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Subject: Greg Brown's Weekend Reading and Other Things.. 06/21/2015

Date: Sun, 21 Jun 2015 06:10:37 +0000

Attachments: [REDACTED], 2015.

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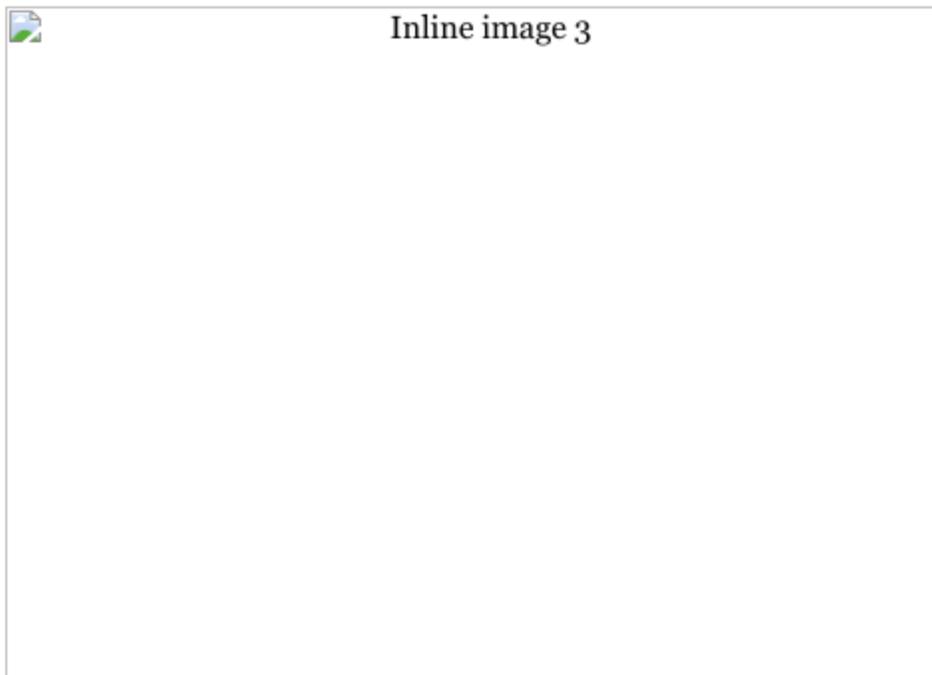
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DEAR FRIEND.....

The Changing Attitudes on Marijuana



For more than an hundred years in America anti-drug messaging has been powerful. And to illustrate the point, the Pew Research organization has compiled new data on Americans' attitudes toward legalizing marijuana. As you might imagine there is a big split by party -- Democrats and independents are more receptive to legalization than Republicans -- but that may be linked to the overlap of politics and age. The graph below shows the generational attitudes toward legalization, from Millennials (*now 18 to 35*) to the pre-Boomer "*Silent*" generation (70 and up). The older you get, the more you oppose legalization.



When I was a kid, drug propaganda -- not differentiating between marijuana and everything else -- looked like this:



Inline image 5

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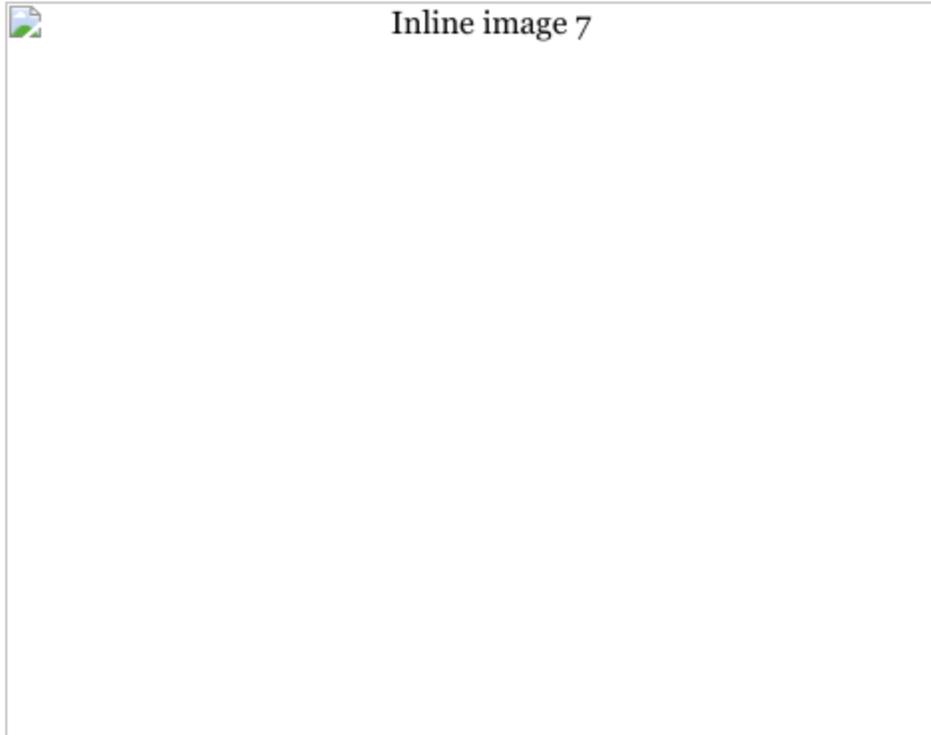
By the time the Millennials came around, anti-pot propaganda looked like this:



Inline image 6

Web Link: <https://youtu.be/r2Okh1ow9B4>

Pew asked why people oppose legalization. The answers they got often reflect more of the intensity of the former attitude than the mellowness of the latter.



Highlighted are two reasons/answers that have been at the center of anti-marijuana rhetoric for years. Is marijuana addictive? Yes, says the government ... adding that it is "*linked to a mild withdrawal syndrome.*" Is marijuana a gateway drug to other substances? Yes, says the government ... technically, sort of, but "most people who use marijuana do not go on to use other, '*harder*' substances." Except that the "*gateway drug*" argument has been debunked by most experts. Yet still: 11 percent of those who oppose marijuana legalization focus on it being a gateway. The **war on drugs** has not been much of a success in keeping people from using drugs. But it seems to have been very good at making people think the *war on drugs* is necessary. And to keep criminalizing the use and thus the sale of marijuana is stupid policy especially when every expert will acknowledge that hundreds of thousands of Americans die from the use of prescription drugs and alcohol every year, while few if not any die from using marijuana.

Finally how dangerous marijuana can be, when mainstream doctors prescribe it for medical purposes? To date, 23 states and the District of Columbia have legalized marijuana for medical purposes, and 13 others have legalized the use of limited marijuana extracts for certain conditions. Also there is currently pending legislation on the books in another nine states. Multiple studies have shown a range of potential medical benefits, suggesting marijuana combats aggressive cancer, slows the spread of HIV and stunts the progression of Alzheimer's disease. This piece was written by someone who has never smoked a joint or ate a hash brownie yet believes that even recreational marijuana should be legalized.

Low Wages Cost U.S. Taxpayers \$153 Billion A Year



Inline image 2

Poverty wages cost U.S. taxpayers about \$153 billion each year, according to a recent report from the University of California, Berkeley. That's because, when families depend on low-wage jobs to survive, they're forced to rely on government programs like Medicaid and food stamps to make ends meet. The Berkeley report looks at how much states and the federal government are spending on programs like Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, the Temporary Aid to Needy Families program, the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, better known as food stamps. The report found that the federal government spends about \$127.8 billion per year, and states collectively spend about \$25 billion per year, on public assistance programs for working families.

Currently, the federal minimum wage is stalled at a paltry \$7.25 an hour. A parent working full-time at that rate over the course of the year won't bring in enough money to live above the poverty line for a family of two, which means leaning on government assistance. So when a company like McDonald's, for instance, pays a worker the minimum wage, you, the taxpayer end up subsidizing her pay. A 2013 analysis from the National Employment Law Project found that the 10 largest fast food companies cost taxpayers about \$3.8 billion per year.

More than half of fast-food workers rely on public assistance, in fact. But that's not the only sector desperate for a raise. The Berkeley report also found that child-care and home-care workers also rely on public assistance to get by. On April 15, workers across the U.S. are planning to protest for better pay and union representation for low-wage workers. The protests are being organized by Fight for 15, a national labor movement fighting to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour. Here's a look at what percentage of low-wage workers across the following fields rely on public assistance:



Inline image 1

Many low-wage employers, from Walmart to McDonald's, have announced pay raises in recent months, but workers say it isn't enough. For example, McDonald's plan to raise wages by 10 percent will only affect a small percentage of the company's workers. Most McDonald's workers are employed by franchisees, and the company has said it can't control how those workers are paid. These companies and franchisees should raise salaries for their workers because it is beyond shameful that in the richest country in the world – millions of Americans work sometimes two and three jobs and still live in poverty.

Totally Out of Control

Medication has reached a shocking level in the UK



Inline image 1

While recently reading the **U.K. Independent** newspaper I came across an article by Janet Street-Porter – ***With one billion prescriptions written every year, it's time to wean ourselves off the drugs*** – that was difficult to believe. The article said that one in four adults in the United Kingdom takes at least three different prescription drugs a week and that the National Health Service (NHS) in England dishes out 2.7 million items every single day.

Critics claim that this overuse of the prescription pad is crippling the NHS financially and could even be shortening our lives. A distinguished group of senior doctors (the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges) say the vast number of drugs we consume is cause for concern. They want the NHS to wind back from “too much medicine” and replace it with a culture where patients ask “what happens if I do nothing?” and get told the realistic benefits and potential drawbacks of any treatment or procedure.

Medication has reached a shocking level in the UK: the NHS in England dishes out one billion prescriptions a year to half of the population, 2.7 million items every single day. Add to that the cost of blood tests and millions of routine exploratory procedures and you can see how the NHS could be chucking away money it can't afford.

One reason for this surge in costs is the way the NHS is structured: hospitals receive funds based on the number of procedures they perform, and GPs get rewarded according to the number of people they diagnose and treatments they prescribe. This seems utterly misguided. Surely it encourages patients to expect miracle cures when (a lot of the time) we could be adopting healthier lifestyles and better pain management. Every time we go to the doctors we want a magic bit of paper or another appointment, instead of being more realistic.

It's time for doctors to say no every time we ask for a pill or a placebo, and we must start asking whether an X-ray or MRI scan, a blood test or a load of physiotherapy is going to make us feel any better than a hot bath, a glass of wine and a cuddle from a close friend. Almost three-quarters of adults aged over 70 take more than three medicines a week (including statins), but are they effective?

Increasingly, critics say this is debatable. Now the debate about unnecessary medication has sparked off a row about whether psychiatric drugs are effective. More than one in 10 women takes antidepressants, almost twice as many as men. Writing in the British Medical Journal, Professor Peter Gotzsche claims that they can cause up to half a million deaths a year in the Western world, and that drug companies routinely overstate the benefits and play down their side effects. He says that in the US, there are 15 times more suicides as a result of these drugs than official statistics show. He wants prescriptions to be given only in acute situations, with a plan in place to taper off consumption, agreed by the patient.

Antibiotics is another area of gross over-prescription. No new drugs have been developed for more than 25 years and many are now ineffective against superbugs. This week, the Government's adviser has announced he would like countries to work together and set up an international fund to pay for the development of new antibiotics, whose usage should be carefully controlled.

The over prescribing of prescription drugs has reached an epidemic proportion. Other than dying from natural causes, accidental prescription drug overdoses are the number one cause of death in the United States. In fact, more people died from accidental prescription overdoses in 2012 than homicides, suicides, and fatal car accidents combined. In 2014 pharmacies filled out 4,002,661,750 retail prescription drugs in the United States. And since 1999, the amount of prescription painkillers prescribed and sold in the U.S. has nearly quadrupled, yet there has not been an overall change in the amount of pain that Americans report.

- 52 Million people in the US, over the age of 12, have used prescription drugs non-medically in their lifetime.
- 6.1 Million people have used them non-medically in the past month.2 5 percent of the United States is the world's population and consumes 75 percent of the world's prescription drugs.
- In 2010, enough prescription painkillers were prescribed to medicate every American adult every 4 hours for 1 month.

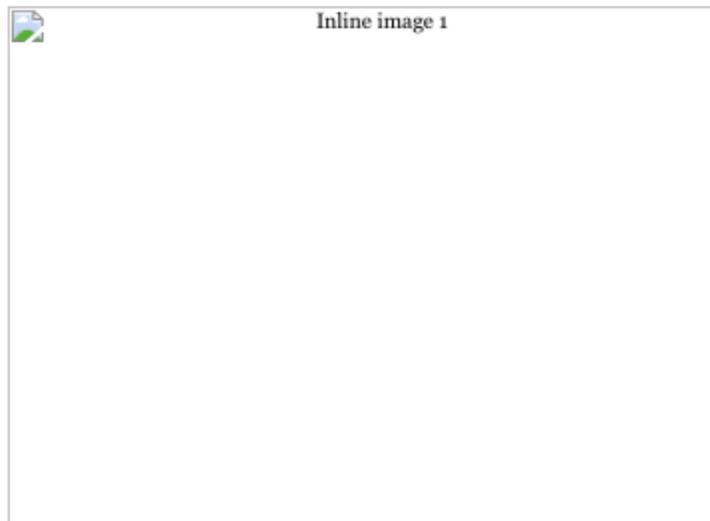
The number of prescription medicine abusers in 2010 was 8.76 million. Most abused prescription drugs fall under 3 categories:

- Painkillers: 5.1 million
- Tranquilizers: 2.2 million
- Stimulants: 1.1 million

In the 1970s, spending on drugs totaled roughly 5% of total US healthcare costs. Today, that has doubled and is rising quickly. Admittedly, new drugs used to treat conditions once treated with surgery may actually bring down costs, since surgery is generally more expensive. Simply citing increases in spending on drugs and ignoring the offset in surgical costs gives a misleading picture of the overall costs of prescription medicines. Still, spending on prescription medications has increased by a staggering \$200bn in two decades.

The misuse and abuse of prescription medications in the United States is out of control, yet few people are aware of just how big the problem really is. We need to acknowledge that there is a prescription drug abuse epidemic in America as well as in the U.K. as it demands our attention. Finally we need to treat the major prescription drug companies and the doctors who over-sell their products like the drug dealers that they are and no different to the sellers of cocaine, heroin and marijuana.

What A Joke



Pledging to be the "*Greatest Jobs President in History*" celebrity hotelier Donald Trump officially announced his campaign for president on June 16, 2015, promising to restore America's standing in the world in a rambling speech that strongly resembled performance art. "Our country needs a truly great leader," the reality TV star told supporters gathered at Trump Tower in New York City. "*We need a leader that wrote The Art of the Deal,*" he added, making sure to mention his book. "*We need a leader that can bring back our jobs, bring back our manufacturing, bring back our military and take care of our vets.*" As Chris Cillizza wrote last week in The Washington Post, "*Donald Trump's presidential candidacy is great entertainment. It's terrible for politics.*"

Entering the stage via escalator -- one of the most unusual entrances in the history of presidential announcements -- Trump eschewed his prepared remarks and launched into a long-winded tirade against just about everybody: President Barack Obama, Democrats, Republicans and multiple foreign nations. "*I beat China all the time. All the time,*" he boasted. While the joke is that almost everyone in China considers Donald Trump as a joke.

Addressing the cost and problems with the administration's health care reform website, Trump crowed that his business background would have aided the government greatly. "I have so many websites, I have them all over the place," he said. Obama's golf hobby, which Trump frequently derides, also acted as a perfect plug for his extensive golf courses. "*He might be on one of my courses; I have some of the best courses in the world,*" he said. Trump who says that his business background will allow him to put the country's finances in order forgets to mention that he filed for corporate bankruptcy four times, 1991, 1992, 2004 and 2009. Again... What a joke...

Scanning across the assembled crowd of supporters, some of whom frequently cheered the newly declared candidate on, Trump again bragged: "*This is beyond anybody's expectations. There's been no crowd like this.*" At one point, Trump held up a sheet of paper and read off his net worth (\$10 billion, according to his campaign). But he assured the audience he wasn't doing so merely "*to brag.*" Trump's speech included some populist proposals, too -- proposals that could create problems for his fellow Republican rivals down the road. "*Let's save Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security without cuts,*" Trump said, because "*now many of these candidates want to cut it.*" And somehow he is not going to raise taxes.

The real-estate mogul has openly flirted with throwing his hat into the ring for years. In 2012, he endorsed then-Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney, who was forced to appear in a surreal press conference to kiss the ring of New York's dealer-in-chief. But his overt skepticism of Obama's birthplace, among other off-the-wall remarks he regularly dishes out through his Twitter feed, will be sure to cause headaches for Republicans in the 2016 presidential primary.

In his speech, Trump announced that he would be meeting with three other Republican candidates in the next week. According to a CNN poll released last month, Trump is tied for 10th place among the 2016 GOP field, possibly guaranteeing him a spot in the first GOP debate in August. "*Sadly, the American dream is dead,*" Trump proclaimed, summing up a speech that ran almost an hour. "*But if I get elected president, I will bring it back, bigger, and better than ever.*"

Like a snake oil salesman who is selling himself as the cure for all of the Country's problems, Trump who has never formally run for president before, but has often talked about it is now literally running for president with nothing but bravado and promises. Few people expected it to happen – he's gone through the motions many times before - and his political rants up until now have been roundly derided as a joke. But this time he actually said the words, and he seems like he means it. With campaign staff in key early voting states and a net worth he puts at more than \$8.5bn, he has the resources to roil the Republican presidential field and at least hang in until it becomes too embarrassing.

Polling high enough to get a spot on the stage in the forthcoming Republican debates, and he's already proven a willingness to take swings at his opponents. Jeb Bush and Marco Rubio "*don't have a clue*", he said in his announcement speech. "*How are these people going to lead us?*" he asked. If he says that enough times during a debate – or in a multi-million dollar television advertising spree – a lot of people are going to stop laughing and take notice. And that's probably just what Trump wants. Thank God that all that might happen is that currently polling with only 3% he makes it on the GOP debates which is limited to ten.

And as Laura Clawson wrote this week in The Daily Kos – If you thought the Republican presidential primary couldn't get any more entertaining, think again: Donald Trump and his epic combover are IN. Trump's announcement speech was a word salad of outrage (Mexican immigrants "*bringing drugs, bringing crime, they're rapists, and some, I assume, are good people*"), fear-mongering (Iran is taking over Iraq "*and they're taking it over bigly*"), and self-promotion ("*I beat China all the time*").

All the talking points were present in unvarnished form—Obamacare bad, immigrants bad, other countries bad, economy bad, politicians bad (wonderful people who want Trump's support, but also apparently morons who won't speak the truth). Also present, major tangents about things like how President Obama would be welcome to play golf on a Trump-owned golf course.

Finally, he got down to it. "Our country needs a truly great leader and we need a truly great leader now. We need a leader that wrote the art of the deal." (Or The Art of the Deal.) And yes, that means that "Ladies and gentlemen, I am officially running for president of the United States and we are going to make our country great again." Pray for us now: Pray that Donald Trump will be in at least one Republican primary debate, because wow. This speech was a promise of mirth and hilarity to come.

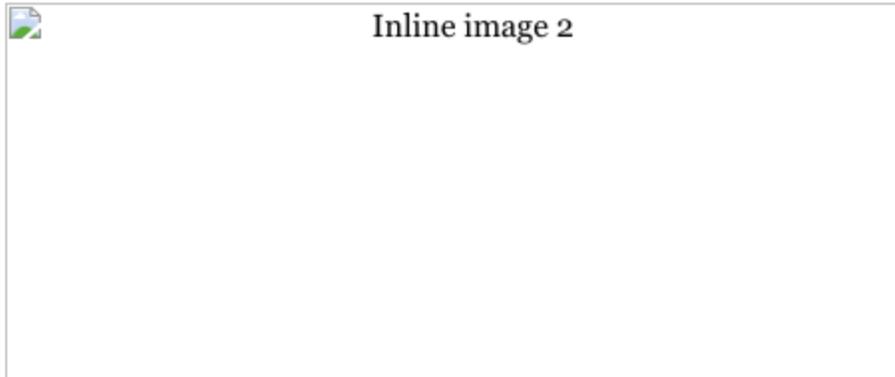
Donald Trump is not now and almost certainly never will be a credible candidate for the presidency. His polling numbers are among the worst I have ever seen; his unfavorable rating outpaces his favorable score by 42 points among Republicans. A candidate with numbers like that is not the sort of candidate who commands live coverage on all the major cable networks when he announces for president. And yet, that's exactly what Trump got this week. He's irresistible because he will say anything no matter how ridiculous or outlandish. Facts or truth don't matter with Donald Trump as his act is entertaining to a certain segment of the public and the media. See attached assessment of the speech by **Fact Checker -- Donald Trump Tramples Facts In 2016 Campaign Kickoff Speech.**

Donald Trump's attention doesn't equal credibility. Entertainment value doesn't equal electability. Being famous isn't the same thing as being respected. Sideshows are fun until they want to be the main

attraction. Donald Trump will never be president. He knows that. We know that. But his candidacy ensures that for the next several months (at least), he will suck the attention and oxygen away from the men and women who might be. That's great entertainment. But it's terrible for politics. **Again..... Donald Trump as President.... What a joke...**

Again No Outrage

More wrongdoing at banks, more huge fines, still no prosecutions



On May 20, 2015 regulators in the U.S. and U.K. announced what for years had seemed inexplicably unattainable: guilty pleas from the parent corporations of some of the world's largest banks. Barclays Plc, Citigroup Inc., JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Royal Bank of Scotland Group Plc pled guilty to manipulating foreign exchange markets and UBS Group AG to manipulating a key financial benchmark, in what the Justice Department trumpeted as "*parent-level guilty pleas.*" But the pleas by Citi and RBS didn't come from the banks' parent companies. Neither did the UBS plea. Instead, they came from subsidiaries: Citicorp, RBS Plc, and UBS AG.

The settlement was the culmination of a long investigation into the actions of perhaps 20 employees of the six banks, who referred to themselves as the "*cartel*". Between 2007 and 2013 they used coded communication in an online chat room to help one another make money, especially by rigging the two daily "*fixes*" of the exchange rate between the dollar and the euro, violating rules on market manipulation and collusion. As one of them wrote in a chat session, "*If you ain't [sic] cheating, you ain't trying.*"

After years of criticism for its lackluster approach to holding big banks accountable for their mortgage-related misdeeds, the DOJ presented May's settlements as a tougher line that forced banks' top-level parent companies to admit guilt. Attorney General Loretta Lynch said the crimes were committed by "*traders who were very senior, who were acting on behalf of the senior banks, whose behavior profited the parent-level banks.*" That is inarguably correct, and means parent companies Citigroup, RBS Group Plc and UBS AG profited from the wrongdoing, along with their subsidiaries who pled guilty.

Previous settlements between big banks and U.S. authorities had been made with small, frequently foreign subsidiaries. This allowed the impact of the agreements to be isolated and provided ammunition for banks to argue publicly that wrongdoing within their organizations was not widespread. A Justice Department spokesman told The Huffington Post that "*Citicorp is the parent of the top banking entity, Citibank NA. Royal Bank of Scotland plc is the top RBS banking entity,*" adding that "*each financial institution agreed to a parent-level plea. When they conspired to manipulate the exchange rate, the traders in question were acting on behalf of, and for the benefit of, the banks that pleaded guilty.*" While this statement is true, it leaves out the significant fact that both "*parents*" are themselves subsidiaries of Citigroup and RBS Group Plc, respectively.

While the guilty pleas were extracted from a parent company of the offending banks, in the cases of Citi, RBS and UBS the parent was itself another subsidiary of the top organizational entity. It is not clear why these pleas were structured in this manner. The Justice Department did not directly respond when asked why the guilty pleas for Citi, RBS and UBS were structured differently than those for Barclays and JP Morgan. While Citigroup, RBS Group Plc and UBS Group AG did not themselves plead guilty, the terms of the agreement, including cooperation with the DOJ going forward, do apply to them.

The scene of regulators in the U.S. and U.K. announcing huge penalties to the major international banks, based on gross misconduct with no individuals charged with any crimes and some confusion as to what exactly the banks were admitting to and what effect that would have seems so familiar that it is reminiscent of baseball's Yankee great Yogi Berra, "*It's like deja-vu, all over again.*" Admitting to criminal behavior in America was once a guarantee of bankruptcy. That, at any rate, was the fate of big names such as Drexel Burnham Lambert, an investment bank, and Arthur Andersen, an accountancy firm, which had to shut up shop after losing both operating licenses and clients that were restricted from doing business with felons. Yet the Department of Justice and other regulators seem to have magicked this consequence away.

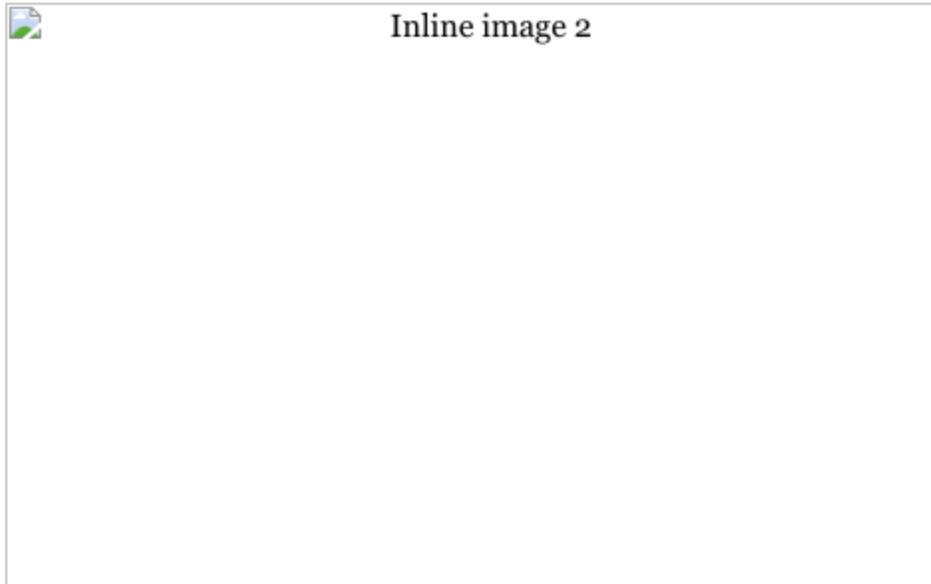
Credit Suisse, another multinational bank, admitted to criminal charges related to its clients' tax evasion last year, but received waivers from the SEC, among others, that allowed it to stay in business. Loretta Lynch, the attorney general, claimed it was up to other regulators to decide whether to do the same this time. "*It is thought that the required waivers have been obtained but this is not certain,*" wrote Richard Bove of Rafferty Capital, an investment bank, reflecting the confusion.

Although private lawsuits are sure to follow, as a group of investors have already announced a \$394 million deal with Citigroup – for these big international banks who are the "*masters of the universe*" in the financial sector where the foreign-exchange generates \$500 billion in daily trades affecting tens of millions of people in just the dollar-euro market enabling these criminal enterprises to make tens of billions of dollars a year – these backroom deals will continue as long as no one goes to jail or companies bared from the industry because fines are just the cost of doing business.... ***and this is my rant of the week...***

WEEK's READINGS

Why don't Americans call mass shootings 'terrorism'? Racism

The refrain of denial – the urge to define white people’s terrorist acts as anything but – is an effort to protect the idea that you can be a racist and not kill people



When tragedies happen, it’s natural for people to come together in the spirit of protecting each other. So after the massacre at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, people responded in an effort to make sense of seemingly nonsensical violence – to provide comfort in the midst of confusion. But for some people, their attempt to make sense of violence was more about rejecting the blatantly obvious - that the shooter was a racist intent on perpetrating an act of terrorism - than it was to comfort a community in pain.

Despite the fact that Charleston Police Chief Greg Mullen said early on that *“this is a hate crime”* and that a witness reported that suspect Dylann Roof said to the black people he killed, *“you rape our women and are taking over our country”*, conservative columnist AJ Delgado maintained that the *“odds would favor [the crime] NOT being racial”*, Republican presidential candidate Lindsey Graham called him a *“whacked-out kid”* and suggested he was *“looking for Christians to kill them, and USA Today referred to him as a “lone wolf”*. The Daily Beast described the killer – a man who reportedly sat with a bible study group for an hour before he started to kill people – as *“quiet and soft spoken”*, averring that he had black friends on Facebook, even as his nine victims remained unnamed and uncelebrated.

The excuses to call a white, male mass-killer anything but “*a terrorist*” are familiar – they’re part of a refrain repeated over and over again when a horrific crime intended to terrify a group of people is committed by a white man. It’s a refrain of denial. (The same denial happened when Elliot Rodger penned a misogynist manifesto before his killing spree: He’s not sexist, he’s just crazy!)

But the question, especially for white people who engage in the excuse-making, is: why are you so intent on defining situations like those in Charleston as not-terrorism? Why are you so invested in the idea that the crime was not one of hatred? A white man apparently planned and allegedly carried out a terrorist act against a historic black church and its members. He used racist language while doing so, and has been pictured wearing a jacket covered in racist, white supremacist patches. We all know what these things mean; we know what the motivation for this massacre was. So how could anyone with sense see all of these things and still maintain that race wasn’t necessarily a factor, and terror wasn’t the intent?

It’s difficult to imagine anything else but that you are protecting the idea that you can be racist and not kill people. While it may be true that not all virulent racists are mass murderers, defending the public image of racists in the wake of a massacre devalues the lives taken. And when you bend over backwards to make sure that white men who commit racist violence can maintain their humanity at the expense of the full measure of justice for their victims, we send a clear message about who is worth protecting and who isn’t.

Even though right wing domestic terror is as big a threat to the nation as terror from abroad, we’ll likely continue to widely hear Roof described as “crazy” or a “*lone wolf*”. What we won’t hear as broadly is how violence against people of color – especially, as my colleague Rebecca Carroll so brilliantly wrote, violence in the protection of white womanhood – is part of the United States’ historical legacy, that it is systematic, that it is organized, and that it has yet to end. Violence against people of color is only as “*crazy*” as America is and has been.

The Daily Show - Charleston Church Shooting



Inline image 1

Web Link: <https://youtu.be/mjzrvRKv6Ks>

For the past 16 years, a major part of Jon Stewart's job has been to write and deliver jokes during his opening monologue at "The Daily Show." But the murder of nine people at a black church by a white man in Charleston, S.C., rendered the comedian unable to find material on Thursday. "I didn't do my job today," Mr. Stewart, who will leave his post in August, told the audience, adding, "And maybe if I wasn't nearing the end of the run or this wasn't such a common occurrence maybe I could've pulled out of the spiral, but I didn't." Instead of jokes, he used his monologue to address the political and news media response to the shootings, racial tension in America and the reluctance of some to call the mass murder a terrorist attack. (Watch the video on the above web link.)

If America had considered this Islamic terrorism, he said, "we'll torture people." He continued: "We've got to do whatever we can to keep Americans safe.' Nine people shot in a church, what about that? 'Hey, what are you gonna do, crazy is as crazy is, right?' That's the part that I cannot for the life of me wrap my head around." Mr. Stewart also addressed the Confederate flag, which continued to fly at full staff on the grounds of South Carolina's Statehouse hours after the shooting. "The Confederate flag flies over South Carolina, and the roads are named for Confederate generals," Mr. Stewart continued, "and the white guy is the one who feels like his country is being taken away from him."

To add insult to injury, Charleston County Magistrate James B. Gosnell began Friday's bond hearing for mass-murderer Dylann Roof by declaring that the killer's family members were victims as well. I can't imagine an American judge saying that the family of a Islamic family be considered victims. But then this is the same judge that advised a black defendant in a November 6, 2003 bond reduction hearing, "There are four kinds of people in this world—black people, white people, red necks, and n---rs."

This month, the headlines were about a Muslim man in Boston who was accused of threatening police officers with a knife. Last month, two Muslims attacked an anti-Islamic conference in Garland, Tex. The month before, a Muslim man was charged with plotting to drive a truck bomb onto a military installation in Kansas. If you keep up with the news, you know that a small but steady stream of American Muslims, radicalized by overseas extremists, are engaging in violence here in the United States. But headlines can mislead. The main terrorist threat in the United States is not from violent Muslim extremists, but from right-wing extremists. Just ask the police.

In a survey we conducted with the Police Executive Research Forum last year of 382 law enforcement agencies, 74 percent reported anti-government extremism as one of the top three terrorist threats in their jurisdiction; 39 percent listed extremism connected with Al Qaeda or like-minded terrorist organizations. And only 3 percent identified the threat from Muslim extremists as severe, compared with 7 percent for anti-government and other forms of extremism.”

Read more here: [\[REDACTED\]](#)

Muslims per year have been involved in an average of six terrorism-related plots against targets in the United States. Most were disrupted, but the 20 plots that were carried out accounted for 50 fatalities over the past 13 and a half years.

In contrast, rightwing extremists averaged 337 attacks per year in the decade after 9/11, causing a total of 254 fatalities, according to a study by Arie Perliger, a professor at the United States Military Academy's Combating Terrorism Center. The toll has increased since the study was released in 2012.

Other data sets, using different definitions of political violence, tell comparable stories. The Global Terrorism Database maintained by the Start Center at the University of Maryland includes 65 attacks in the United States associated with rightwing ideologies and 24 by Muslim extremists since 9/11. The International Security Program at the New America Foundation identifies 39 fatalities from “non-jihadist” homegrown extremists and 26 fatalities from “jihadist” extremists.

Meanwhile, terrorism of all forms has accounted for a tiny proportion of violence in America. There have been more than 215,000 murders in the United States since 9/11. For every person killed by Muslim extremists, there have been 4,300 homicides from other threats.

Public debates on terrorism focus intensely on Muslims. But this focus does not square with the low number of plots in the United States by Muslims, and it does a disservice to a minority group that suffers from increasingly hostile public opinion. As state and local police agencies remind us, right wing, antigovernment extremism is the leading source of ideological violence in America. So why don't Americans call mass shootings 'terrorism'? RACISM.....

The most dangerous terrorist for America are not Islamic terrorist six thousand miles away fighting for their souls of their countrymen against oppressive authoritarian regimes who have enriched themselves, families and friends. Think home-grown underachievers who for the last half century have been told by partisan leaders and cable television pundits that their meager lot in life is due to Blacks, Hispanics, Muslims, Arabs, Africans, Chinese and anyone but their own kind. No wonder why they go on crazy rampages.... And remember that since 2002, Right-wing White Terrorists have Killed More

Americans Than Muslim Extremists. For additional evidence attached please find the attached **Raw Story** article by Alex Henderson -- ***Here are 10 of the worst domestic terror attacks by extreme Christians and right-wing men.***

The Changing Face of the Heartland.



Inline image 1



Inline image 2

Like many places in America Minnesota and the surrounding states of the upper Midwest are experiencing a demographic revolution. That fact and its significance are just beginning to sink in, which is why many residents of the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul area, whatever their own ethnicity, still refer to their community matter-of-factly as “lily white.” And while it’s true that with a 78 percent Caucasian population the Twin Cities are still far less ethnically diverse than other parts of the United States — among them the far West and Southeast as well as gateway cities and multicultural hubs like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, San Francisco, and Miami — it’s also becoming less true with every passing year. One big reason: immigration.

“Our diversity is more diverse.”

Insofar as we associate Minnesota with immigration at all, it’s because of the influx of Scandinavians and Germans during the 19th century (think of all those Norwegian bachelor farmers in Lake Wobegon). But Minnesotans now come from a surprisingly wide array of countries and communities, and these more recent immigrants tend to be people of color rather than whites. As former Minneapolis mayor R.T. Rybak says, “*Our diversity is more diverse*” than many other places because the state in general, and Minneapolis-St. Paul in particular, have been hubs of refugee resettlement for decades. The region has twice the share of immigrants from Southeast Asia as the United States as a whole (21 percent versus 10 percent of the immigrant population), and five times the share of immigrants from Africa as the nation as a whole (21 percent versus 4 percent).

Minnesota is home to Mexicans, Hmong, Indians, Vietnamese, Somalis, Liberians, and Ethiopians. Its people of color also include American-born Native Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and African-Americans. According to the State Demographic Center, the Asian, black, and Hispanic populations in the state tripled between 1990 and 2010, while the white population grew by less than 10 percent. This trend will continue: From 2010 to 2030, the number of people of color is expected to grow twice as quickly as the number of whites. As Minnesota and the region go, so goes the nation, which is also becoming ever more diversified, with an overall decline in the percentage of whites, and increase in people of color.

At the same time that its overall ethnic and racial makeup is changing, Minneapolis and St. Paul are feeling the effects of another shift, vividly described by William Frey in his new book, *Diversity Explosion*, and again one that is occurring throughout the nation: the aging of the generation of Americans born after World War II, who were predominantly white.

These two demographic shifts have huge implications for how both the private and public sectors in Minnesota — and elsewhere — allocate their resources and make decisions about education, training, and hiring. The challenge will be to make sure that as the baby boomers retire and their jobs open up to a more diverse workforce, the young people in that workforce are ready to fill those jobs.

With most of the future growth in the labor force coming from people of color, it's alarming to have to acknowledge how profoundly the existing education and training systems have failed them. Statewide, 85 percent of whites graduated from high school on time in 2013, compared to 58 percent of Hispanics, 57 percent of blacks (including both U.S.-born African-Americans and African immigrants), and fewer than half (49 percent) of American Indians. The gaps are slightly larger at the metropolitan level, and wrenching for the largest city, Minneapolis, where just 51 percent of Africans, 41 percent of Hispanics, 40 percent of African-Americans, and 34 percent of American Indians graduate from public schools on time.

The employment gap is appalling, too. Seventy-nine percent of working-age whites in the Twin Cities are employed compared to 65 percent of working-age people of color — the largest such gap in the country. Unless it can shake these dubious distinctions, the region and the state as a whole will not have a sufficiently skilled workforce to maintain, much less grow, its economy. That could have potentially disastrous results. The region is home to 18 Fortune 500 companies, including 3M, Medtronic, General Mills, and Pillsbury.* If the local workforce cannot meet the needs of these and other companies in the next five to ten years, which is when the state demographic office foresees labor shortages beginning to take effect, they may decide to move to regions that have a bigger pool of qualified workers.

This looming crisis should come as no surprise. Reports dating back as far as the 1990s and early 2000s have repeatedly warned that the education and employment gaps would become a drag on workforce growth and, as a result, on economic growth unless something was done to reverse these trends. Yet little was done, and the gaps persisted.

The lag between awareness and action is partly attributable to complacency. The state has long taken pride in its progressive politics, its iconic-brand companies, and what has, for decades, been the state's distinctive advantage — a highly skilled workforce. Minnesotans were further lulled by the effects of the Great Recession of 2007-09, when the problem was a scarcity of jobs, not of workers. With a recovery underway, however, Minnesotans have begun to understand that the existing labor pool will

soon be insufficient. And this recognition has helped reframe the conversation about race-based education and achievement gaps in Minneapolis-St. Paul — turning what had been a moral (and insufficiently effective) commitment to its underserved communities into an economic necessity. Leading figures from the worlds of government, business, and academia, and public and private groups throughout the region, are now trying to figure out how to undo the effects of decades of neglect, tackling the problem from many perspectives and with an ever greater sense of urgency.

David Hough, the county administrator of Hennepin County, the most populous county in the Twin Cities region, confronts the changing composition of the workforce and the education gap every day. Hough is a baby boomer, as are many other Hennepin County workers. A few years ago, his human resources department ran some numbers to determine how many employees — at what levels and in what departments — were nearing retirement. The results were sobering: somewhere between 2,500 and 3,000 employees “are going to walk out the door” in the next five years, he says, and “we need to make sure we have the next workforce up and ready to go.”

Hough acknowledges that the impending workforce shortage never seemed urgent before. “We’ve always adapted [to the education and employment gaps] without necessarily taking the problem head on.” While he realizes that he doesn’t have to replace the thousands of retirement-eligible baby boomers — more than a third of his workforce — all at once, he knows that the time to begin preparing the next generation of workers is now. “We start with 20 people and 30 people and 40 people,” he says, “hoping that we’re proactive enough so that by 2020 we’ve got some feeder mechanisms [to get people into the jobs pipeline].”

So in 2013 Hough and his colleagues developed a new approach to hiring, finding, and training entry-level workers in about 20 job categories that don’t necessarily require a bachelor’s degree. The county is offering customized training programs for these potential employees at local community colleges and non-profit training organizations, and giving them extensive preparation and support — not just before hiring them but during an internship phase and after they’re on the job. In the pilot program, which started in March 2014, people were trained to be the human services representatives who determine eligibility for social services in Hennepin County. The job is challenging, but the pay is about \$18 an hour plus benefits and it can put people on a career ladder in county government. Hough believes the return on investment will be substantial because once these new workers have jobs that pay well, they will no longer need the county public assistance services many of them currently receive. In effect, the program is moving people from one side of the desk to another.

Primary working-age population in the United States will experience a net loss of 15 million whites between 2010 and 2030.



Inline image 3

In terms of sheer numbers, Minnesota may still lag in diversity compared to much of the rest of the country, yet it is a microcosm of the kind of changes taking place all across the nation. As William Frey's *Diversity Explosion* comprehensively documents, as the baby boom generation ages out of the workforce, the primary working-age population in the United States will experience a net loss of 15 million whites between 2010 and 2030. Meanwhile, the share of people of color that are of labor-force age will steadily grow, especially the youngest segments of the working population. And as immigrants spread out beyond traditional immigrant gateways, and native-born people of color also move to new areas in search of new jobs or a different way of life, more and more communities will face a future that is markedly more ethnically and racially diverse than their past. Between 1990 and 2010, the share of the U.S. population made up of people of color went from 24 percent to 36 percent, and that share is expected to leap to 44.5 percent by 2030. The good news is: The growth of working-age populations of color will enable the United States labor force to grow, albeit modestly, in the 2020s, in contrast to the shrinking workforce populations of much of the developed world, including Japan and many European nations.

Of course that's only good news if, as Minnesota's business, civic, and community leaders have recognized, that workforce has been educated and trained to take on the challenges of the 21st century. Minnesota, despite being at the back of the pack because of the huge educational and employment gaps its people of color have faced in the past, seems determined to do the hard work of change, to become a leader in making a virtue of diversity.

So the question that the new demographic reality presents for the country is: Will the U.S. follow in Minnesota's footsteps? Will market demand do what moral suasion has not, and make the educational, economic, and workplace success of people of color a priority for everyone? Minnesota, and the nation as a whole, will spend the next decade finding out the answer. To read the entire story please feel free to download Jennifer Bradley's article – ***The Changing Face of the Heartland.***

Economics and Elections

Britain's economic performance since the financial crisis struck has been startlingly bad. A tentative recovery began in 2009, but it stalled in 2010. Although growth resumed in 2013, real income per capita is only now reaching its level on the eve of the crisis — which means that Britain has had a much worse track record since 2007 than it had during the Great Depression.

Yet as Britain prepares to go to the polls, the leaders of the coalition government that has ruled the country since 2010 are posing as the guardians of prosperity, the people who really know how to run the economy. And they are, by and large, getting away with it.

There are some important lessons here, not just for Britain but for all democracies struggling to manage their economies in difficult times. I'll get to those lessons in a minute. But first, let's ask how a British government with such a poor economic record can manage to run on its supposed economic achievements.

Well, you could blame the weakness of the opposition, which has done an absolutely terrible job of making its case. You could blame the fecklessness of the news media, which has gotten much wrong. But the truth is that what's happening in British politics is what almost always happens, there and everywhere else: Voters have fairly short memories, and they judge economic policy not by longterm results but by recent growth. Over five years, the coalition's record looks terrible. But over the past couple of quarters it looks pretty good, and that's what matters politically.

In making these assertions, ■ not engaged in casual speculation — ■ drawing on a large body of political science research, mainly focused on presidential contests in the United States but clearly applicable elsewhere.

This research debunks almost all the horserace narratives beloved by political pundits — never mind who wins the news cycle, or who appeals to the supposed concerns of independent voters. What mainly matters is income growth immediately before the election. And I mean immediately: We're talking about something less than a year, maybe less than half a year.

This is, if you think about it, a distressing result, because it says that there is little or no political reward for good policy. A nation's leaders may do an excellent job of economic stewardship for four or five years yet get booted out because of weakness in the last two quarters before the election. In fact, the evidence suggests that the politically smart thing might well be to impose a pointless depression on your country for much of your time in office, solely to leave room for a roaring recovery just before voters go to the polls.

Actually, that's a pretty good description of what the current British government has done, although it's not clear that it was deliberate.

The point, then, is that elections — which are supposed to hold politicians accountable — don't seem to fulfill that function very well when it comes to economic policy. But can anything be done about this weakness?

One possible answer, which appeals to many pundits, might be to remove economic policy making from the political sphere and turn it over to nonpartisan elite commissions. This presumes, however, that elites know what they are doing — and it's hard to see what, in recent events, might make you believe that. After all, American elites spent years in the thrall of Bowles Simpsonism, a completely misplaced obsession over budget deficits. European elites, with their commitment to punitive austerity, have been even worse.

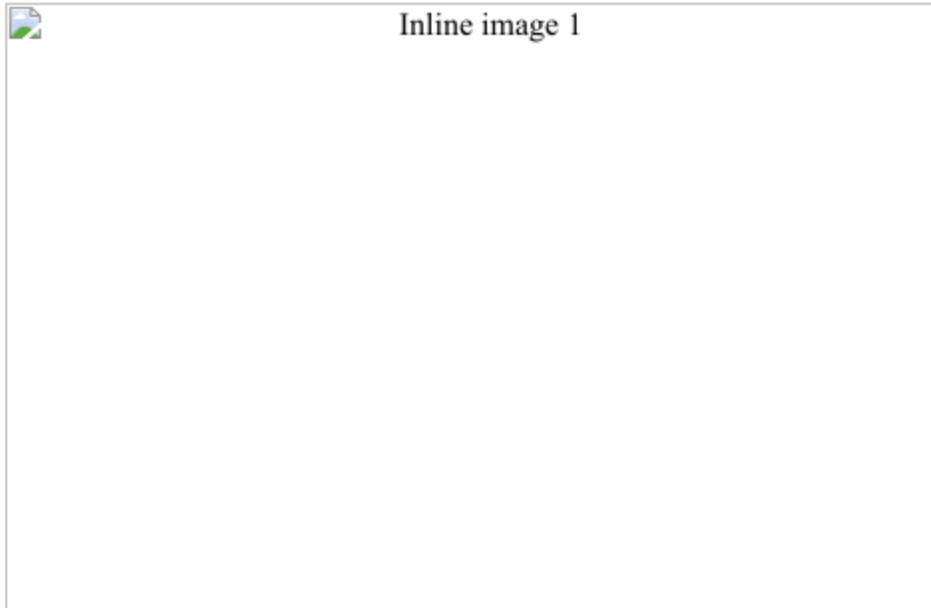
A better, more democratic answer would be to seek a better informed electorate. One really striking thing about the British economic debate is the contrast between what passes for economic analysis in the news media — even in high end newspapers and on elite oriented TV shows — and the consensus of professional economists. News reports often portray recent growth as a vindication of austerity policies, but surveys of economists find only a small minority agreeing with that assertion. Claims that budget deficits are the most important issue facing Britain are made as if they were simple assertions of fact, when they are actually contentious, if not foolish.

So reporting on economic issues could and should be vastly better. But political scientists would surely scoff at the idea that this would make much difference to election outcomes, and they're probably right.

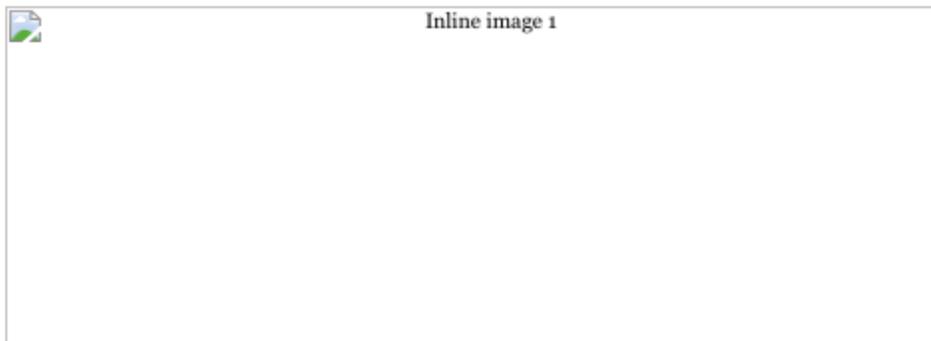
What, then, should those of us who study economic policy and care about real world outcomes do? The answer, surely, is that we should do our jobs: Try to get it right, and explain our answers as clearly as we can. Realistically, the political impact will usually be marginal at best. Bad things will happen to good ideas, and vice versa. So be it. Elections determine who has the power, not who has the truth.

Paul Krugman – New York Times – April 6, 2015

Solar Power World Map



The Last Time Oceans Got This Acidic This Fast, 96% of Marine Life Went Extinct



The biggest extinction event in planetary history was driven by the rapid acidification of our oceans, a new study concludes. So much carbon was released into the atmosphere, and the oceans absorbed so much of it so quickly, that marine life simply died off, from the bottom of the food chain up. That doesn't bode well for the present, given the disturbingly similar rate that our seas are acidifying right now. Parts of the Pacific, for instance, are already so acidic that sea snails' shells begin dissolving as soon as they're born. The biggest die-off in history, the Permian Extinction event, aka the Great Dying, extinguished over 90 percent of the planet's species — and 96 percent of marine species. A lot of theories have been put forward about why and how, exactly, the vast majority of Earth life went belly up 252 million years ago, but the new study, published in *Science*, offers some compelling evidence acidification was a key driver.

A team led by University of Edinburgh researchers collected rocks in the United Arab Emirates that were on the seafloor hundreds of millions of years ago, and used the boron isotopes found within to model the changing levels of acidification in our prehistoric oceans. Through this “*combined geochemical, geological, and modeling approach*,” the scientists say, they were able to accurately model the series of “*perturbations*” that unfolded in the ear. They now believe that a series of gigantic volcanic eruptions in the Siberian Trap spewed a great fountain of carbon into the atmosphere over a

period of tens of thousands of years. This was the first phase of the extinction event, in which terrestrial life began to die out. The study explains that the second phase of the event happened much more quickly. "During the second extinction pulse, however, a rapid and large injection of carbon caused an abrupt acidification event that drove the preferential loss of heavily calcified marine biota," the authors write.

So does this study mean we should be especially worried about the phenomenon taking hold today? "Yes," said Dr. Rachel Wood, a professor of carbonate geoscience at the University of Edinburgh and one of the paper's authors. "We are concerned about modern ocean acidification," she told me in an email. "Although the amount of carbon added to the atmosphere that triggered the mass extinction was probably greater than today's fossil fuel reserves, the rate at which the carbon was released was at a rate similar to modern emissions." In other words, the Siberian Traps probably spewed out more carbon in total, but we're spewing out just as fast. And that's overwhelming the planetary equilibrium. "This fast rate of release was a critical factor driving ocean acidification," Wood said.

Why?

"The rate of release is critical because the oceans absorb a lot of the carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere, around 30 percent of the carbon dioxide released by humans," Wood said. "To achieve chemical equilibrium, some of this CO₂ reacts with the water to form carbonic acid. Some of these molecules react with a water molecule to give a bicarbonate ion and a hydronium ion, thus increasing ocean 'acidity' (H⁺ ion concentration)." Marine animals whose skeletons are comprised of calcium carbonate — and that's a lot of them (think snails, coral), which form a crucial part of the food chain — dissolved or couldn't form in the first place. And that is what's happening today. "Between 1751 and 1994, surface ocean pH is estimated to have decreased from approximately 8.25 to 8.14, representing an increase of almost 30 percent in H⁺ ion concentration in the world's oceans," Wood said.

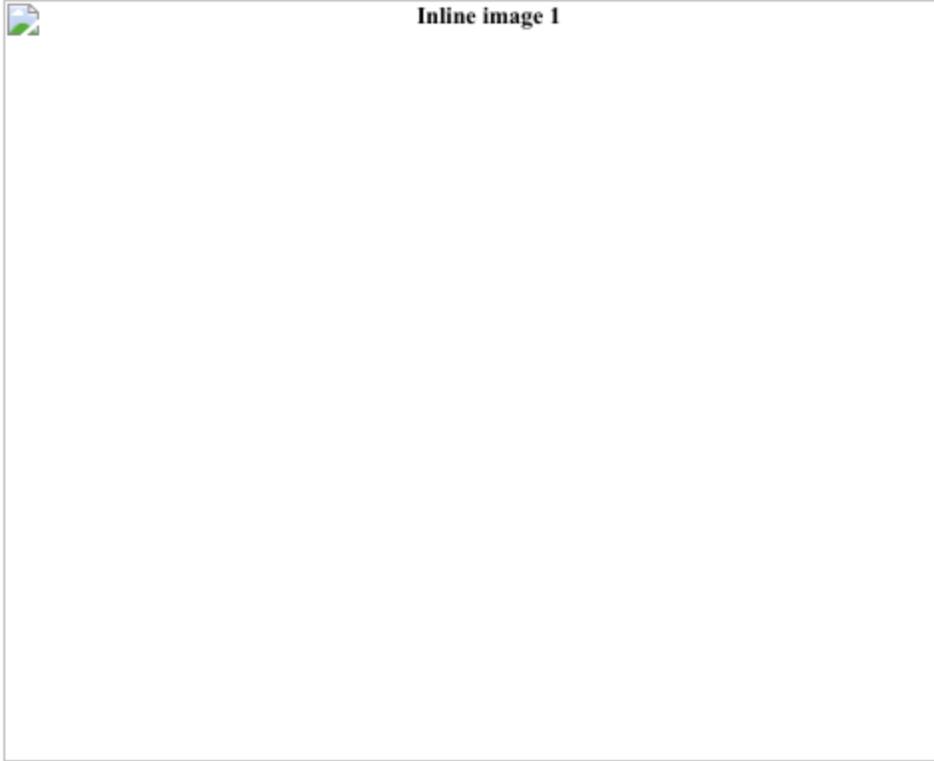
Inline image 2

That's a major uptick in ocean acidity in a relatively short amount of time, and it's happening because humans have burned fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas with reckless abandon since the Industrial Revolution. That's fueling climate change, of course, as well as its less-discussed, but potentially equally cataclysmic sibling, ocean acidification. "Scientists have long suspected that an ocean acidification event occurred during the greatest mass extinction of all time, but direct evidence has been lacking until now," study coordinator Dr. Matthew Clarkson said in a statement. "This is a worrying finding, considering that we can already see an increase in ocean acidity today that is the result of human carbon emissions."

Much of marine life is already in grave danger from acidification. It's contributing to the bleaching of coral reefs around the world, and, as mentioned before, it's killing sea snails in the Pacific. If it worsens, acidification could threaten the whole of the marine biosphere, and, obviously, the land-dwelling creatures that depend on it too. In 2013, marine scientists released a "***State of the Oceans***" report that found that the rate of current acidification was "*unprecedented.*" They noted that the seas were acidifying faster than any point in the last 300 million years. That study didn't take into account the new data, of course, but that's the timeline we're dealing with: ***The last time the oceans were so acidic was in the midst of the greatest extinction in the history of the world.***



Inline image 1



According to the US department of Agriculture, these will be the top 20 economies by 2030. India will overtake Japan and Germany and Brazil will be ahead of the UK. The India story makes sense, but I have reservations about Brazil.

Favorite Streets in 12 European Cities

Cobbled lanes, broad avenues, streets for gallery-hoppers, food-lovers, shoppers and flâneurs:

Contributors in 12 cities describe the byways (including one river) they love.

PARIS

Rue de Charonne



Inline image 1

SETH SHERWOOD: APRIL 16, 2015

From the neon lights and sex shops of Boulevard de Clichy to the bucolic cobbled paths of Rue Georges Lardennois, Paris has a street for every mood and mission.

You can enjoy a walkable feast amid the fine food shops of Rue de Bretagne, stagger between bars on Rue de Lappe and then rejuvenate with a run on the Promenade Plantée, a disused elevated railway line blooming with gardens.

But if you are looking for one street where you will find outfits for every occasion, then head to Rue de Charonne.

It is a meandering one-lane thoroughfare of mostly unremarkable 20th-century buildings whose street-level hangouts — cool-kid cafes, homey small bars, vintage stores — and ever-evolving selection of French indie fashion labels draw Paris's bourgeois bohemians.

Footwear from La Botte Gardiane, at No. 25, will help you pound the pavement in style.

Based in rural southern France, the family-owned business spent decades manufacturing rugged leather boots for French ranchers (which were sold mainly by mail order) before opening its first boutique in 2012.

"I've tried to develop the brand and make it more refined and more urban," said Fanny Agulhon, who designs much of the company's output.

The collection, which encompasses everything from sparkly rock 'n' roll ankle boots (245 euros, or about \$257 at \$1.05 to the euro) to strappy sandals with ankle bands (€120), can be spotted on the feet of celebrities like Jean Dujardin.

Shimmery sand-colored socks (€25) set the tone for Emma François's ethno-chic threads at Sessùn, No. 34. A sleeveless knee-length floral dress from the Libertad collection costs €125, while a

translucent indigo jumpsuit is 165.

At No. 30, add skinny jeans (€160) from FrenchTrotters, courtesy of the designers Clarent and Carole Dehlouz.

A collegiate look suffuses the men's wear, like checkered button-down shirts with slim pen pockets (€155). Ladies can go formal with a sober waist-length blue trench coat (€330) or haute hippie in floral-print pajama pants (€180).

The street's most original accessories lurk inside the black-painted confines of L'Adorable Cabinet de Curiosités de Monsieur Honoré, also at No. 30.

Animal skulls, exotic butterflies and a stuffed black bird decorate the space, which seems conceived by a debauched 19th-century zoologist.

Witness the scorpions in a clear resin block (€13) — with a chain for keys — or black umbrellas with handles resembling a death's head (€159).

By night, slumber awaits at No. 10-12 in the brand-new Hôtel L'Antoine, designed by Christian Lacroix.

Each floor's decorative theme pays homage to the artists and artisans who have historically occupied the neighborhood.

Please feel free to download the entire article to see the other eleven streets.

Web Link:

[emc=edit_th_20150417&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=60734496&r=0](#)

BERN: Grosser Muristalden

BERLIN: Rüdeshheimer Strasse

SAN SEBASTIÁN: Calle 31 de Agosto

MILAN: Ripa di Porta Ticinese

LONDON: **Pimlico Road**

LISBON: **Rua Nova do Carvalho**

ISTANBUL: **Itfaiye Caddesi**

OSLO: **The Akerselva River**

VIENNA: **Kärntner Strasse, Graben and Kohlmarkt**

MADRID: **Calle Zurbano**

PRAGUE: **Krymska**

Just in case you might be traveling to any of the above cities or are thinking about visiting one or more hopefully this article is helpful.

One hundred years ago. What a difference a century makes! Here are some statistics for the Year 1915:

The average life expectancy for men was 47 years.
Fuel for a car was sold in drug stores only.

Only 14 percent of the homes had a bathtub. Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone. There were only 8,000 cars and only 144 miles of paved roads.

The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.
The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower .

The average US wage in 1910 was 22 cents per hour.
The average US worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year...

A competent accountant could expect to earn \$2000 per Year. A dentist \$2,500 per year, a veterinarian between \$1,500 and \$4,000 per year, and a mechanical engineer about \$5,000 per year.

More than 95 percent of all births took place at home.

Ninety percent of all Doctors had NO COLLEGE EDUCATION!

Instead, they attended so called medical schools, many Of which were condemned in the press AND the government as "substandard."

Sugar cost four cents a pound. Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen. Coffee was fifteen cents a pound.

Most women only washed their hair once a month, and

used Borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

Canada passed a law that prohibited poor people from entering into their country for any reason. The Five leading causes of death were:

1. Pneumonia and influenza
2. Tuberculosis
3. Diarrhea
4. Heart disease
5. Stroke

The American flag had 45 stars...

The population of Las Vegas, Nevada, was only 30!

Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea hadn't been invented yet.

There was neither a Mother's Day nor a Father's Day.

Two out of every 10 adults couldn't read or write and only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school. Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at the local corner drugstores.

Back then pharmacists said, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, Regulates the stomach and bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health!"
(Shocking?)

Eighteen percent of households had at least one full-time servant or domestic help.

There were about 230 reported murders in the ENTIRE U.S.A.

(To be honest I don't believe some of these figures but I used them because even a rewritten history is history and often the only history that we have.)

Why We Need To Stop Calling All Unhealthy Foods 'Processed'



Inline image 12

Pop quiz. Which of the following is considered a processed food: Kellogg's Corn Flakes, homemade greek yogurt, bagged baby spinach? (Answer: ***All of them.***)

The point here, is that "***processed foods***" includes a much wider variety of products than most consumers typically associate with the term. Secondly, not all processed foods are evil. Processed foods can provide convenience, like in the case of bagged baby spinach, or safety, as in the case of pasteurized eggs, and can even -- gasp -- be healthy.

"The idea of saying just avoid processed foods is crazy," Dawn Jackson Blatner, RD, CSSD, LDN, told The Huffington Post. "Yogurt is a processed food. It's actually been cultured and packaged. Canned beans, with no other ingredient besides beans, is processed because [the beans] have been cooked and they have been canned." Where Blatner draws the line with her endorsement is with extremely processed foods, which logically enough, is also where things start to get murky for consumers.

And while this may seem like an issue of semantics -- after all, when most people say "*processed*," they expect others understand this to be a colloquial term for "*unhealthy*" -- the lack of a clear and official definition for what qualifies as a heavily processed foods is extremely controversial in the nutrition community. A new study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition in May, has set out to clarify and define what, exactly, is meant by the term.

The U.S. government defines processed food as "*any food other than a raw agricultural commodity and includes any raw agricultural commodity that has been subject to processing, such as canning, cooking, freezing, dehydration, or milling.*" That seems clear enough. But there's no agreed upon definition for extremely processed foods, the stuff that nutritionists like Blatner say we should be avoiding at the grocery store.

As the researchers write in the study, "*The U.S. government's definition of 'processed food' -- any food other than a raw agricultural commodity -- includes a diverse array of foods ranging from frozen vegetables, dried fruit, and canned beans to whole-wheat bread, breakfast cereals, prepared meals, candy and soda.*" Basically, any category that includes both soda and frozen vegetables is too broad to help consumers make healthy eating choices.

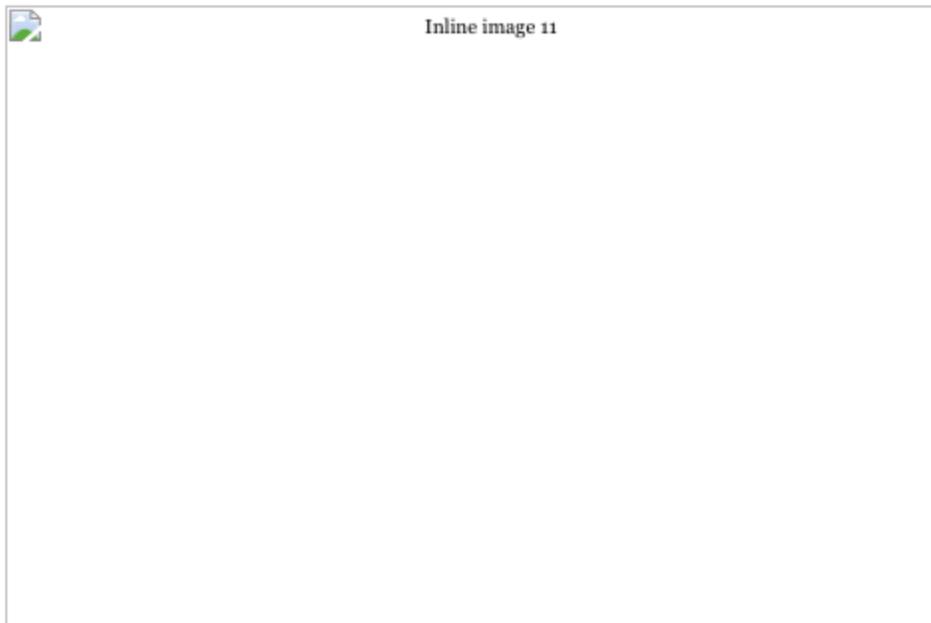
To help break things down, the researchers divided 1.2 million food products into four distinct categories: minimally processed, basic processed, moderately processed and highly processed. In the study, highly processed food were defined as "*multi-ingredient industrially formulated mixtures processed to the extent that they are no longer recognizable as their original plant or animal source.*" Americans are buying highly processed foods in large quantities. According to the study, 61 percent of our calories come from these highly processed foods, including refined bread, lunch meat, soda, alcohol, and condiments like salsa and hummus. These foods were also higher in fat, sugar and sodium than their less-processed counterparts.

Outside of the research world, dividing your shopping chart into four processing categories probably isn't realistic. So what should a health-conscious shopper do? For starters, Blatner recommends reading nutrition labels from the bottom up, starting with the ingredient list. Shoppers should keep an eye out for nutritional red flags: chemicals they don't use in their own kitchens; refined sugar and flour; artificial sweeteners, flavors and colors; and preservatives (ingredients starting with a string of letters, like BHA and BHT). The more of these red flags on the ingredient list, the higher the chance that the item is highly processed and probably not a smart purchase from a nutritional standpoint.

The important takeaway here is that people are using the same word to mean two very different things. Food manufactures choose to say that every food is processed, ignoring the fact that not all processed foods have equal health profiles. Health food advocates, on the other hand, may toss the term around incorrectly, as a catchall for anything they consider unhealthy. "*It's not demonizing processed foods,*" Blatner said. "*Let's put an actual word ahead of that -- extreme processing -- and then let's define that together.*"

So here, a few surprisingly processed -- but still healthy -- foods:

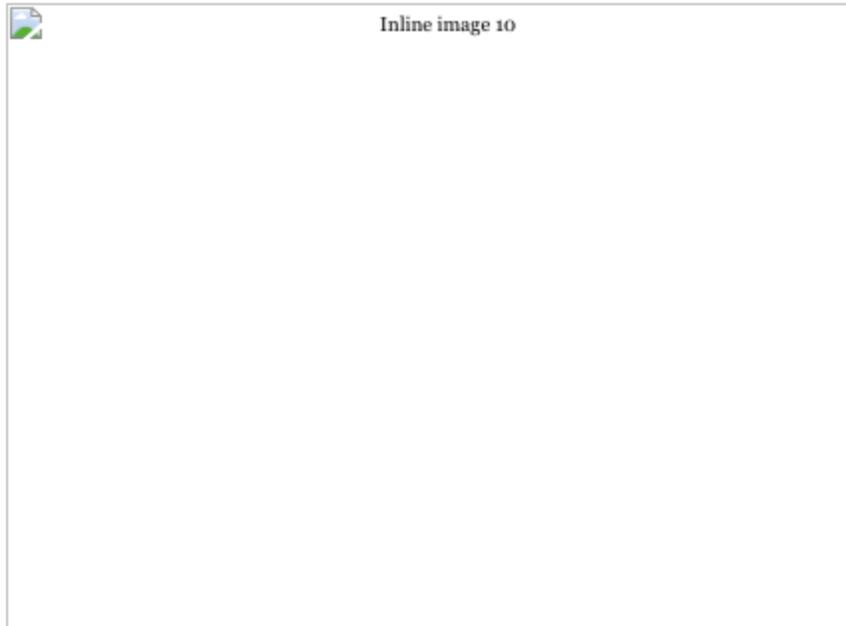
Pasteurized eggs



Level of processing: Minimally processed. Eggs are heated to a temperature high enough to kill bacteria found in the food, making it safer for consumers.

Why it's healthy: Eggs are considered the gold standard for high-quality protein, and can increase the body's levels of HDL, the "good" cholesterol.

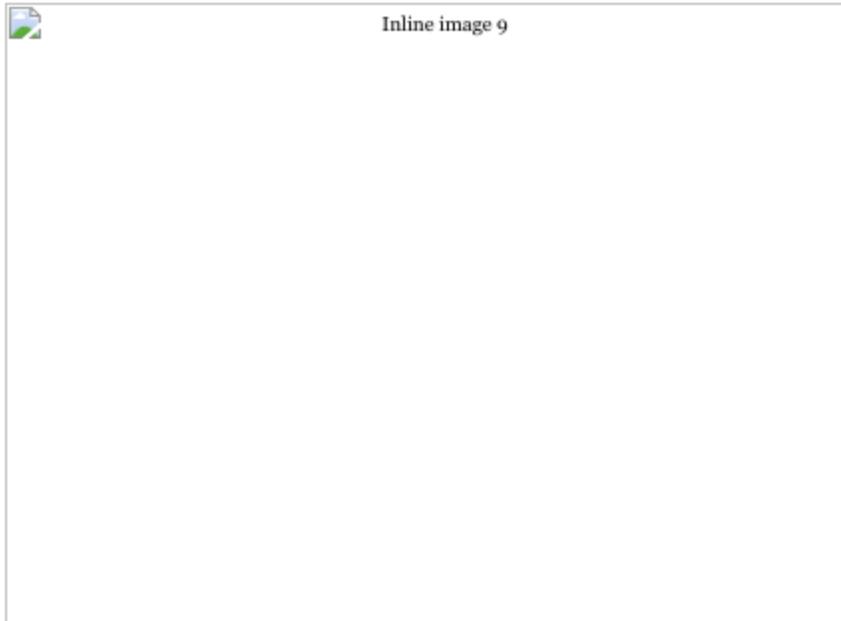
Cold-press juice



Level of processing: Basic processed. Fruit is crushed and pressed to extract its juice, without producing any heat that could break down nutrients.

Why it's healthy: A diet high in fruits and vegetables can ward off stroke and heart attack and prolong your life. Still, you're better off reaching for whole fruits than juice -- a 2013 study found that while eating whole fruits decreased participants risk of Type 2 diabetes, drinking fruit juice actually increased their risk.

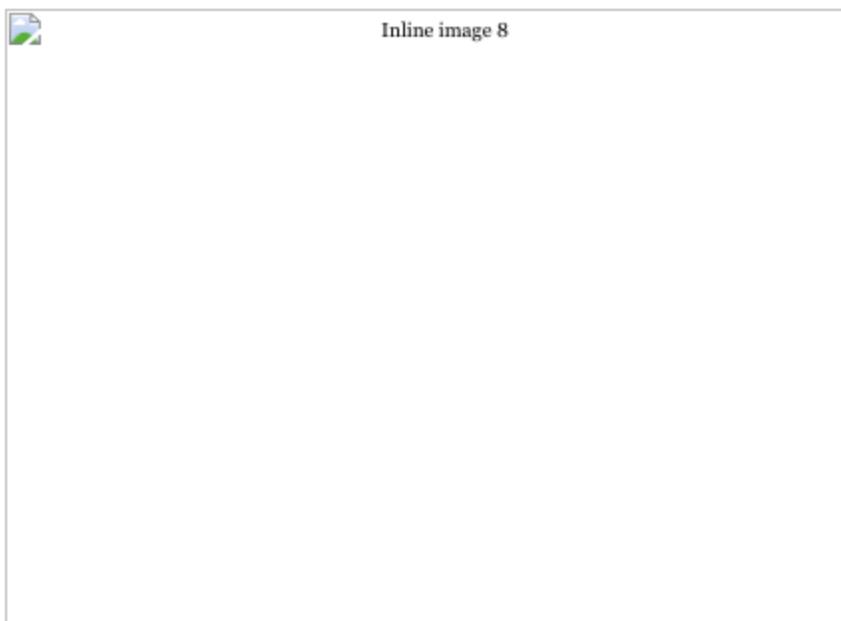
Plain Greek yogurt



Level of processing: Basic processed. Live yogurt cultures are added to strained and pasteurized cow's milk and then strained to remove the whey, which makes the yogurt thicker.

Why it's healthy: The natural probiotics in Greek yogurt help promote a healthy gut. Greek yogurt is also packed with protein.

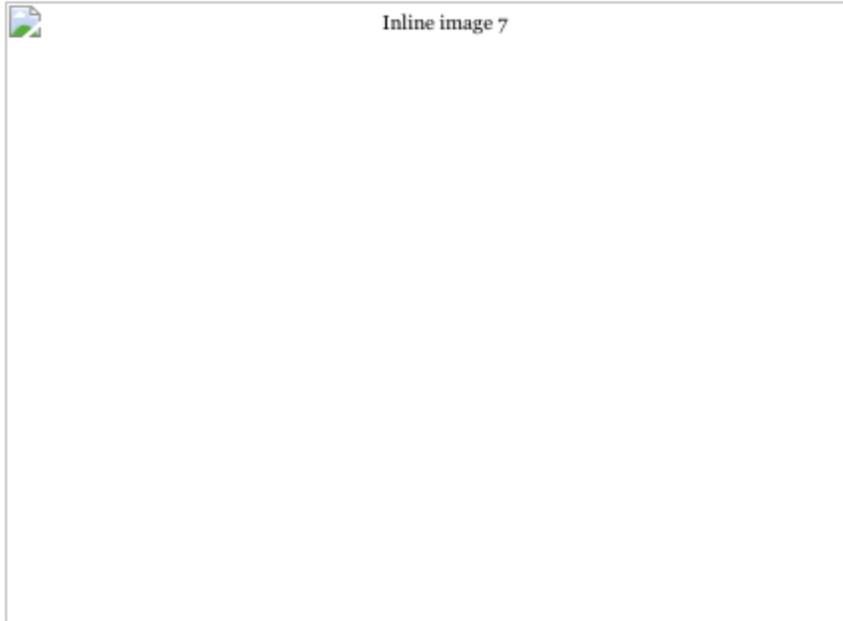
Canned green beans



Level of processing: Basic processed. Green beans are washed and canned under pressure to prevent food-borne botulism. Canned green beans are affordable and easy to cook with.

Why it's healthy: Canned green beans are packaged at the height of freshness and contain calcium and vitamins C, K and A (although fresh green beans have higher levels of vitamins and minerals than canned). Just make sure you aren't buying the kind with added sugar or sodium.

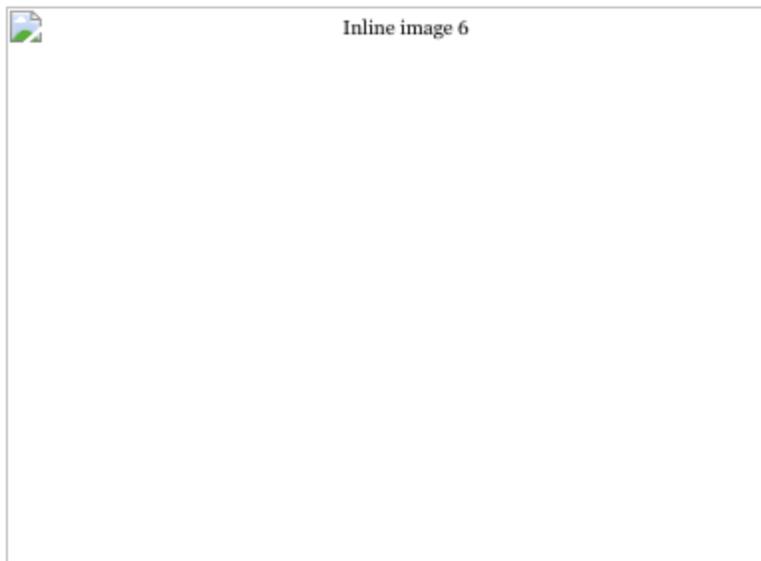
Dried apricots



Level of processing: Minimally processed. Pitting and drying apricots preserves the fruit and makes it easier to transport.

Why it's healthy: Dried apricots are a good source of dietary fiber, and contain even higher levels of iron and potassium than fresh apricots.

100-percent, whole-wheat bread



Level of processing: Moderately processed. Bread is somewhat removed from its original raw ingredients. Wheat is converted to flour, without removing the bran and germ, and combined with

water, yeast, eggs, oil, salt and sugar.

Why it's healthy: Whole grains are a good source of fiber, as well as selenium, magnesium and potassium.

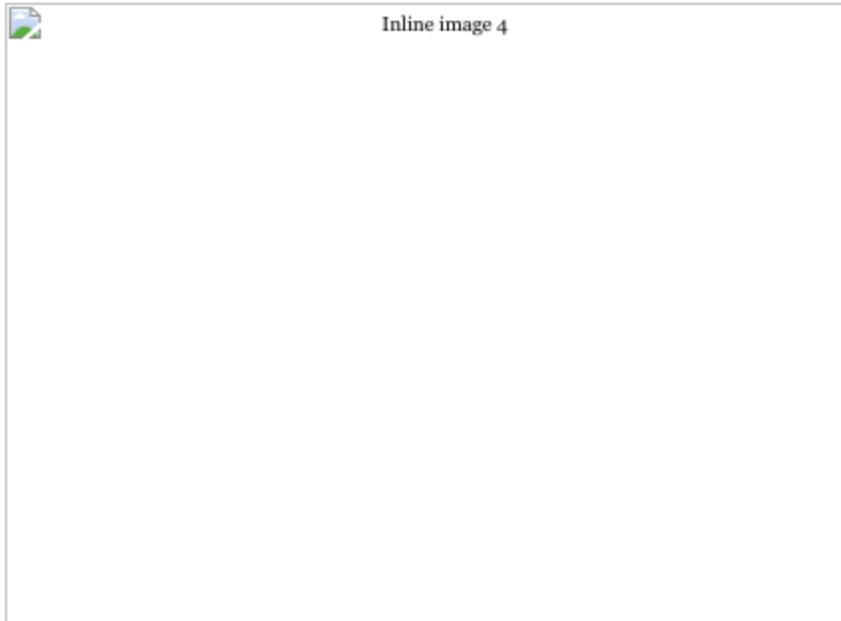
Frozen turkey



Level of processing: Minimally processed. Freezing meat preserves it and stops bacteria in the food from multiplying.

Why it's healthy: Turkey contains vitamin B, which aids brain development during pregnancy, as well as the mineral phosphorus, which helps build health teeth and bones.

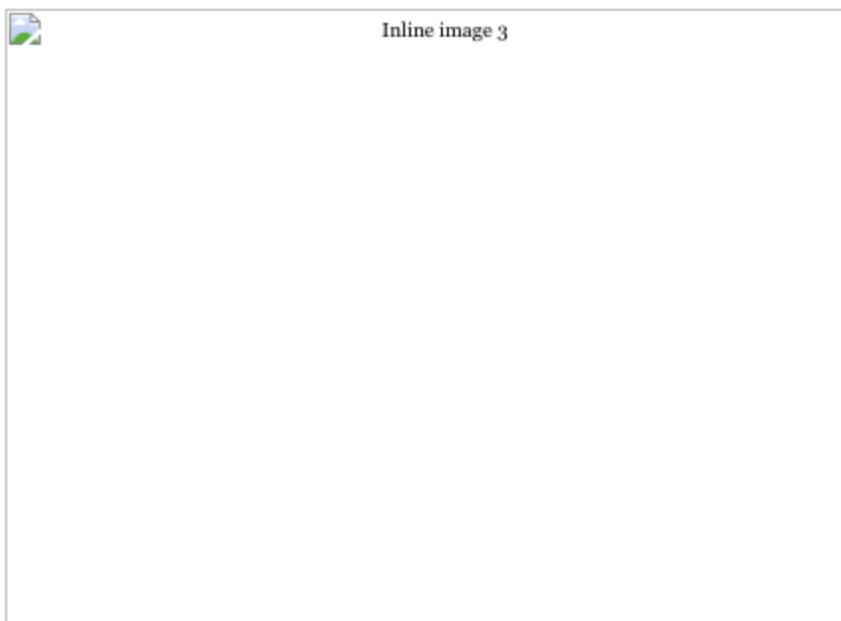
Extra-virgin olive oil



Level of processing: Basic processed. Making olive oil is a multi-step process, including washing the fruit, pressing it and extracting the oil from the resulting olive pulp.

Why it's healthy: Olive oil contains monounsaturated fatty acids, which are considered heart healthy and could lower your risk of heart disease.

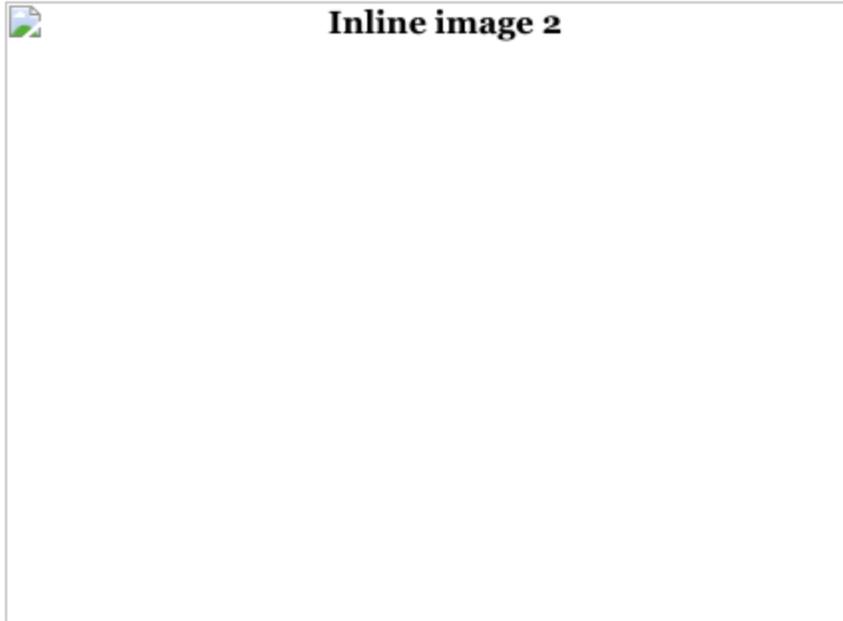
Cheese



Level of processing: Moderately processed. From testing for a "*clean break*" to separating the curds from the whey, making cheese is not a simple process. Here's one professor's 21-step illustrated recipe.

Why it's healthy: A recent study linked a diet rich in cheese to a decreased risk for obesity and a faster metabolism. That said, like all good things, cheese is probably best enjoyed in moderation.

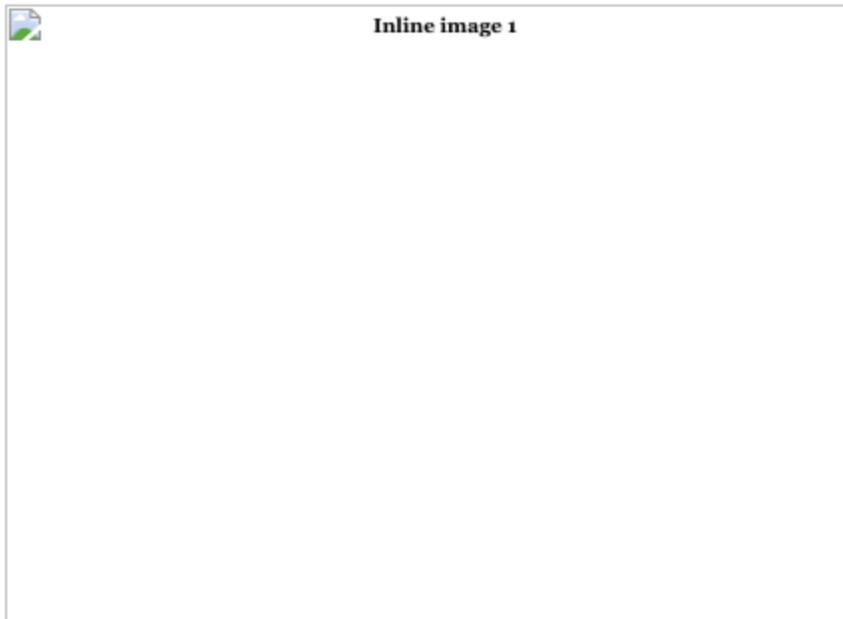
Green tea



Level of processing: Minimally processed. Tea leaves are steamed, rolled and dried, causing oxidation.

Why it's healthy: Green tea contains catechins, which have been linked to lower body fat and a decrease in obesity.

Pre-shelled almonds



Level of processing: Minimally processed. Shelling makes almonds easier and more convenient to eat. Following two salmonella outbreaks in California in the early aughts, the USDA has required all almonds (even "raw" ones) be pasteurized before being sold to the public.

Why it's healthy: Almonds contain more calcium than any other nut, as well as protein and hearty-health fats.

Erin Schumaker – Huffington Post – May 26, 2015

Find out below some of the most fascinating photographs ever captured on camera.

Thanks to these great images, we now have before us a rare window to some of the most interesting moments of our world history.

1. A boxing match on board the USS Oregon in 1897



**2. An airman being captured by Vietnamese in Truc Bach Lake, Hanoi in 1967.
The airman is John McCain.**



3. Samurai warriors taken between 1860 and 1880



4. A shell-shocked reindeer looks on as war planes drop bombs on Russia in 1941.



5. Walt Disney on the day they opened Disney Studios



6. Che Guevara enjoying a drink



7. The Microsoft staff in 1978

Bill Gates, front row left.



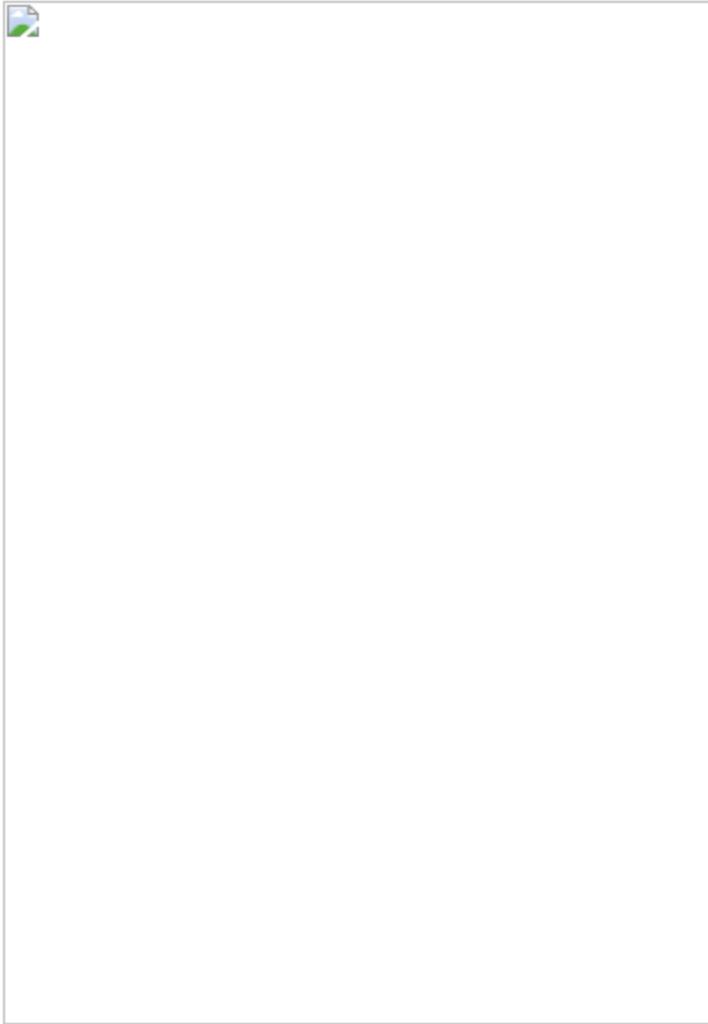
8. The last known Tasmanian Tiger (now extinct) photographed in 1933



9. German air raid on Moscow in 1941



10. Winston Churchill out for a swim



11. The London sky after a bombing and dogfight between British and German planes in 1940



12. Martin Luther King, Jr removes a burned cross from his yard in 1960. The boy is his son.



13. Google begins.



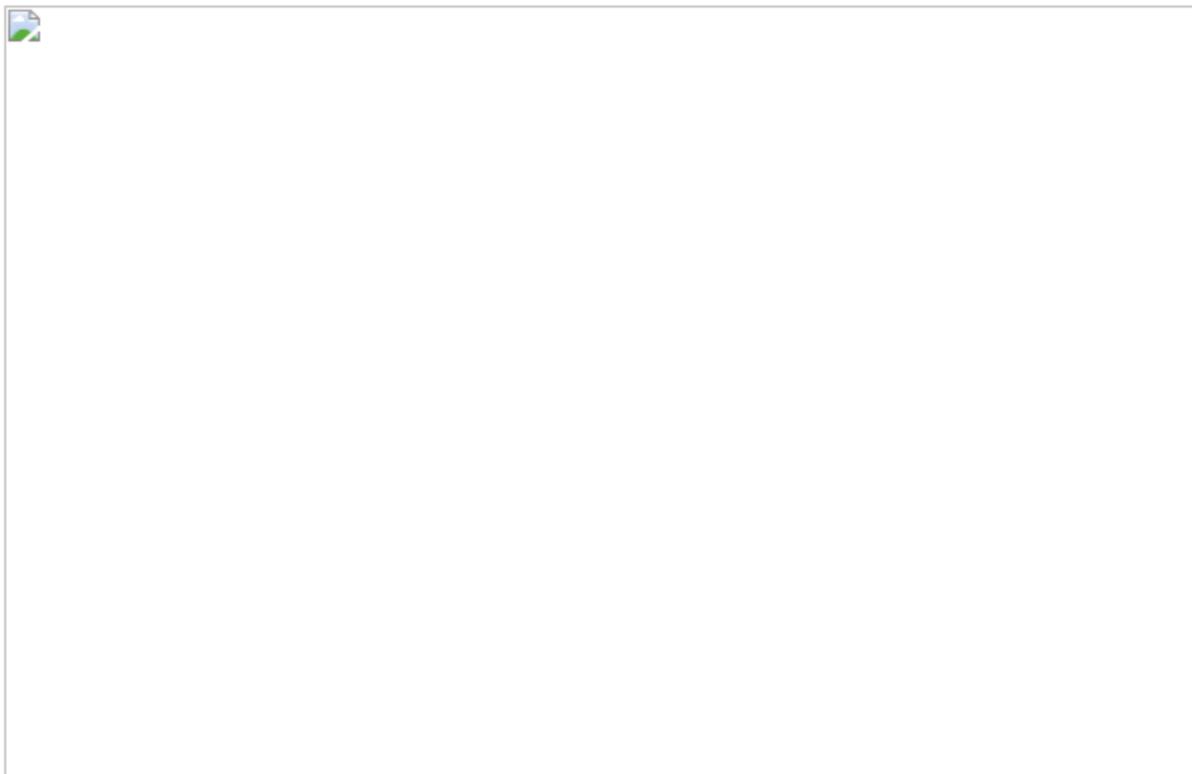
14. Nagasaki , 20 minutes after the atomic bombing in 1945



15. The only photograph of a living Quagga (now extinct) from 1870



16. Hitler's bunker



17. A Japanese plane is shot down during the Battle of Saipan in 1944.



18. The original Ronald McDonald played by Willard Scott



19. The first photo taken from space in 1946



20. British SAS back from a 3-month patrol of North Africa in 1943



21. Disneyland employee cafeteria in 1961



22. The first McDonalds



23. Fidel Castro lays a wreath at the Lincoln Memorial.



24. George S. Patton's dog mourning his master on the day of his death.



25. California lumberjacks working on Redwoods



26. Construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961



27. Bread and soup during the Great Depression



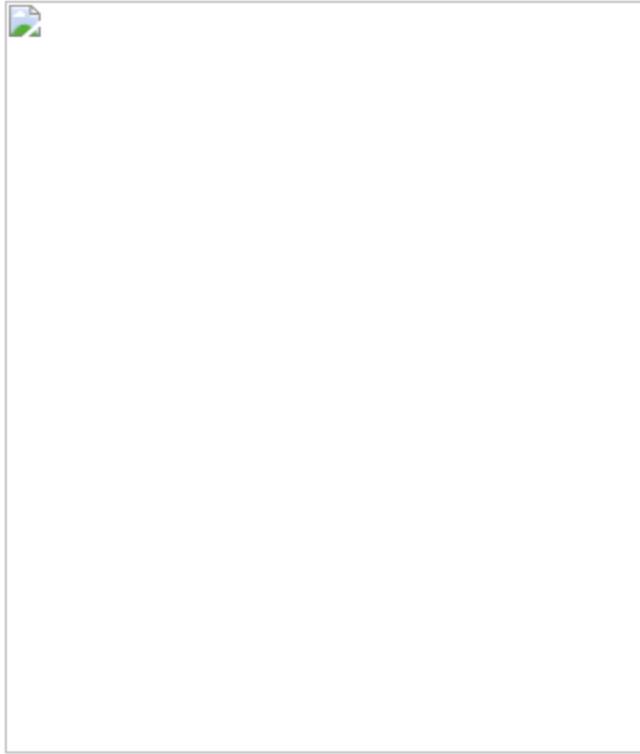
28. The 1912 World Series



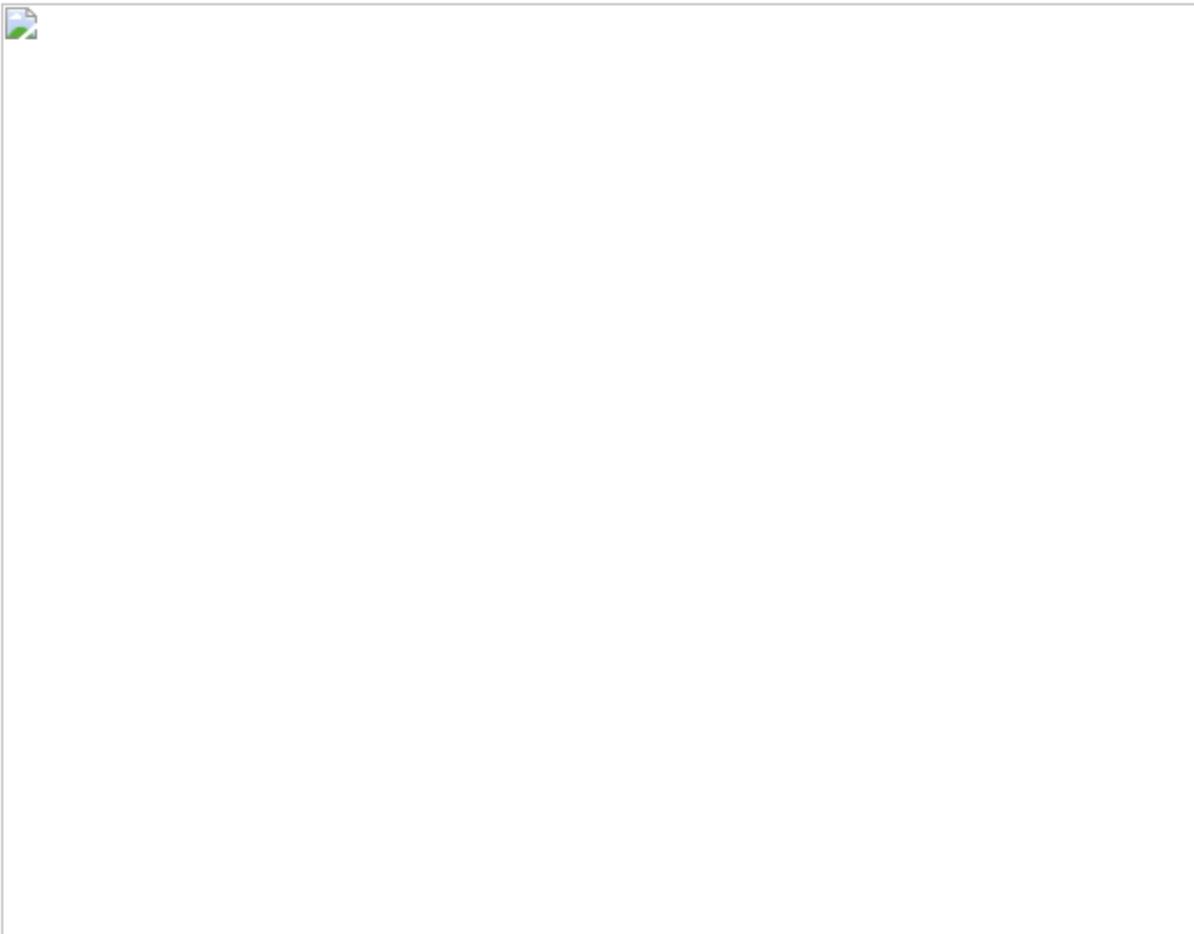
29. The first photo following the discovery of Machu Pichu in 1912.



30. Construction of Christ the Redeemer in Rio da Janeiro, Brazil



31. Steamboats on the Mississippi River in 1907



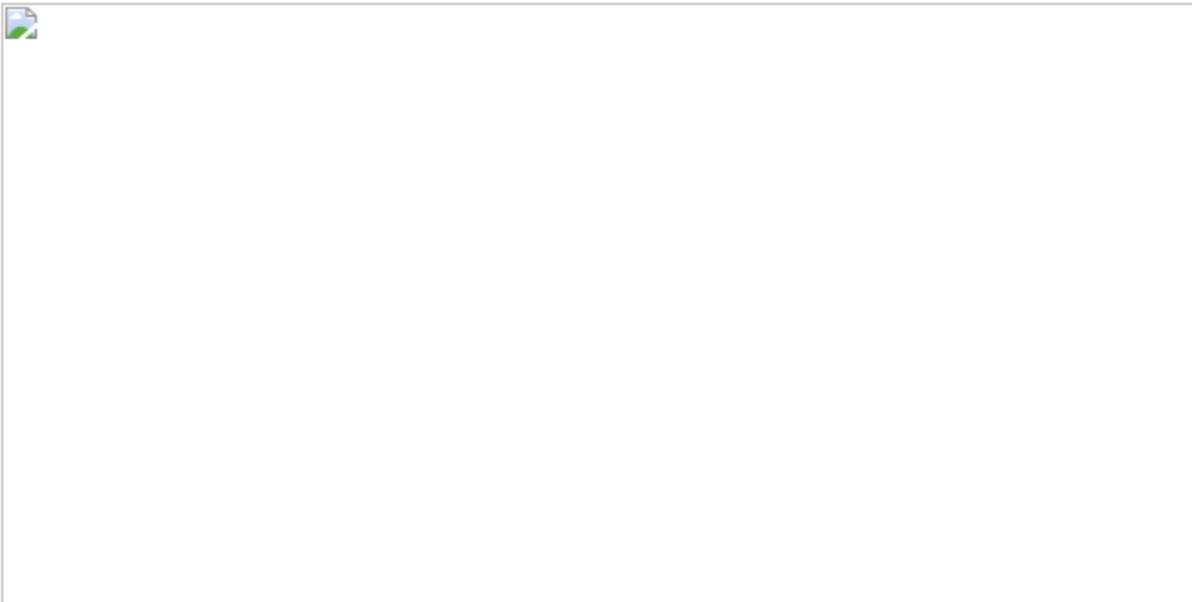
32. Leo Tolstoy telling a story to his grandchildren in 1909



33. The construction of Disneyland



34. Arnold Schwarzenegger on the day he received his American citizenship



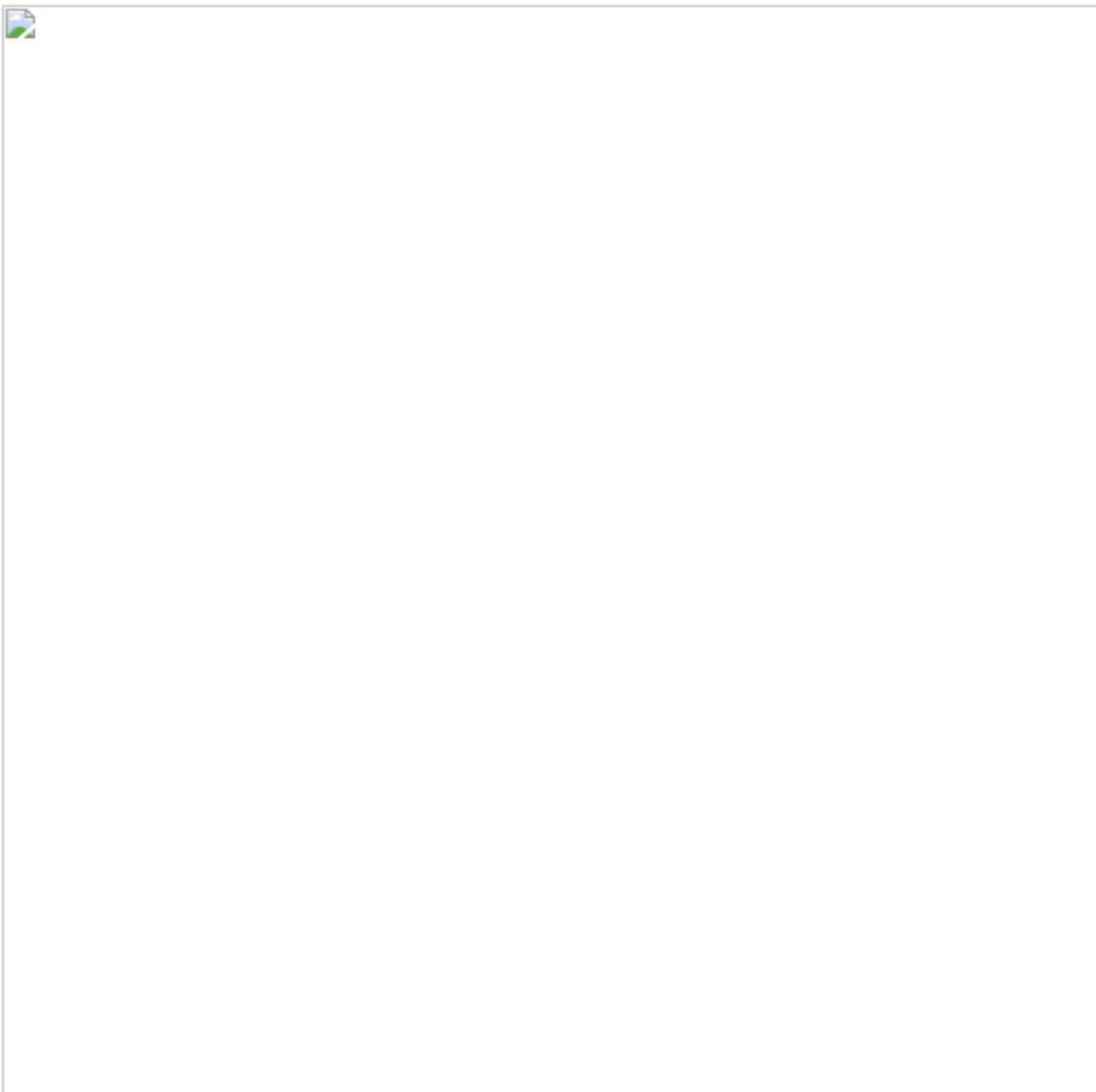
35. 14-year-old Osama bin Laden (2nd from the right)



36. Construction of the Statue of Liberty in 1884



37. Albert Einstein's office photographed on the day of his death



38. A liberated Jew holds a Nazi guard at gunpoint.



39. Construction of the Manhattan Bridge in 1908



40. Construction of the Eiffel Tower in 1888



41. Dismantling of the Berlin Wall in 1989



42. Titanic leaves port in 1912.



**43. Adolf Hitler's pants after the failed assassination attempt at Wolf's Lair in
1944**



44. ENIAC, the first computer ever built



45. Brighton Swimming Club in 1863



46. Ferdinand Porsche (yeah, that Porsche) showing a model of the Volkswagen Beetle to Adolf Hitler in 1935



47. The unbroken seal on King Tut's tomb



48. Apollo 16 astronaut Charles Duke left this family photo behind on the moon in 1972.



49. The crew of Apollo 1 practicing their water landing in 1966. Unfortunately, all of them were killed on the launch pad in a fire.



50. An aircraft crash on board during World War II



**51. Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Warren G. Harding (29th president of USA),
and Harvey Samuel Firestone**

(founder of Firestone Tire and Rubber Co.) talking together



THIS WEEK'S QUOTES

Rand Paul compromising on the tough issues

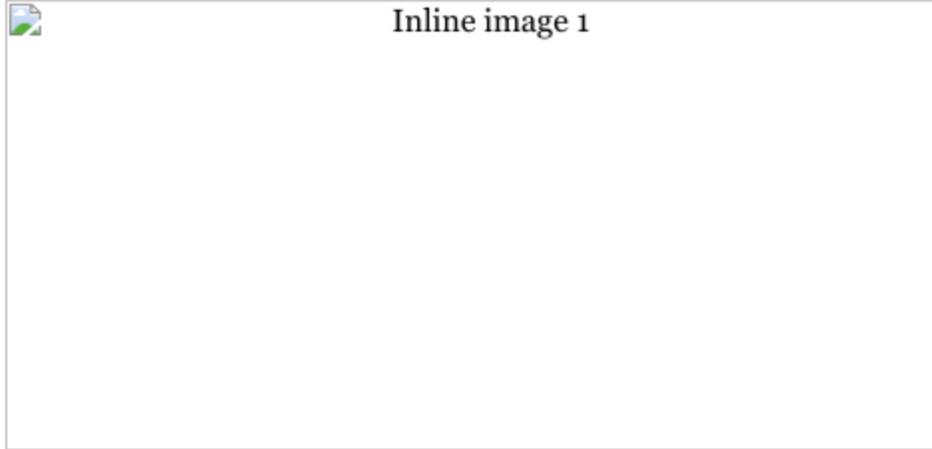
“Its like Ross Perot went into the phone booth and Mitt Romney came out...”

Bill Maher – April 17, 2015

BEST VIDEO OF THE WEEK

Some People Are Crazy

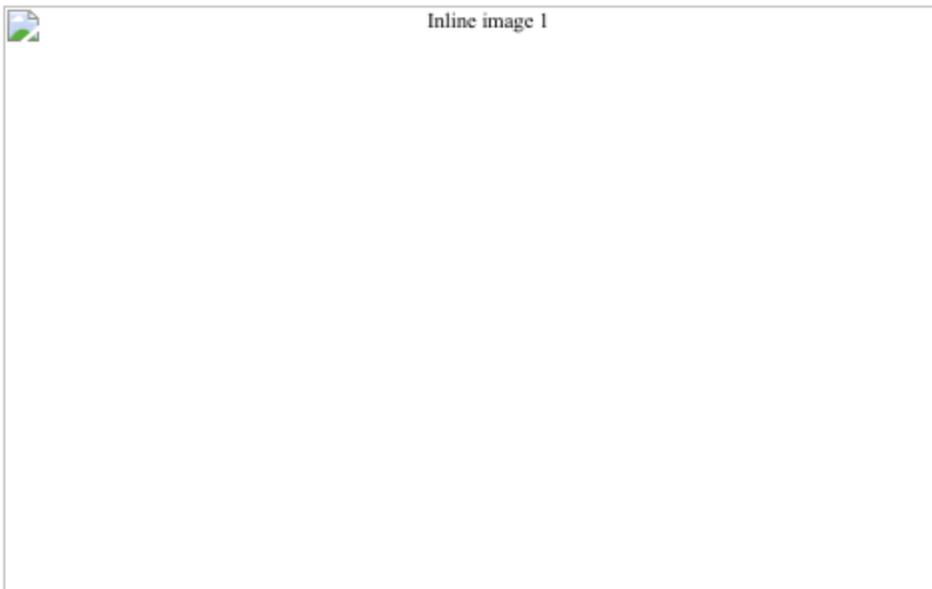
Unbelievable Tricks



Web Link: <https://youtu.be/VWf8CXwPoqI>

THIS WEEK'S MUSIC

GEORGE MICHAEL



This week I invite you to share with me the music singer, songwriter multi-instrumentalist and record producer of **Mr. George Michael** – born as *Georgios Kyriacos Panayiotou* on 25 June 1963 in North West London. And to say that global superstar George Michael has had an extraordinary career

is an understatement. As a teenager he found success after forming the duo Wham! with Andrew Ridgeley in 1981. At the age of twenty, the band's first album *Fantastic* reached No. 1 in the UK in 1983 and produced a series of top 10 singles including "Young Guns", "Wham Rap!" and "Club Tropicana". Their second album, *Make It Big* reached No. 1 on the charts in the US. Singles from that album included "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go" (No. 1 in the UK and US), "Freedom", "Everything She Wants", and "Careless Whisper" which reached No. 1 in nearly 25 countries, including the UK and US, and was Michael's first solo effort as a single.

Michael then sang on the original Band Aid recording of "Do They Know It's Christmas?" (which became the UK Christmas number one) and donated the profits from "Last Christmas/Everything She Wants" to charity. In addition, he contributed background vocals to David Cassidy's 1985 hit "The Last Kiss", as well as Elton John's 1985 successes "Nikita" and "Wrap Her Up". Michael cited Cassidy as a major career influence and interviewed Cassidy for David Litchfield's *Ritz* Newspaper. Wham!'s tour of China in April 1985, the first visit to China by a Western popular music act, generated enormous worldwide media coverage, much of it centered on Michael. The tour was documented by film director Lindsay Anderson and producer Martin Lewis in their film *Foreign Skies: Wham! In China*.

With the success of Michael's solo singles, "Careless Whisper" (1984) and "A Different Corner" (1986), rumours of an impending break up of Wham! intensified. The duo officially separated during the summer of 1986, after releasing a farewell single, "The Edge of Heaven" and a singles compilation, *The Final*, plus a sell-out concert at Wembley Stadium that included the world premiere of the China film. The Wham! partnership ended officially with the commercially successful single "The Edge of Heaven", which reached No. 1 on the UK chart in June 1986.

Michael began his solo career, during early 1987, was a duet with Aretha Franklin. "I Knew You Were Waiting" was a one-off project that helped Michael achieve an ambition by singing with one of his favorite artists, and it scored number one on both the UK Singles Chart and the US Billboard Hot 100 upon its release. During the autumn of 1987, Michael released his first solo album, *Faith*. In addition to playing a large number of instruments on the album, he wrote and produced every track on the recording, except for one, which he co-wrote.

The first single released from the album was "I Want Your Sex", during the summer of 1987. The song was banned by many radio stations in the UK and US, due to its sexually suggestive lyrics. MTV would broadcast the video, featuring celebrity make-up artist Kathy Jeung in a basque and suspenders, only during the late night hours. When "I Want Your Sex" reached the US charts, American Top 40 host Casey Kasem refused to say the song's title, referring to it only as "the new single by George Michael." The second single, "Faith", was released during October 1987, just a few weeks before the album. "Faith" would become one of his most popular songs. The song hit No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 in the US and maintained that position for four consecutive weeks. It also reached No. 2 in the UK Singles Chart.

Michael has sold more than 100 million records worldwide. His 1987 debut solo album, *Faith*, has sold more than 20 million copies worldwide and made several records and achievements in the United States. Michael has garnered seven number one singles in the UK and eight number one hits on the Billboard Hot 100 in the US. In 2008, *Billboard* magazine ranked Michael the 40th most successful artist on the Billboard Hot 100 Top All-Time Artists list. He's sold-out stadiums from Tokyo to Tampa. He re-defined popular music with his debut solo album, 1987's 'Faith' and has subsequently crafted a substantial, enormously popular body of work.

Michael has won numerous music awards throughout his 30-year career, including three Brit Awards —winning Best British Male twice, four MTV Video Music Awards, four Ivor Novello Awards, three American Music Awards, and two Grammy Awards from eight nominations. In 2004, the Radio Academy named Michael as the most played artist on British radio between the period of 1984–2004. The documentary *A Different Story* was released in 2005; it covered his personal life and professional career. In 2006, George Michael announced his first tour in 15 years, the worldwide 25 Live tour, spanning three individual tours over the course of three years (2006, 2007 and 2008).

Since his last tour the *Symphonica* which finished in London in October 2012, George had been doing what he does best: writing, recording and producing. March 17, 2014 saw the release of 'Symphonica', an album recorded during the *Symphonica* tour. The album was produced by George and the late Phil Ramone, who died in March 2013 aged 79. Ramone had also co-produced 'Songs From The Last Century' and, in a career which spanned over half a century, worked with hundreds of artists from Bob Dylan, Frank Sinatra, Ray Charles, Billy Joel and Paul McCartney to Aretha Franklin, Barbra Streisand and Karen Carpenter. 'Symphonica' is Phil Ramone's last work.

I first met George Michael in the early 1980s when Brook Shields had a schoolgirl crush on him and didn't understand why he would not respond and no one would tell her that he was gay. Needless to say it was amusing. I ran into him again over those years when he was writing songs with a French friend of mine in Paris and again when I accompanied Quincy Jones during parts of Michael Jackson's "BAD" tour which intersected with Madonna and George Michael's tours only to find that ours was the most fun. Sometimes overshadowed were Michael's legendary fights with his record companies and embarrassing peccadilloes as a result of his propensity to cruise public areas for anonymous sex partners. Still as his official website proclaims George Michael is an amazing pop artist who rows to his own drumbeat unconditionally which is why I believe that he should be included in the Pantheon of Pop Music. With this said.... ***I invite you to enjoy the music and one of the greatest male voices in Pop Music.... Please enjoy.... Mr. George Michael...***

George Michael / Wham! – ***Careless Whisper*** -- <https://youtu.be/xQ9KuQQDEow>

George Michael / Wham! – ***Everything She Wants*** -- https://youtu.be/Yf_Lwe6p-Cg

George Michael – ***One More Try*** -- <https://youtu.be/bG5N3GC-m20>

George Michael – ***Father Figure*** -- 

George Michael – ***I Can't Make You Love Me*** -- <https://youtu.be/TEOKJe3QgoE>

George Michael – ***The Long And Winding Road*** -- <https://youtu.be/XzRQjRiGc1Q>

George Michael – ***The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face*** -- <https://youtu.be/1FA7OuuL3h4>

George Michael – ***I Want Your Sex*** -- https://youtu.be/uIFPAA_1Wbk

George Michael – ***Monkey*** -- <https://youtu.be/NuQ9SrijJag>

George Michael – ***Too Funky*** -- <https://youtu.be/JQ2DVwSVIlo>

George Michael – ***Amazing*** -- <https://youtu.be/6YziZ1FIAWs>

George Michael – *A Different Corner* -- https://youtu.be/_RV7eq52dOc

George Michael – *I Knew You Were Waiting For Me* -- <https://youtu.be/vM6DFTHnZm0>

George Michael – *Freedom* -- <https://youtu.be/QulBUdp-SAQ>

George Michael – *Faith* -- <https://youtu.be/DUf3G-dyA0A>

George Michael – *Fastlove* -- https://youtu.be/_FM15fuCEgk

George Michael – *Last Christmas* -- <https://youtu.be/z4v7AtXPN6Y>

Aretha Franklin & George Michael – *I Knew You Were Waiting* -- <https://youtu.be/ooYtCvEdoNY>

Elton John & George Michael – *Every Time You Go Away* -- https://youtu.be/ljyt9_TFZd4

I hope that you enjoyed this week's offering and wish you and yours a great week and wishing all of you fellow Dads a Happy Father's Day.....

Sincerely,

Greg Brown

--

Gregory Brown
Chairman & CEO
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