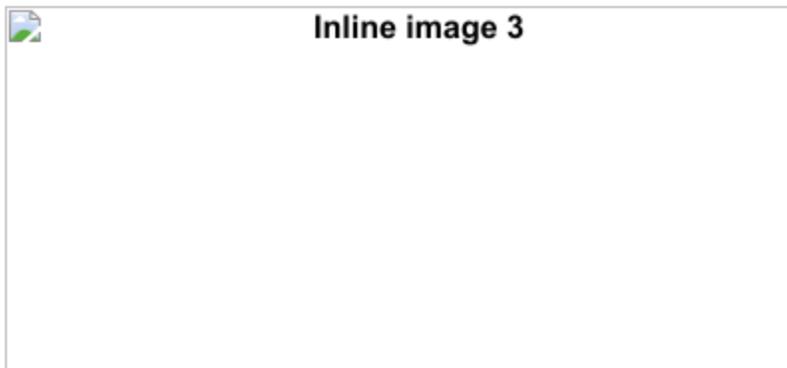
### (#9) Google's Quantum Computer is 100 Million Times Faster Than a Normal Computer



**What happened:** After running a series of tests between their D-Wave quantum computer (which uses quantum bits, or "qubits") and a normal single core computer (which uses normal bits), Google has concluded that the operation run on the quantum computer was 100 million times faster.

**Why it's important:** As Moore's Law continues to power exponential improvements in computing power and capacity, advances in quantum computing and other new computing mechanisms will help overcome current limitations and accelerate even more. These advances will be critical as we develop more advanced artificial intelligence systems, virtual simulations and optimization problems.

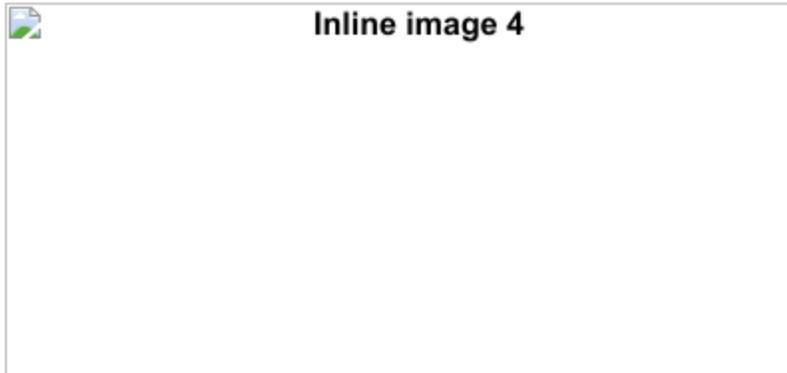
## (#8) New Horizon's Pluto Flyby



**What happened:** NASA's New Horizons probe completed the first ever reconnaissance mission of Pluto. New Horizons "launched on Jan. 19, 2006; it swung past Jupiter for a gravity boost and scientific studies in February 2007, and conducted a six-month-long reconnaissance flyby study of Pluto and its moons" - discovering four new moons orbiting the planet.

**Why it's important:** This mission will help us understand the worlds at the edge of our solar system, and perhaps the origins of our own world. Moreover, this mission represents a triumph of our culture of BOLD exploration - the United States has been the first nation to reach every planet in the solar system with a space probe. New Horizons will help us answer basic questions about the surface properties, geology, interior makeup and atmospheres on these important bodies.

## (#7) SEC Approves of Title III of JOBS Act



**What happened:** In October, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) voted on and passed rules to implement Title III of the JOBS Act - giving non-accredited investors the right to invest in companies via crowdfunding. Via the ruling, companies can now offer and sell securities through crowdfunding platforms like Crowdfunder.com and Angel.co.

**Why it's important:** This ruling could unleash trillions of investment dollars now locked up in personal savings, IRAs, and investment accounts that sit around and basically only finance large companies in the public market. This capital will go on to fuel thousands of bold entrepreneurs who want to tackle the world's most difficult problems or take the biggest moonshots. By aligning incentives, early investors will be able to participate in the upside of successful companies.

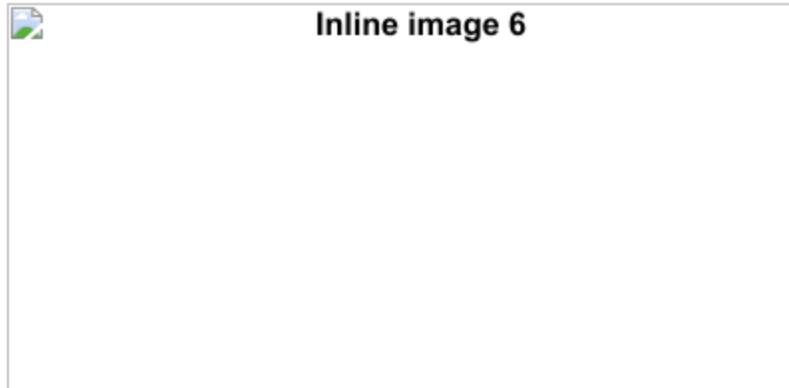
## (#6) New Battery Technology Breakthroughs



**What happened:** This year, research teams, universities and startups made strides in advancing battery technology. Soon, we will begin to see batteries that charge in seconds, last months and even charge over the air. Laser-made super capacitors are 50 times faster than current batteries, more durable and discharge even slower than current supercapacitors. Companies like Prieto are using copper foam to create 3D structures in batteries, resulting in longer life, faster charging, five times higher density, and are cheaper to make and smaller than current offerings. Tesla released their Powerwall to store solar energy in homes. The list goes on.

**Why it's important:** Battery technology is critically important (and remains a key limiting factor) for the development of exponential technologies and computing devices. As our computers become more complex and distributed, so too do our demands for efficient and reliable sources of power. These developments will enable the convergence and distribution of key technologies like robotics, sensors, networks, AI, 3D printing and more.

## (#5) One Step Closer to Global Internet Connectivity



**What happened:** Facebook (Internet.org - drones and satellite constellation), Google (Project Loon - helium balloons), and Qualcomm and Virgin (OneWeb - Satellite constellation) made strides this year to provide global connectivity to every human on Earth at speeds exceeding 1 Megabit per second. Google Loon actually deployed working balloons and OneWeb closed \$500M in capital to build its system.

**Why it's important:** We will grow from three to eight billion connected humans, adding five billion new consumers into the global economy over the next five years. These "rising billions" represent tens of trillions of new dollars flowing into the global economy. And they are not coming online like we did 20 years ago with a 9600 modem on AOL. They're coming online with a 1 Mbps connection and access to the world's information on Google, cloud 3D printing, Amazon Web Services, artificial intelligence with Watson, crowdfunding, crowdsourcing, and more.

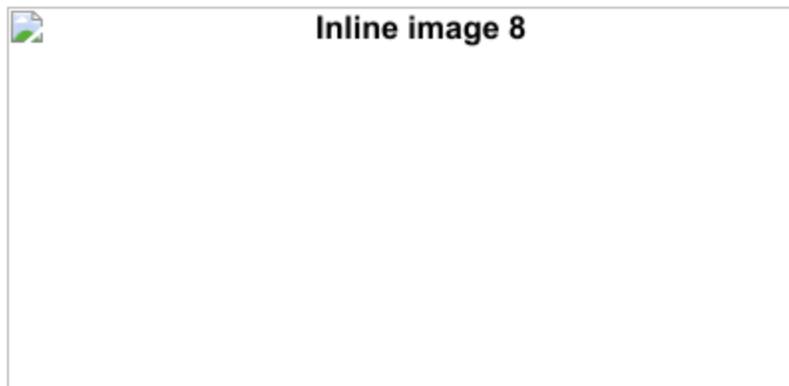
## (#4) First New Antibiotic in 30 Years Discovered



**What happened:** A team from Northeastern University has discovered a new way to isolate antibiotic chemical compounds from microbes in soil, using an electronic chip to grow and control the microbes. The team discovered that one compound, Teixobactin, is highly effective against common bacterial infections.

**Why it's important:** The discovery of Teixobactin, "could pave the way for a new generation of antibiotics" because of how the team discovered and processed the drug. As we move closer to a world of abundance, drug resistance will become a surmountable challenge as we develop new ways to fight and resolve these problems. "Teixobactin shows how we can adopt an alternative strategy and develop compounds to which bacteria are not resistant."

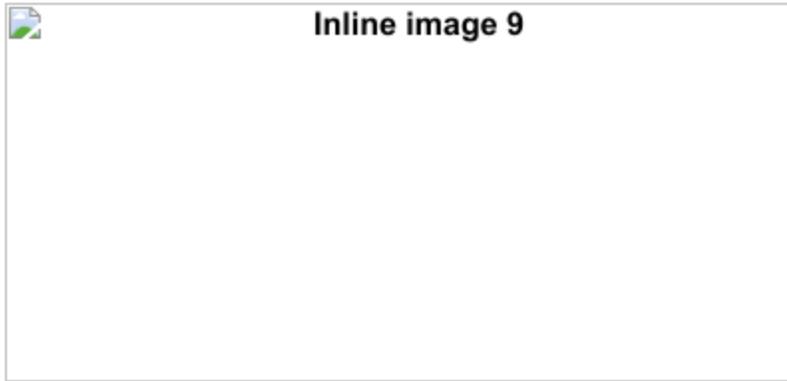
### (3) Engineered Polio Virus Treats Cancer



**What happened:** This year, doctors used a genetically re-engineered polio virus, PVS-RIPO, to treat glioblastoma -- a brain tumor that carries a life expectancy of less than a year. Unlike other experimental treatments in the past using HIV, measles and smallpox, researchers from Duke found that polio actually seeks out and attaches itself to receptors that can be found on almost every solid tumor. Not only was this reengineered polio virus successful in seeking out and poisoning cancerous cells, but it also steered clear of normal cells.

**Why it's important:** Advances in exponential technologies like synthetic biology and genomics are reinforcing the notion that previously unresolvable diseases (cancer, heart disease, Alzheimers) are in fact resolvable. We are developing solutions to these problems at an accelerating rate, and as we usher in an era of personalized medicine, we will see a dramatic increase in the healthy human lifespan. At my company Human Longevity Inc, our mission is to make 100 the new 60.

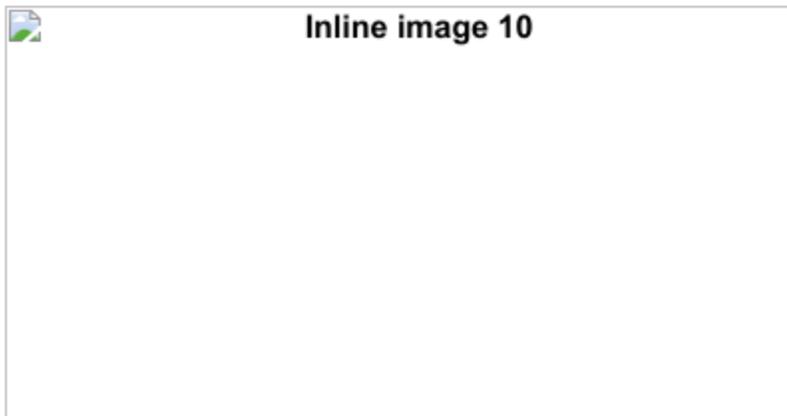
### (2) Researchers in China use CRISPR-Cas9 to Edit Genomes of Human Embryos



**What happened:** This year, a research team out of Guangzhou, China reported that they'd been able to edit the genomes of human embryos using CRISPR-Cas9 - a new gene splicing technique. Also this year, scientists from London's Francis Crick Institute applied for approval to edit genes in human embryos. If approved, it will be the world's first approval of such research by a national regulatory body.

**Why it's important:** CRISPR stands for Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats. It is a strand of DNA that was found in 1987 to be part of a bacterial defense system. It turns out that we can actually use this same mechanism to target and splice specific strands of our DNA - in other words, the CRISPR/Cas system is a way to **edit** our genome. It is cheap, quick, easy to use, and more accurate than previous methods, and as a result, we will soon have the tools to eliminate diseases, create hardier plants, wipe out pathogens and much, much more.

## **(#1) SpaceX's Successful Landing of the Falcon 9 First Stage**



**What happened:** SpaceX successfully recovered the first stage of the Falcon-9 Orbital Launch Vehicle, bringing it back from near orbital speeds and altitude back to its point of departure at Kennedy Space Center.

**Why it's important:** This is an accomplishment that the traditional launch industry had said was impossible. Because the first stage has 9 or 10 engines, this allows SpaceX to basically reuse over 80% of the vehicle's parts, and significantly reduce the future launch getting to orbit. It is a game-changer and a new era of spaceflight. Making the first stage of Falcon-9 reusable is a step towards major demonetization of the space industry.

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## THE MOST OVERPRICED ITEMS ON THE MENU, ACCORDING TO CHEFS



As someone who has spent an ungodly amount of money in restaurants, I was sparked by an article on the **Thrillist** website by Matt Maltzer –

***THE MOST OVERPRICED ITEMS ON THE MENU, ACCORDING TO CHEFS*** – with the hope that this knowledge might help me lower my bills when I go to restaurants, especially when most of the meals are just okay and the great meals are few and far between. We have to wonder why restaurateurs believe that a \$20 plate of spaghetti and meatballs, \$12 wedge salad and a \$43 bottle of wine that you can find in your local supermarket for less than \$10 is worth the extra “*vig*” and why we are so willing to overpay for certain items on a restaurant's menu – that you just could have bought in your local grocery store, especially when the theater of being in a happening restaurant isn't the extra coefficient.

People must realize that an \$6 or \$8 bottle of water which in most cases is no better than the local tap water is a bit of a rip-off, but truth be told there are a whole host of other dishes that, while they might seem reasonably priced, are actually netting the restaurant big margins at your expense. So to discover some of the most overpriced, marked-up, sucker-bet foods at your favorite eatery, Maltzer talked to chefs and restaurant owners; under the cloak of anonymity who shared the biggest wastes of money on the menu.

## "Kobe" beef

Real, actual Kobe beef is made in Japan from cows that get daily spa treatments, full-body exfoliations, and consultations with a naturopath. Or something like that. "Some restaurants, however, are serving American-style 'Kobe,' calling it Japanese Kobe, and charging \$35/oz for it," said one chef, adding that since there are no standards for an "American" version of the beef, there's also no value in "Kobe" hot dogs, hamburgers, Bolognese sauces, nachos, or anything else. Restaurants are basically using the term to mean "*add eight dollars for schmucks.*"

## Spicy tuna roll

You know why they make that thing so damn spicy? The same reason cuisines from places with sub-standard refrigeration are often spicy: the meat is suspect. Not spoiled, necessarily, but as one owner told us, "*I stay away from spicy tuna rolls because they're made with the leftover parts of the tuna and disguised with the spicy sauce.*"

## Fried calamari

The squid-to-breading ratio here is only slightly better than the ratio of basketball-to-commercials during the last 30 seconds of an NBA game. "*You're paying for pure breading,*" one chef/owner said, "*which usually falls off or is chewy.*"

## Truffles

The large majority of "*truffle oil*" has about as much actual truffle in it as there is lime juice in a can of Sprite. Pretty much every chef and owner that Meltzer talked to agreed on this one, with many saying that it's usually a chemically engineered imitation or a highly diluted extract, like vanilla. Even on the rare occasion when actual truffles are used, paying \$58 to see some black flecks on your risotto is never worth it.

## Bottled water

This is not as obvious as you might think. Sure, you're paying for something you get for free, but if you're one of those people who says, "I can't trust the tap water that's so gross" and/or European, ask your server about the restaurant's tap water before you order bottled. Most places now have advanced filtration systems and the taste/clarity of the water is almost indistinguishable from that \$11 bottle of Voss.

## Any chicken entrée over \$25

Unless that entrée is called "*Chicken à la 20-Dollar Bill*," you've just grossly overpaid. Chicken -- even those free-range, born-free, allowed-to-vote-in-local-elections birds -- rarely cost the restaurant more than a few dollars per pound, one owner told Meltzer. He added for reference, "*The cheese in your chicken quesadilla typically costs more.*" WOW....

## Lobster mac and cheese

A few dollar markup from the standard mac and cheese makes sense, but any more is a waste of cash. "*You aren't getting prized lobster tails and generally not even claws, you're getting all the scraps from the body shells,*" one restaurant owner said. "*It may taste great, but the restaurant's laughing all the way to the bank.*"

## Well liquor

Unless you're knocking back \$1 liquor pitchers at one of the best college bars in America, paying \$8 for hangover-grade tequila is just an investment in a miserable next morning. One restaurant owner admitted that the markup is considerably higher on well drinks, while the quality is drastically lower. You're better off throwing down the extra dollar or two for a brand that purifies its booze.

## Oysters

Oysters used as an ingredient in a more complicated dish like oysters Rockefeller, or some other creative endeavor, are worth it. But simply oysters on a plate? As one chef put it: "*\$36-\$45 per dozen is absolutely outrageous for an ingredient that requires no culinary skill whatsoever.*"

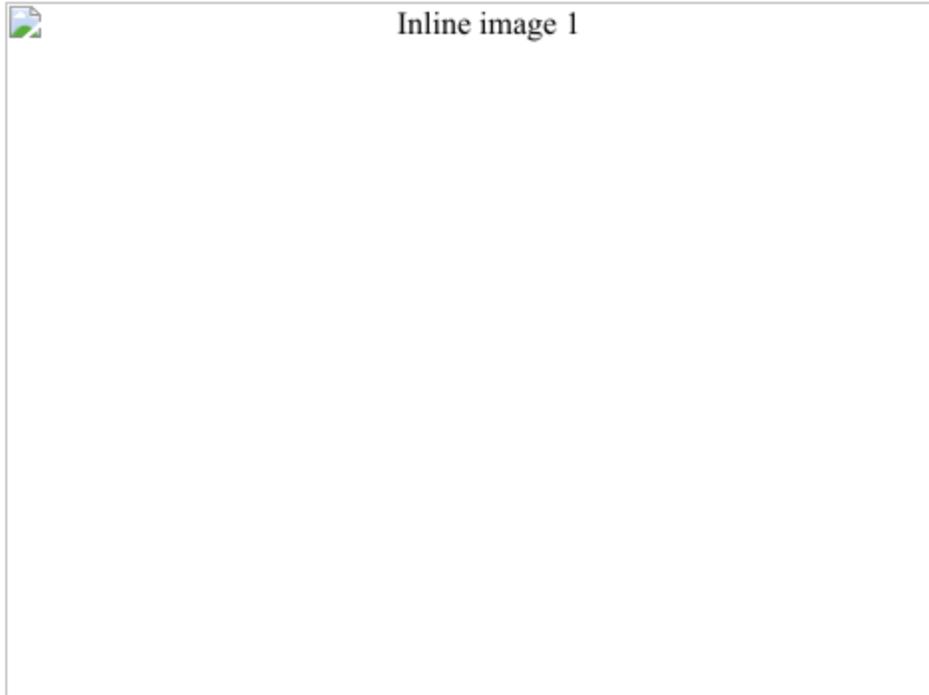
## Mezze platters or artisanal toast

Think about how much you'd spend on a giant plate of Wonder Bread and ketchup, because while it's a little bit fancier, that's pretty much what you're getting. As one chef noted, "*it's a great way for restaurants to charge an arm and a leg for bread and condiments.*"

## Expensive wine or Champagne

At this point, telling someone the second-cheapest bottle of wine is the most marked up is *kinda* like telling someone pro wrestling isn't real: the secret's out. But the higher up the wine menu you go, the more actual cash you're paying in a markup. One restaurant owner told us that if you're a true wine connoisseur, you're better off just bringing in that favorite \$100 bottle from home and paying the corkage fee. And if you're not an aficionado? Then stop being a douche and order something cheap.

## THIS WEEK'S QUOTE



## HE WAS SO RIGHT

### God Dam America

They took one sound bite and demonized him, but press play to see why the media made sure you didn't hear the rest.



Inline image 3

Like almost everyone else, until last week I had only heard the sound bite "*God Dam America*" used by Conservatives to discredit and demonize Barack Obama through his association with his Christian minister Reverend Jeremiah Wright, without hearing the full text to fully understand the rational point that the Reverend was actually making. The use of this sound bite was a gross manipulation. Worse is that not only did the mainstream media do nothing to stop, explain or clarify this "*coded attack*" by playing the entire message, neither did the Liberal media or any of the Black leadership in America. No wonder poor whites in Red States, believe that billionaire Donald Trump is championing their interest more than Bernie Sanders or raising the minimum wage, strengthening the safety net for the poor and elderly will not help them and their families. They are spoon fed these types of sound bites...

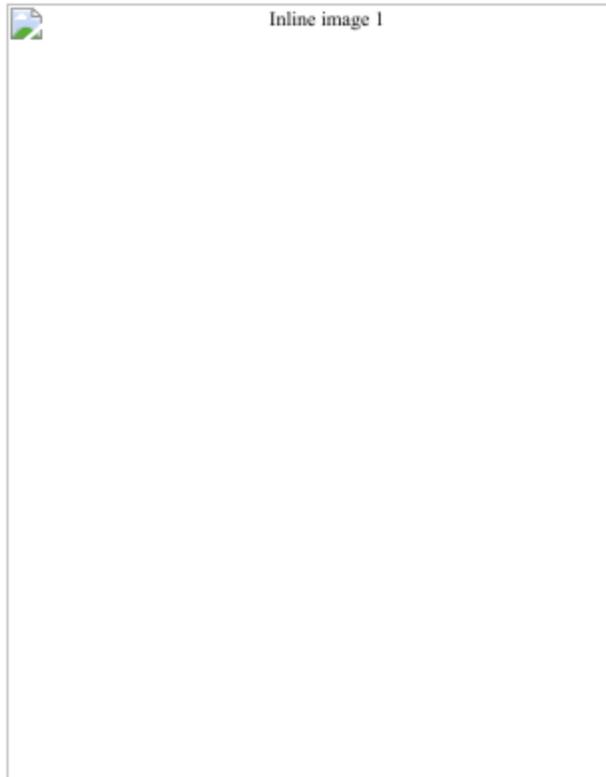
Web Link: <https://www.facebook.com/derrick.seals/posts/10153210661807213>

Reverend Wright spoke the truth. I salute and more so respect any preacher, political leader or American unafraid to speak these and other truths. At a time where a Presidential contender has built a national constituency by questioning the legitimacy of the nation's first Black American President, promising to deport 11 million Hispanics, deny entry into the country for any Muslims and "*take our country back*".... Code for "*keep it white*".... I suggest that you watch the clip several times so that you truly understand where Reverend Wright is coming from. And I love this country.... But Reverend Wright was right.... And it's all horrifically TRUE.

**THINK ABOUT THIS**

The Cost of Modern Warfare

If you want to understand why trying to defeat terrorist with a military option won't work... consider who will go broke first and why bombs alone will never solve the problem.



**BEST VIDEO OF THE WEEK**

## Doctors Without Borders

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)



Inline image 2

Web Link: <https://www.facebook.com/msf.english/videos/10153152667702385/>

## THIS WEEK'S MUSIC

### Natalie Cole

By now you have probably heard that multiple **Grammy**-winning recording artist Natalie Cole and the daughter of the legendary Nat King Cole died on December 31 at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles from due to congestive heart failure caused by Hepatitis C at the age of 65. Natalie rose to musical success in the mid-1970s as an R&B artist with the hits "*This Will Be*", "*Inseparable*", and "*Our Love*". After a period of failing sales and performances due to a heavy drug addiction, Cole re-emerged as a pop artist with the 1987 album *Everlasting* and her cover of Bruce Springsteen's "*Pink Cadillac*". In the 1990s, she re-recorded standards by her father, resulting in her biggest success, *Unforgettable... with Love*, which sold over seven million copies and also won Cole numerous **Grammy Awards**. She sold over 30 million records worldwide

Natalie Cole was born at Cedars of Lebanon Hospital in Los Angeles, the daughter of crooner Nat King Cole and former Duke Ellington Orchestra singer Maria Hawkins Ellington, and raised in the affluent Hancock Park district of Los Angeles. Regarding her childhood, Cole referred to her family as "*the black Kennedys*" and was exposed to many great singers of jazz, soul and blues. At the age of 6, Natalie sang on her father's Christmas album and later began performing at age 11. Cole grew up with older

adopted sister Carole "Cookie" (1944–2009) (her mother Maria's younger sister's daughter); adopted brother Nat "Kelly" Cole (1959–95), and younger twin sisters Timolin and Casey (born 1961).

Her paternal uncle Freddy Cole is a singer and pianist with numerous albums and awards. Cole enrolled in Northfield School, an elite New England preparatory school before her father died of lung cancer in February 1965. Soon afterwards she began having a difficult relationship with her mother. She enrolled in the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She transferred briefly to University of Southern California where she pledged the Upsilon chapter of Delta Sigma Theta sorority. She later transferred back to the University of Massachusetts, where she majored in Child Psychology and minored in German, graduating in 1972.

Following graduation, Cole, who grew up listening to a variety of artists from soul artists such as Aretha Franklin to psychedelic rock icon Janis Joplin, began singing at small clubs with her band, Black Magic. Clubs initially welcomed her due to her being Nat King Cole's daughter, only to be disappointed when she began covering R&B and rock numbers. While performing, she was noted by a couple of producers in the Chicago area, Chuck Jackson and Marvin Yancy, who then approached her to do records. After cutting several records together, they passed off the music to several record labels. Most labels turned them down with one exception. Capitol Records, her father's label, heard the records and agreed to sign her.

Cole, Yancy and Jackson went into studios in Los Angeles to polish the recordings they had shipped, resulting in the release of Cole's debut album, *Inseparable*, which included songs that reminded listeners of Aretha Franklin. In fact, Franklin later contended that songs such as "*This Will Be*", "*I Can't Say No*" and others were originally offered to her while she was recording the *You* album. Franklin turned most of the songs down but agreed to record the title track for her album. Cole also recorded "*You*". Released in 1975, the album became an instant success thanks to "*This Will Be*", which became a top ten hit and later winning Cole a **Grammy Award** for **Best Female R&B Vocal Performance**. A second single, "*Inseparable*", also became a hit. Both songs reached number-one on the R&B chart. Cole also won **Best New Artist** at the **Grammy Awards** for her accomplishments. Due to the media's billing of Cole as the "*new Aretha Franklin*", it inadvertently started a rivalry between the two singers.

## Natalie Cole Career Highlights

- Natalie Cole rocketed to stardom in 1975 with her debut album, *Inseparable*, earning her a #1 single, "*This Will Be (An Everlasting Love)*" and her first two **Grammy Awards for Best New Artist** and **Best Female R&B Vocal Performance**
- In 1977, Cole scored a No. 1 R&B hit with "*I've Got Love on My Mind*" from her third release, *Unpredictable*, which became her first platinum album. Cole continued her winning streak that same year with her fourth album, *Thankful*, which also went platinum and featured another signature hit, "*Our Love*."
- The singer expanded her success with her own TV special in 1977. It was the first of more than 300 major television appearances in her career, including dramatic roles on "*Law and Order*" and "*Touched by an Angel*" as well as guest spots on talk shows with Oprah Winfrey, Ellen DeGeneres, and Larry King.
- In 1979, Cole was awarded a star on the **Hollywood Walk of Fame**.

- After overcoming personal challenges, Cole returned in peak form with 1987's *Everlasting*, an album which garnered three hit singles: "*Jump Start (My Heart)*," the Top 10 ballad "*I Live For Your Love*," and her dance-pop cover of Bruce Springsteen's "Pink Cadillac."
- Cole marked a career milestone in 1991 with the release of *Unforgettable...With Love*, featuring the celebrated duet with her late father, Nat King Cole. The album spent five weeks at No. 1 on the pop charts, earned six **Grammy Awards**, and sold more than 14 million copies worldwide.
- In 1996, Cole released a follow-up album of American standards, *Stardust*, which featured another duet with her father on "*When I Fall in Love*." The album went platinum and won another **Grammy for Best Pop Collaboration with Vocals**.
- Subsequent albums, *Snowfall on the Sahara* (1999) and *Ask a Woman Who Knows* (2002), both merited the **NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Jazz Artist**
- Cole took home her ninth career **GRAMMY Award for 2008's Still Unforgettable**, which won for **Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album**. It also earned Natalie a **NAACP Award for Best Jazz Artist**."
- In 2001, she starred as herself in "*Livin' for Love: the Natalie Cole Story*," based on her autobiography, *Angel on My Shoulder*, which detailed her harrowing drive to overcome drug addiction. She received the **NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Actress in a Television Movie, Mini-Series or Dramatic Special**. As an actress, Natalie starred in director Delbert Mann's "*Lily in Winter*" and co-starred with Laurence Fishburne and Cicely Tyson in Walter Mosley's "*Always Outnumbered*."
- Cole released a second memoir in 2010 titled "*Love Brought Me Back*," the heart-wrenching chronicle of her quest for a kidney transplant.
- At the time of her death Natalie Cole served as spokesperson for **the University Kidney Research Organization**, a nonprofit organization supporting medical research related to the prevention, treatment, and eradication of all form of kidney disease.

As someone who had the privilege to work with Natalie Cole when she performed in one of our *Black Athletes Hall of Fame* television specials in 1977, I can personally attest to the musically mastery that she commanded and why tens of millions of her fans will miss her presence. ***With this you are invited to enjoy the wonderful music of Ms. Natalie Cole.***

Natalie Cole – ***Unforgettable*** -- <https://youtu.be/MKCyUe4syc4>

Natalie Cole – ***Pink Cadillac*** -- <https://youtu.be/IhHLifMnUxw>

Natalie Cole – ***I Got Love On My Mind*** -- <https://youtu.be/fKGjIwIoMH0>

Natalie Cole – ***Our Love & I Believe*** -- <https://youtu.be/o1B4GrBVY08>

Natalie Cole – ***Day Dreaming*** -- [https://youtu.be/yQB\\_EU0dtOM](https://youtu.be/yQB_EU0dtOM)

Natalie Cole – ***Tell Me All About It*** -- <https://youtu.be/NGEWwhTTkWs>

Natalie Cole & Andrea Bocelli – ***Christmas Song*** -- <https://youtu.be/MTYtaBIBDXA>

Natalie Cole – ***Inseparable*** -- <https://youtu.be/09xAmRy0GZs>

Natalie Cole – ***This Will Be*** -- [https://youtu.be/lswB6q2t\\_6c](https://youtu.be/lswB6q2t_6c)

Natalie Cole – ***I'm a woman*** -- <https://youtu.be/C8ZePqfxsDM>

Natalie Cole – ***Mona Lisa*** -- <https://youtu.be/aFJqeyObjAs>

Natalie Cole – ***My baby just cares for me*** -- <https://youtu.be/VZb8btFLqwc>

Natalie Cole – ***Run To You/I Have Nothing*** -- [https://youtu.be/1be\\_9DNNgSw](https://youtu.be/1be_9DNNgSw)

Natalie Cole ft. Ruben Studdard – ***When I Fall in Love*** -- [https://youtu.be/qX4\\_3H9o0SU](https://youtu.be/qX4_3H9o0SU)

Whitney Houston & Natalie Cole – ***Say A Little Prayer*** -- [https://youtu.be/-uE1Dho\\_3UA](https://youtu.be/-uE1Dho_3UA)

Reba McEntire & Natalie Cole – ***Since I Fell For You*** -- [https://youtu.be/R53W\\_EoIzkQ](https://youtu.be/R53W_EoIzkQ)

Frank Sinatra & Natalie Cole – ***I get a kick out of you*** -- <https://youtu.be/Z4btDs7atqc>

Natalie Cole & Patti Austin – ***Mr. Paganini*** -- <https://youtu.be/eN9Vfp5G8Ws>

#### BONUS TRACKS

Rachelle Ferrell & Deborah Cox (Tribute to Natalie Cole) – ***Soul Train Lady Of Soul Awards 1999*** -- <https://youtu.be/8YiNIBt25W8>

Earth Wind & Fire with Natalie Cole --

<https://www.facebook.com/EarthWindandFire/videos/10153123610280989/?theater>

*I hope that you enjoyed this week's offerings and wish you and those whom you love a great week and fantastic 2016.....*

Sincerely,

Greg Brown

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