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**Subject:** Greg Brown's Weekend Reading and Other Things.. 11/01/2015

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**Attachments:** Jackie\_Wilson\_bio.docx;

Hot\_dogs, [REDACTED],\_World\_Health\_Organization\_

declares Peter Whoriskey\_TWP\_10.26.15.docx;

[REDACTED]'s\_Economic\_Policy\_Problem\_Ross\_Douthat\_NYT\_Oct\_29\_2015.docx

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**DEAR FRIEND.....**

Should These Children Still Believe in the American Dream?



In Yazoo City, Mississippi, a cluster of kids playing in the street, stripped by the heat of shoes and shirts, greeted Chris Arnade, (a former Wall Street trader and now a writer and photographer based in New York), like a rock star, surrounding me with requests, because I had a camera and wanted to talk. He was traveling around the country asking people about the American dream, and when he asked

them they answered without pause, a rapid-fire succession of desires for wealth and fame, obtained via the NBA, NFL, and hip-hop. While the adults, clustered yards away next to a grill, were less forthcoming, less eager, seemingly abashed to be talking about dreams.

After a few minutes of conversation, they reckoned that the American dream was a farce. This wasn't an isolated event; most of the adults he spoke with on this trip, some 200 over 30 states, had a similar response. An initial confusion, a quick and visceral listing of failings, of disappointments, of things not achieved, only to be redefined moments later, perhaps out of embarrassment, because everybody is supposed to have dreams, certainly the American dream. Many refused a portrait. *"Nobody will print what I have to say anyways."*

In spite of believing that they are not part of the American dream, no one rude. Arnade said that every single person he met was gracious, but they had little time for dreams. They were worn and overwhelmed by the realities of life, the burden of caring for kids, the burden of *"keeping Mr. Bill from kicking me out of my house."*

Dreams imply things are getting better, growing, but many people are just focused on hanging on to what they have. They want to keep their families intact and safe. This isn't an unusual concern, cherry picked from the streets. The statistics show most Americans haven't seen their wealth increase in decades.

For those fighting to stay current, dreams are silly things spoken about only by those looking for votes. *"The only people talking about the American dream are politicians. The rest of us are busting our asses, dealing with shrinking paychecks and rising costs."* The blame for this, when assigned, is directed at a vague other: the other class, the other side of town, or the other part of the country. The only other ever made explicit is immigrants.

Immigrants are seen as a direct threat to paycheck and to values. *"Ain't nobody who works with their hands who hasn't lost a job to a Mexican."* *"Things have changed here. Our values are not the same since we opened our borders."*

Yet for the immigrants themselves, who have seen their wealth grow and their freedoms multiply by crossing the border, the American dream is anything but silly. When asked they answer quickly, without cynicism, and unwavering in their optimism.

A recent immigrant from Mexico, taking his son fishing in the Rio Grande on a bright Sunday, shot back when Arnade asked about the American dream. *"I am living the American dream. I have a job, a family, and my son goes to a great school, and if he works hard enough, he can have any job he wants. I didn't have that. He does. That is a dream come true."*

His story and others are collected in the portraits below.



*“To have a family, to give them a proper home, and to be able to provide them a proper education.”*  
—Nikki, Yazoo City, Mississippi

*“To make money, raise a family, and to be safe. I was born a mile from here in Juarez. I don’t want my child to face what I had to face. I want the best for him and my wife.”* — Cesar, El Paso, Texas

*“The American dream is dead, because we don’t have any values anymore. People only care about possessions, about things, about money, not happiness. Happiness comes from caring about others, about family, and about community. I have cared for and buried most of my family, and it has cost me. But it has been worth it.”* — Karen, Tallulah, Louisiana

*“To live a successful life on your terms, to be accepted by others on your terms, and to accept others on their terms.”* — Jose Villa, La Villita, New Mexico

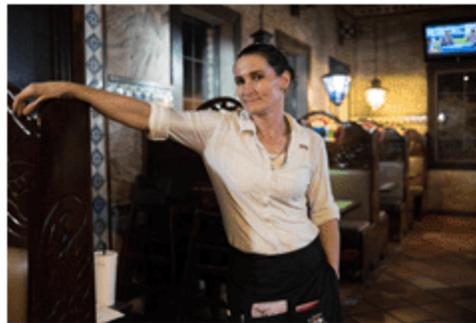
*“I don’t believe in the American dream anymore. Nothing comes by just being here. You got to focus on bettering yourself and your family, by hard work and education. Be yourself, be true to you, not some dream, but you.”* — Chaka, Albany, New York

*“I have nothing. But I am free because I have God and I can pray.”* — Enrique, Albany, New York

*“To have a better life for your children. I want that for my daughter, a better education and a better job for her. But you have to work hard. My mother does and I do and I want to make sure my daughter does.”* — Sierra, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

*“To provide for my daughter, have a job, a home, and an education. I am studying at Ozarks Technical College so I can provide for her, and she can have more than I have.”* —Cheyenne, Springfield, Missouri

*“Work hard and live free. Anyone can succeed and be free here if they are willing to work. My grandparents came from Syria escaping persecution. They came through Ellis Island to Arkansas, and built this store with their own hands.”* —Richard Mahfouz, Dermott, Arkansas



*“To get an education and then a job. I have both. But Appleton is changing. We have a lot of people already here, and others coming here who don’t have either.”* —Marsha Brewer, Appleton, Wisconsin

*“What Martin Luther King said 50 years ago: The right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, regardless of your skin color. We still fighting for that now. We still watching our children killed needlessly for nothing.”* —Isaiah, Kansas City, Missouri

*“To have a family and be safe. The country isn't as safe as it used to be. Parents are not teaching their kids values and kids need values. My children respect me and part of that is whooping them when they get out of line. They need to be whooped now and then, not beat.”* —Christina, Vicksburg, Mississippi

*“The American dream is long gone. Long, long gone. Politicians have ruined it, broken our values, sold out to folks with money who only care about themselves. Nobody cares about anyone who works*

*with their hands anymore. We got to get this country straight again, before it all keeps sliding down into hell.*” —Robert McAdams, Peru, Nebraska

*“To be able to own the things you need or want. My relatives in Mexico don’t have that. They are struggling with money and worried about safety. Here in the U.S., if you work hard enough, you can get what you need.”* —Alex, Denver, Colorado

*“Freedom, safety, and a good job. I have them now. Those on the other side of the fence in my backyard, living in Mexico, don’t have that. They climb into my yard and I find them hiding under my truck. They want what we have and we should be proud others want it.”* —Blanca, Socorro, Texas

*“To have a career, college for your kids, and to be happy. I am a career-minded, God-fearing, family-structured woman. I want the best for myself and my family. That is out of reach right now because higher education is too expensive.”* —Katrena Keith, Talladega, Alabama



*“If you work hard you get what you deserve, but that is dying because our values are dying. Our children are spoiled. ‘Spare the rod, spoil the child.’ I have worked in foundries all my life, since I was fifteen. Hard work, and I don’t got a lot of money to show for it, but I got my values and I will teach my kids those values. Right now the government is trying to destroy those values.”* —Larry, Ohatchee, Alabama

*“To be free. There has been no American dream for me. I am a Native American, born on a reservation, and my people’s freedom has been taken away before, and my freedom taken away and I have been thrown in jail.”* —Brendon Worth, Green Bay, Wisconsin

*"I am living the American dream. I have a job, a family, and my son goes to a great school, and if he works hard enough, he can have any job he wants."* — Miguel, Bernalillo, New Mexico

The American Dream? Not all of us have it. We have victims of domestic abuse and human trafficking and drug addiction in our midst. But it's right in front of us. The American Dream is going past our windows right now. For many in the morning, kids walk to school, in safety. They have clean water, they have a school to go to, and no one is trying to brutally kill them to score a political point. The police are not corrupt. The mail comes on time. The power is on, 24 hours a day. There's no shortage of food. This is paradise. Anyone who tells you different has never been to a war zone. We have the luxury of that distance and for most of us not being born in a war zone or in a poor country. This is a blessing that buffers us from the costs of our wars and economics that more than half of the world suffers under.

As someone who made the generational leap from poverty then onto insecure working class to comfortable middle class. The American Dream is alive and well - millions of people would give anything to be in our shoes. To live in safety, with the opportunity of a good education and future for their children. It's our birthright, through no merit of our own as it truly is serendipity. For many our country is an imperfect paradise, with the rule of law access to education and the opportunity to pursue relevant work. But for tens of millions this dream is as much of a dream as those the children in Yazoo City, Mississippi – who only see success as the NBA, NFL, and hip-hop and not as a doctor, nurse, police officer, firefighter, teacher or the owner of a grocery store.

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## Do You Believe Me or Your Lying Eyes?



During the second GOP debate, Republican presidential candidates Donald Trump and Jeb Bush clashed on former president George W. Bush's response to terror threats following the 9/11 attacks.

The heading of this piece was the pay-off line in a joke that Richard Pryor use to tell about a wife finding her husband engaged in sex with another woman. And although some may think that this is crass, it is no less ridiculous than Jeb Bush telling Donald Trump that his brother kept America safe. Where was he on 9/11? And what about his brother's performance during Katrina? And if keeping us safe includes starting two wars, mishandling them so badly that we are still living with the consequences of trillions of dollars in additional debt, millions of refugees, 861,000 soldiers who are

counted injured casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan that the government is expected to spend some \$2 million in long-term medical cost and the total destabilization of the entire Middle East..... Then maybe Jeb is right....

YES, as a country we all banded together as one, in response to 9/11, blaming no one other than the terrorist themselves, but it is truly disturbing that someone running for the Presidency today would blatantly ignore what really happen while at the same time defend the Republicans going after Hillary Clinton for the tragedy in Benghazi. What makes it even worse, is that Jeb Bush's foreign policy advisers, are almost to the man, the same 'gang that couldn't shoot straight' that brought us the catastrophes in Afghanistan and Iraq. And yes, George Bush did a great job in rallying the country after 9/11, quickly identifying most of the terrorist behind the attack and tracking them down. But in the end he gave up on Bin Laden leaving two catastrophic wars that he didn't win and couldn't finish. Yet, Jeb Bush, many Republicans and even members of the media like to repeat the line that the Bush/Cheney "kept the country safe."

Donald Trump's latest assault on the GOP establishment came in the form of harsh questions about President George W. Bush's handling of the 9/11 attacks during a Republican debate, forcing Jeb Bush to defend his brother's national security record in Jeb's campaign for the White House. Candidate Bush has adopted a simple refrain in defense of his brother: "*He kept us safe,*" he has said. Trump raised the issue during in an interview with Bloomberg News, saying, "*The World Trade Center came down during [George Bush's] reign.*" In an interview with The Washington Post on Saturday, Trump listed steps he said Bush should have taken.

Jeb Bush's retort to Trump has been to suggest the real estate mogul is applying an impossible standard, one that intentionally misrepresents Bush's remarks in defense of his brother. "I mean, so next week, Mr. Trump is probably going to say that FDR was around when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. It's what you do after that matters," Bush said during the CNN interview that aired Sunday morning. "Does anybody actually blame my brother for the attacks on 9/11? If they do, they're totally marginalized in our society. It's what he did afterwards that matters, and ████ proud of him."

While in the same interview, Bush scrambled to explain why his brother shouldn't be held to a similar standard over 9/11 as the one to which Republicans are holding Hillary Rodham Clinton over the 2012 Benghazi attack: If it happened on your watch, you're responsible. "Were we doing the job of protecting our embassies and our consulates, and during the period, the hours after the attack started, could they have been saved?" Bush said. "If the ambassador was asking for additional security and didn't get it, that's a proper point, and if it's proven that the security was adequate compared to other embassies, fine, we'll move on."

In the end, if we are honest about 9/11 if we don't want to repeat the same mistakes. Remember it is documented that Condoleezza Rice was informed that Bin Laden was planning to do a major attack on U.S. soil which she gave to George Bush in August of 2011. This happened before the mismanagement of both wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the the bungling of rescue efforts during Katrina. But the truly "*big ugly*" is how the Republican Party is trying to blame Hillary Clinton for the deaths of four Americans serving in Libya on the same day a year later. And three years later they continue to hunt her down on the groundless argument that someone must be the blame. And as Chris Mathews said, ....that if you follow that argument and the trail of 9/11 and you end up with George W. Bush. And as Harry Truman once said of the American Presidency.... "***The Buck Stops Here.***" And as Richard Pryor joke asks, who do you want to believe.....

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## The Most Powerful Person on the Planet

If you ever wonder why Vladimir Putin is so popular in Russia look at the graphic below...



And yes, today Russia is going through a severe recession but the average Russian is still much better off than they were 15 years ago... Even still, Putin's approval rating hit historic high at 89 percent in June 2015, as well as ranked the most trust person in the country. Just so you understand that this isn't propaganda, the poll was conducted over the period June 19-22, by the **Levada Center** which was founded in 1987 by Russian sociologist, Doctor of Philosophy Yuri Levada and hated by the Kremlin. So whatever we think here in America, I assure you that every politician and in the U.S. and Europe would love to have his numbers... As for the title of "**The Most Powerful Person in the World**" that is according to **Forbes Magazine**.

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## Is There a Need for Rough Justice

The officer flipped her over and then tossed her across the room during the arrest, the video showed.



Web Link: [REDACTED]

By now you have seen the disturbing video of a white uniformed school resource officer (SRO) aggressively confronting a 16 year-old Black female student at Spring Valley High School in South Carolina, body slamming while she was still sitting in a chair and dragging her out of the classroom, as fellow students watched speechlessly. The veteran deputy pinned the senior student down as he puts her hands behind her back. After she's on the ground, a woman in the classroom yells "*what the f---?*", he told this other student, "*I'll put you in jail next.*" The episode happened in front of a full class, and at least one person in the room was filming. The female student was not injured and was later released to her parents, police said.

The officer Ben Fields was listed on the Richland County sheriff's department's website as a senior deputy assigned to Spring Valley High School. On his now-deleted Twitter page, he described himself as football coach for the school's defensive line, and a strength coach. Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott said [REDACTED] seen the video and found it "*disturbing.*" "*That is not a proper technique and should not be used by law enforcement,*" Lott said. Lt. Curtis Wilson said the deputy was removed from the school and placed on administrative duty while investigators look into the attack. He said school resource officers are always held to a higher standard of investigation because they're meant to protect students. Civil rights groups and several elected officials applauded the officer's dismissal, which came two days after videos by students at school recorded his rough handling of the teenager who Lott said had refused educators' orders to put away her phone and leave the class.

The videos quickly went viral, reigniting concerns that the proliferation of police in U.S. schools can criminalize behavior once handled more quietly by school officials. A civil rights probe by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Justice Department into the arrest is under way and the state law enforcement division also is investigating. Some activists are calling for Fields, 34, to be criminally charged.

A group called the **Richland Two Black Parents Association** released a statement condemning what occurred in the video. "*Parents are heartbroken as this is just another example of the intolerance that continues to be of issue in Richland School District Two particularly with families*

and children of color," the statement said. "As we have stated in the past, we stand ready to work in collaboration to address these horrible acts of violence and inequities among our children." The images captured an "egregious use of force" against the student, Victoria Middleton, executive director of the ACLU of South Carolina, told the Associated Press.

Now this is where I normally would ended the piece..... until I saw **Brenda's Last Word** who did a video commentary on the incident. Brenda Wood is a veteran broadcast journalist and commentator on the Atlanta, GA affiliate television station for **NBC's Channel 11**. Known for taking a different look at controversial incidents and issues Brenda had a different take on the Spring Valley School incident.



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

Brenda starts out saying that no question Officers Field's behavior was unprofessional and unacceptable and should have been fired. But she urged her viewers to not miss the bigger picture of the "discipline problem in our schools" which is out of control. And not just the part of resource officer, because kids today, more often than we like to admit, have little to no regard to civility. She explains that the some of the outrage against the video is rooted in part to our collective naiveté of what actually goes on in schools all of the time. For this reason she says that the video is not as black and white as it may seem.

Continuing on Brenda says, "just about any teacher in a large public school will tell you that their biggest daily issue in the classroom is that kids have no respect for authority. And when the student gets aggressive the teacher has no power to do anything about it. And the students know that so they have no incentive to back down when a teacher asks them to. No incentive to follow orders." She points out that in the video we just see the reaction. We don't see the action that precipitated it. She points out that the other classmates were not surprised that the student had instigated her own beat-down. Because she believes that the kids knew the incident wasn't just one-sided. Brenda finishes by saying again that she believes that that Officer Fields abused his power. And what he did was way out-of-controlled, but out-of-control SROs are not a problem in our public schools. While teacher and those students who truly wanting to learn are burdened every single day with the albatross of

disrespectful mouthy misbehaving kids who have no intention of following the rules and will defy anyone who tries to make them. All made worse because the contract between parents and teacher that existed when I was growing up no longer exist. When I was growing up the last thing you ever wanted was for your mother, father or both be summoned to "your" school to discuss "your" behavior.

As someone who attended elementary school and the 1950s and junior and high school in the early and mid-1960s, this type of student behavior only happen in really bad schools ("*hoodlum academies*") and films like "*Asphalt Jungle*" and "*To Sir With Love*" because every school had an enforcer who was a male teacher, vice principal or the coaches and nuns who you knew not to mess with because when you did there was immediate retribution. And with your parent's permission the local police took you to the basement of the police station to administer a bit of discipline. And although many of you might think of me as a liberal, I believe that today we need a bit of "*rough discipline*" today in our schools. I am not talking about Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown type of "*injustice*". And in no way do I support Field's behavior, as his nickname around the school "*Officer Slam*" suggest that he has done this deplorable act before and should have been fired prior to this latest incident. However this unlawful beat-down is something that should examine on the other side as well.

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## The Republican Tax Plans Are All Basically Insane

They would cost trillions of dollars.



Like millions of others, I watch the third GOP Presidential debate and noticed that every candidate promised to slash taxes and unleash economic growth. Most of them haven't actually presented a specific tax plan. But those who have are peddling economic fantasies. Even the conservative **Tax Foundation** believes these plans would balloon the national debt.

- **Donald Trump's** plan would cost over \$10 trillion.

- **Bobby Jindal's** plan would cost \$9 trillion.
- **Rick Santorum's** would cost \$1.1 trillion.
- **Jeb Bush's plan?** \$1.6 trillion.
- **Marco Rubio?** More than \$1 trillion over the next decade.

One exception: **The Tax Foundation** says **Rand Paul's tax plan** would save the government \$737 billion. But other tax experts are far less sanguine. Citizens for Tax Justice estimates that Paul's plan would cost \$15 trillion. Much of the difference is due to less optimistic assumptions about economic growth. The Tax Foundation assumes that tax cuts befitting Wall Street and the wealthy will generate very high levels of growth. Citizens for Tax Justice does not.

**Mike Huckabee's "FairTax,"** which would establish a national retail sales tax, in lieu of the current tax system that taxes how much income people make. Huckabee claims that his plan would yield six percent economic growth -- two percent more than the four percent that Jeb Bush has said his tax plan would return. The obviously problem with this plan is that for the poor and middle-class this would be a huge tax hike as much more of their wealth would go to taxes.

### THE GOP TAX PLANS IN ONE CHART

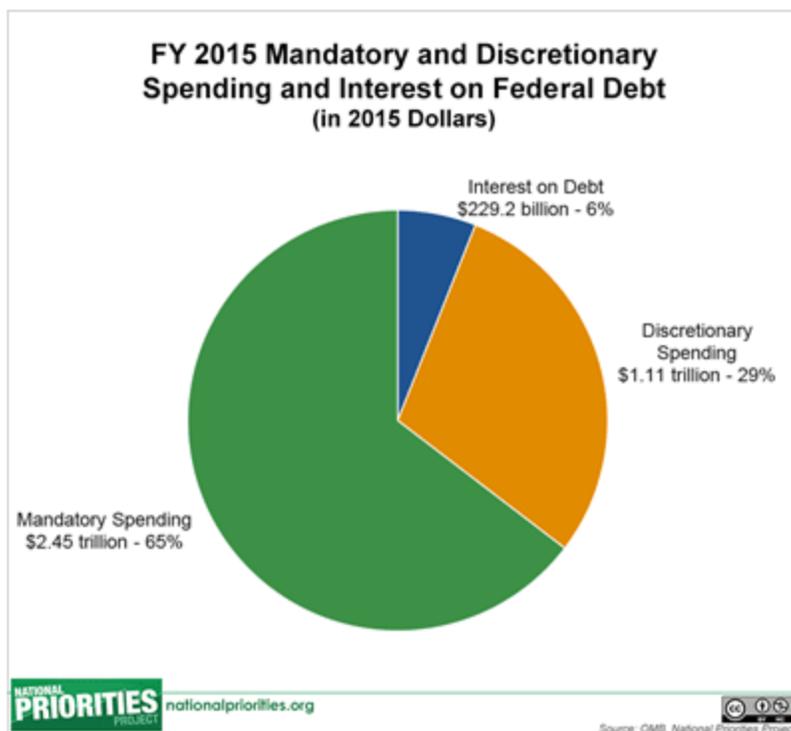
INCOME BRACKET	CURRENT	BUSH	PAUL	RUBIO*	SANTORUM*	TRUMP
\$0-\$12,600	0%	0%	0%	15%*	20%*	0%
\$12,601-\$22,600	10%	0%	0%	15%*	20%*	0%
\$22,601-\$31,050	10%	10%	0%	15%	20%	0%
\$31,051-\$50,000	15%	10%	0%	15%	20%	0%
\$50,001-\$87,500	15%	10%	14.5%	15%	20%	10%
\$87,501-\$100,000	25%	25%	14.5%	15%	20%	10%
\$100,001-\$150,000	25%	25%	14.5%	15%	20%	20%
\$150,001-\$163,800	25%	25%	14.5%	35%	20%	20%
\$163,801-\$242,450	28%	28%	14.5%	35%	20%	20%
\$242,451-\$300,000	33%	28%	14.5%	35%	20%	20%
\$300,001-\$424,100	33%	28%	14.5%	35%	20%	25%
\$424,101-\$477,450	35%	28%	14.5%	35%	20%	25%
Over \$477,450	39.6%	28%	14.5%	35%	20%	35%

\*INCLUDES PERSONAL TAX CREDIT OF \$3,000-\$4,000 PER MARRIED COUPLE, WHICH WOULD MEAN A NET GAIN FOR LOW INCOME FAMILIES.

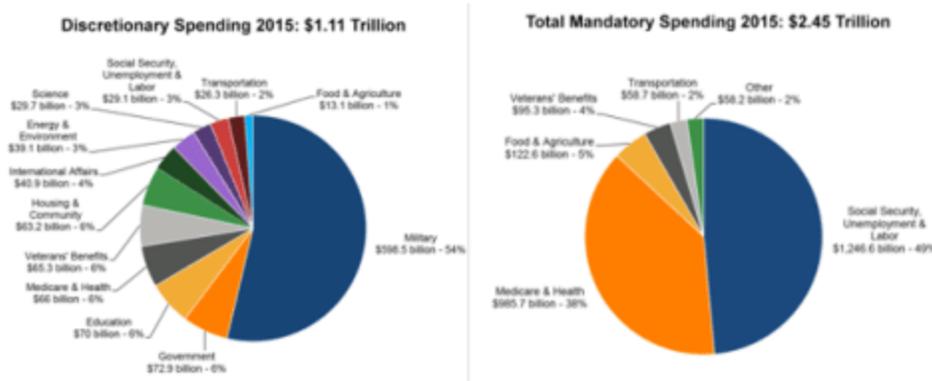


As for the current GOP front-runner **Ben Carson**, his 10% to 15% flat tax (based on the "*Biblical Sin-Based Tax Program of tithing*") is so implausible that it is laughable, because the total American Economy is \$18 trillion while fiscal year 2015, the federal budget is \$3.8 trillion or approximately 21% of the U.S. economy. So you can do the math.... As for Ted Cruz he also is proposing a 10% flat tax, which as we know, no one believes can generate enough revenue to balance the budget.... He also wants to return to the goal standard..... but wasn't that phased out four decades ago....

Below please find graphs of 2015 U.S. government spending:



Total debt held by the public is currently \$13.08 trillion and the total national debt as of October 2015 was \$18,150,604,277,751 and growing.



As political columnist and commentator **Mark Shields** said Friday on **PBS NewsHour** – There seems to be no political price for lying or proposing policies that have been proven to not work. As such Republican politicians are addicted to the idea that once one them the presidency and that was Ronald Reagan, cutting taxes and raising the defense budget while still paying lip service to the goal of a balanced budget while they are offering Supply-side tax cuts. The two are polar opposites and mutually exclusive. But they still talk in those terms. Oh yes, we will have a balanced budget amendment as well. It has been proven that supply-side economics only helps the people that are already wealthy, as it really is only about cutting taxes. Yet they all come back to that. Even Marco Rubio whose economic ideas are different and in ways more creative, still it comes back to cutting the tax rate on the top. Echoing this sentiment is Ross Douthat who wrote in a **New York Times** op-ed after the last debate -- Rubio's economic platform, *"... his tax plan relies on impossible deficit math while delivering very large benefits, in absolute and percentage terms alike, to people who make most of their money from investments."*

As such for those Conservatives I ask what would you cut to make up for the hundreds of millions of yearly deficit funding that the country is generating every year by, just cutting entitlements, when the current deficit is \$485 billion down from \$1.1 trillion six years ago. And although all of the Republican presidential candidates tell us that their tax cuts will generate more revenues, we know from the 1990s

grand experiment of supply-side economics, that cutting taxes and expecting revenues to rise doesn't work. So for those who chose to repeat this failed economic policy/premise they are insane -- as Albert Einstein said, "**insanity is doing the same thing over and over expecting a different result.**" Need I say anymore.... **as this is my rant of the week....**

## WEEK'S READINGS

More Americans Have Been Shot to Death in the Last 25 Years Than Have Died in Every War



A month ago, another deadly shooting — this time at Mississippi's Delta State University — made national news. At least one person was killed, and as of Monday night, the suspect had not been apprehended.

This chart, pulled from an unrelated Center for American Progress report published on Monday, provides timely context on the prevalence of gun deaths in the United States. The chart tallies gun accidents, suicides, and murders, and shows that the number of gun deaths in the United States since 1989 exceeds the number of American combat fatalities in 239 years of US history — from the Revolutionary War to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. (Note: The military total pictured in the chart below represents only the number of American military killed in battle. The absolute total of US military killed in wartime since 1776 is higher, at more than 1.1 million, according to estimates from the Department of Veterans Affairs.)

FIGURE 3

### The war at home

Gun deaths since the end of the Reagan administration outnumber U.S. military deaths from wars

Total number of gun-related deaths in the United States from 1989 to 2014

836,290

Total U.S. military killed in war from 1776 to 2015

656,397

Note: 2014 information totals were estimated based on 1989 to 2013 numbers.

Source: Authors analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Injury Prevention & Control: Data & Statistics (WISQARS)," available at [http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal\\_injury\\_reports.html](http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal_injury_reports.html) (last accessed August 2015); Department of Veterans Affairs "America's Wars," available at [http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs\\_americas\\_wars.pdf](http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs_americas_wars.pdf) (last accessed September 2015); Nese F. DeBruyne and Anne Leland, "American War and Military Operations Casualties: Lists and Statistics" (Washington: Congressional Research Service, 2015), available at <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL32492.pdf>; U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Casualty Status Fatalities (2015), available at <http://www.defense.gov/casualty.pdf>. For casualties before the year 2000, Veterans Affairs and Congressional Research Service information was used. For battle casualties after 2000, information was obtained from the U.S. Department of Defense.

Center for American Progress

The report does not just focus on gun violence, but looks at the positions of the current group of Republican presidential hopefuls on a number of conservative mainstay issues, such as immigration, climate science, and taxes. Titled "Right of Reagan," the report uses former President Ronald Reagan, considered by many to be a model of conservatism, as a benchmark for measuring the extremism of many of the candidates. It notes that while Reagan opposed the National Rifle Association on several issues, including background checks and an assault weapons ban, many of the top GOP contenders have been highly rated by the NRA for their unwavering opposition to gun control.

Most GOP candidates oppose closing loopholes in the background check system — loopholes that "enable criminals to evade the system and purchase guns online, at gun shows, in parking lots, and just about anywhere else," write the report's authors. Billionaire real estate mogul Donald Trump, the current GOP front-runner, said this summer that he opposes expanding background checks, though in his 2000 book he wrote that he supported an assault weapons ban and longer waiting periods for gun purchases. Siding with the NRA is a common strategy among the candidates, the report notes: The powerful gun lobby group is one "that many Republicans dare not cross."

Hannah Levintova – The Salon – Sep. 15, 2015

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## If This Doesn't Upset You – Nothing Will



Web Link:

[us-database](#)

**The Counted** is a project by the **Guardian** – working to count the number of people killed by police and other law enforcement agencies in the United States throughout 2015, to monitor their demographics and to tell the stories of how they died. The database will combine Guardian reporting with verified crowd sourced information to build a more comprehensive record of such fatalities. **The Counted** is the most thorough public accounting for deadly use of force in the US, but it will operate as an imperfect work in progress – and will be updated by Guardian reporters and interactive journalists as frequently and as promptly as possible.

Why is this important?

The reason why The Count and other similar sites are important is that in an era when we count everything including pumpkin seeds, the US government has no comprehensive record of the number of people killed by law enforcement. This lack of basic data has been glaring amid the protests, riots and worldwide debate set in motion by the fatal police shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed 18-year-old, in Ferguson, Missouri, in August 2014. Before stepping down as US attorney general earlier this year, Eric Holder described the prevailing situation on data collection as “*unacceptable*”. By understanding the gravity of the issue we can begin to push for the required changes that hopefully will reduce many of these unnecessary deaths.

We have to demilitarize our police departments. Aggressive behavior and guns should be last result, whereas in the UK (*a nation of more than 64 million people*) police have killed only 1 person this year. Germany (*a country of 80 million*) less than 100 people have been killed by police since 1998. And in Iceland, police have only killed one person since the republic was founded in 1944. Granted, the population of Iceland is just 323,000. But it's still impressive.

To make sense of these numbers, you need to know just how rarely police in other wealthy liberal democracies kill civilians. Even when you account for population size, gun ownership, and violent crime rates, American police out-kill civilians by staggering factors relative to peer nations. Here are some other comparisons published in a study by the Danish police on firearm use between 1996 and 2006. They identified the number of people killed by police in several European countries and accounted for population by giving the number of people killed per one million residents. They used population figures from the year 2000.

Here's what they found:

- Denmark: number of people killed by police between 1996 and 2006: 11 people – number of people killed per one million residents: .187 people
- Sweden: 13 people – .133 people

- Norway: 3 people — .060 people
- Finland: 2 people — .034 people
- Germany: 81 people — .089 people
- The Netherlands: 24 people — .137 people
- England/Wales: 25 people — .042 people

If we take **Five Thirty Eight's** estimate that 1,000 people are killed by police in the United States every year and divide it by the 2000 population of 282 million, the American situation for just one year would look like this:

- US: 10,000 people killed — 35.5 killed for every one million residents

According to the IPCC, there hasn't been a fatal police shooting in more than two years and over the same period only 26 people have died in police custody during arrest or in post-arrest detention. In the period from 2010-2014, a total of 62 people died in police custody. Compare the police record from 2010-2014 to Baltimore's police record, which we know thanks to an investigation by the ACLU. In Baltimore alone, 31 people died in police custody, exactly half the number who died in all of England and Wales.

England and Wales have a combined population of 56 million. Baltimore's population is 622,000. Do the math and you realize that people in Baltimore were about 50 times more likely to be killed by police. And the disparity is even larger when you factor in shooting deaths. The Economist estimates that British citizens are 100 times less likely to be shot by police than Americans.

Are you comfortable with that?

Defenders of American police will often explain the disparity on the prevalence of guns in the United States. More people with guns and more gun crime means American police might be quicker to use deadly force. But if you compare per capita gun to per capita police homicides, that theory doesn't hold up. The US has two to three times as many guns per capita as places like Denmark, Germany, Finland, Switzerland, and. But the number of police homicides per capita is staggeringly high. Twice as many guns means 70 times as many people killed by police? We clearly need to figure out why this is happening and what will stop it.

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## The Republicans' Incompetence Caucus



The House Republican caucus is close to ungovernable these days. How did this situation come about?

This was not just the work of the Freedom Caucus or Ted Cruz or one month's activity. The Republican Party's capacity for effective self-governance degraded slowly, over the course of a long chain of rhetorical excesses, mental corruptions and philosophical betrayals. Basically, the party abandoned traditional conservatism for right-wing radicalism. Republicans came to see themselves as insurgents and revolutionaries, and every revolution tends toward anarchy and ends up devouring its own.

By traditional definitions, conservatism stands for intellectual humility, a belief in steady, incremental change, a preference for reform rather than revolution, a respect for hierarchy, precedence, balance and order, and a tone of voice that is prudent, measured and responsible. Conservatives of this disposition can be dull, but they know how to nurture and run institutions. They also see the nation as one organic whole. Citizens may fall into different classes and political factions, but they are still joined by chains of affection that command ultimate loyalty and love.

All of this has been overturned in dangerous parts of the Republican Party. Over the past 30 years, or at least since Rush Limbaugh came on the scene, the Republican rhetorical tone has grown ever more bombastic, hyperbolic and imbalanced. Public figures are prisoners of their own prose styles, and Republicans from Newt Gingrich through Ben Carson have become addicted to a crisis mentality. Civilization was always on the brink of collapse. Every setback, like the passage of Obamacare, became the ruination of the republic. Comparisons to Nazi Germany became a staple.

This produced a radical mind-set. Conservatives started talking about the Reagan "*revolution*," the Gingrich "*revolution*." Among people too ill educated to understand the different spheres, political practitioners adopted the mental habits of the entrepreneur. Everything had to be transformational and disruptive. Hierarchy and authority were equated with injustice. Self-expression became more valued than self-restraint and coalition building. A contempt for politics infested the Republican mind.

Politics is the process of making decisions amid diverse opinions. It involves conversation, calm deliberation, self-discipline, the capacity to listen to other points of view and balance valid but competing ideas and interests.

But this new Republican faction regards the messy business of politics as soiled and impure. Compromise is corruption. Inconvenient facts are ignored. Countrymen with different views are regarded as aliens. Political identity became a sort of ethnic identity, and any compromise was regarded as a blood betrayal.

A weird contradictory mentality replaced traditional conservatism. Republican radicals have contempt for politics, but they still believe that transformational political change can rescue the nation. Republicans developed a contempt for Washington and government, but they elected leaders who made the most lavish promises imaginable. Government would be reduced by a quarter! Shutdowns would happen! The nation would be saved by transformational change! As Steven Bilakovics writes in his book *Democracy Without Politics*, “even as we expect ever less of democracy we apparently expect ever more from democracy.”

This anti-political political ethos produced elected leaders of jaw-dropping incompetence. Running a government is a craft, like carpentry. But the new Republican officials did not believe in government and so did not respect its traditions, its disciplines and its craftsmanship. They do not accept the hierarchical structures of authority inherent in political activity.

In his masterwork, *Politics as a Vocation*, Max Weber argues that the pre-eminent qualities for a politician are passion, a feeling of responsibility and a sense of proportion. A politician needs warm passion to impel action but a cool sense of responsibility and proportion to make careful decisions in a complex landscape.

If a politician lacks the quality of detachment — the ability to let the difficult facts of reality work their way into the mind — then, Weber argues, the politician ends up striving for the “boastful but entirely empty gesture.” His work “leads nowhere and is senseless.”

Welcome to Ted Cruz, Donald Trump and the Freedom Caucus.

Really, have we ever seen bumbling on this scale, people at once so cynical and so naïve, so willfully ignorant in using levers of power to produce some tangible if incremental good? These insurgents can't even acknowledge democracy's legitimacy — if you can't persuade a majority of your colleagues, maybe you should accept their position. You might be wrong!

People who don't accept democracy will be bad at conversation. They won't respect tradition, institutions or precedent. These figures are masters at destruction but incompetent at construction.

These insurgents are incompetent at governing and unwilling to be governed. But they are not a spontaneous growth. It took a thousand small betrayals of conservatism to get to the dysfunction we see all around.

David Brooks – New York Time – October 13, 2015

This week the Republicans finally got their act together, electing 45 year-old Rep. Paul Ryan as the 54th speaker of the House of Representatives succeeding John Boehner who had served as speaker since 2011. Ryan is known as a nice guy by both Republicans and Democrats and a policy wonk. In his first speech he said the constant drama wasn't what the American people wanted and tried to move past it. *"We are not solving problems. We are adding to them. And I am not interested in laying blame. We are not settling scores. We are wiping the slate clean,"* said Ryan. ***Now let's see how long this will last....***

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## One Simple Trick Will Give You Better iPhone Battery Life

Sweet battery power, nectar of the gods.



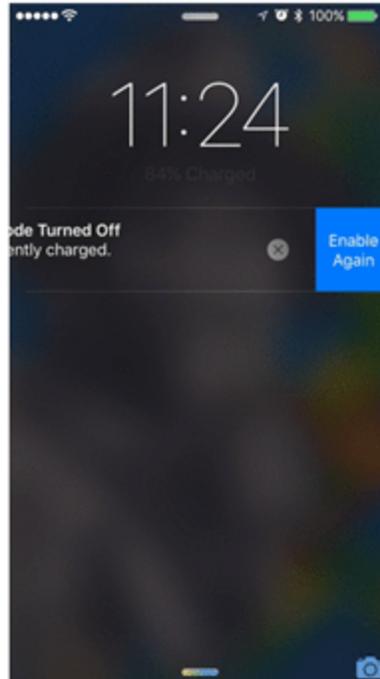
If you own a smartphone running *iOS 9*, Apple's new power-saving feature could give you way more battery life than you might expect -- provided you know how to use it. When your battery falls to 20 percent, a notification prompts you to enable **Low Power Mode**, a setting that conserves your precious charge by disabling non-essential tasks such as visual effects, automatic downloads and background activity. It might also make your phone's performance slower, but that's better than having it die altogether.

The big problem is that this handy feature automatically turns off when you charge the battery up to 80 percent. For the average iPhone user, that may be enough. But if you have a long day ahead of you, you might want to stretch your battery life even more. We've got a trick to help you extend **Low**

**Power Mode** so you can use it not only when your battery is running out of juice, but anytime you want.

The secret is to manually enable this setting. There are 3 ways to do that.

**1.** When you receive the notification that *Low Power Mode* has been turned off, swipe to the left and tap "*Enable again.*" Check out this GIF posted on ItinerantDev:



**2.** Head to Settings > Battery > Low Power Mode and pull the toggle button to the right. Voilà!

**3.** Ask Siri to enable Low Power Mode. Super easy.

Apple didn't disclose exactly how much battery your phone saves while in power-saving mode. However, some estimates suggest that the *Low Power* feature can help your phone hold a charge up to 44 percent longer than in regular mode. That's a whole lot of "extra" battery. Use it wisely. But as someone who recently moved from Samsung to iPhone, I have learned that these fancy features which we all love drains the battery faster than you can say Jiminy Cricket. So anything that can extend battery life without doubling the phone's weight is welcome news for Apple lovers...

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## No More Bacon, Hotdogs and Sausages

**Bacon, hot dogs cause cancer, World Health Organization says**



By now you have probably heard that a research division of the World Health Organization announced on October 26, 2015 that bacon, sausage and other processed meats cause cancer and that red meat probably does, too. The report by the influential group stakes out one of the most aggressive stances against meat taken by a major health organization, and it is expected to face stiff criticism in the United States. If you're trying to decide between eating bacon or steak for dinner the new findings that could help guide your choice. Crispy strips of cured, smoked pork belly, according to WHO, cause cancer. And a rib eye? Well, it might cause cancer too.

The much anticipated announcement from the WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer is detailed in an article published in the medical journal *The Lancet*. The authors examined more than 800 studies conducted largely over the last 20 years. The working group's verdict is that processed meats are carcinogenic, and that red meat is "*probably carcinogenic to humans.*" The WHO findings were drafted by a panel of 22 international experts who reviewed decades of research on the link between red meat, processed meats and cancer. The panel reviewed animal experiments, studies of human diet and health, and cell processes that could explain how red meat might cause cancer. And although the panel's decision was not unanimous, by raising lethal concerns about a food that anchors countless American meals, it has raised serious concerns.

Processed meats — such as bacon and other meats that have been cured, smoked, or fermented — join tobacco and asbestos on the list of top cancer-causing agents. "*But this does NOT mean that they are all equally dangerous,*" WHO officials wrote in a Q&A published along with the findings. "*The IARC classifications describe the strength of the scientific evidence about an agent being a cause of cancer, rather than assessing the level of risk.*" While smoked meat is relatively safer than smoking cigarettes, the WHO report says that eating 50 grams a day of processed meat — that's about two strips of bacon — causes the risk of colorectal cancer to go up by 18 percent. Increased rates of pancreatic and prostate cancer are also associated with processed and red meat consumption, and overall, 34,000 deaths a year are attributed to excessive amounts of processed meat.

“For an individual, the risk of developing colorectal cancer because of their consumption of processed meat remains small, but this risk increases with the amount of meat consumed,” Kurt Straif, head of the IARC Monographs Programme, said in a press release. “In view of the large number of people who consume processed meat, the global impact on cancer incidence is of public health importance.”

The report’s policy conclusion is not abstinence, but rather limiting consumption—a prescription that many governments, including that of the United States, have already adopted. After all, red meat such as beef contains high levels of iron, B vitamins, and other nutrients.

But between global rising meat consumption and the political and financial clout of the meat industry, the conversation swirling around the contentious announcement is not one about moderation and realigning global diets for the good of the environment and public health. Rather, it is being presented as a zero-sum game.

“Scientific evidence shows cancer is a complex disease not caused by single foods and that a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle choices are essential to good health,” said Barry Carpenter, president and CEO of the North American Meat Institute, the largest trade organization for the industry, in an amazingly snarky press release.

Carpenter continued by referencing a litany of potential-cancer-causing agents, citing the class each is in. “IARC says you can enjoy your yoga class, but don’t breathe air (Class I carcinogen), sit near a sun-filled window (Class I), drink wine or coffee (Class I and Class 2B), eat grilled food (Class 2A), or apply aloe vera (Class 2B),” the release reads. “And if you are a hairdresser or do shiftwork (both Class 2A), you should seek a new career.”

The IARC recommendation is based on a review of previous research — research that, in its own right, created quite a few media firestorms and industry battles. But with the cumulative weight the two decades’ worth of papers have together, and with these new reputation of WHO behind the cancer-causing claims, so dismissing the recommendations are unlikely to carry the argument. With this said, I am still going to enjoy an occasional hotdog at the game or the barbeque because today it seems that no foods are absolutely safe.

**THIS WEEK'S QUOTE**

**The Gun Lobby's interpretation of the Second Amendment is one of the greatest pieces of fraud, I repeat the word fraud, on the American People by special interest groups that I have ever seen in my lifetime. The real purpose of the Second Amendment was to ensure that state armies - the militia - would be maintained for the defense of the state. The very language of the Second Amendment refutes any argument that it was intended to guarantee every citizen an unfettered right to any kind of weapon he or she desires.**

**Conservative  
Supreme Court  
Chief Justice  
Warren Burger**

ONE MILLION MOMS AND DADS AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

Warren Burger was very conservative, but he understood the Second Amendment

**THIS IS BRILLIANT**

The Nicholas Brothers

*Vintage talent that you just can't get enough of!*



Web Link: [REDACTED]

Not to take anything away from the achievements of the great Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly or the wonderful Bill “*Bojangles*” Robinson and “*Little*” Shirley Temple, Fayard (1914–2006) and Harold (1921–2000) Nicholas were definitely the most talented unsung dancers of their era and if their race had been different would possibly have become as famous as the four Hollywood legends mentioned..... Please enjoy..... Because they were as good as it gets.....

**THINK ABOUT THIS**



And you thought that the U.S. was **The Land of Immigrants**

**BEST VIDEO OF THE WEEK**

These two fellows put on quite a show . . .



Web Link: <https://youtu.be/5-pLO6WCymA>

32 Festival Cirque de Demain (Paris, France) – Shcherbak and Popov

## THIS WEEK'S MUSIC

Jackie Wilson



Nicknamed "**Mr. Excitement**" – with a four octave vocal range and a consummate performer is why this week I invite you to enjoy the music of Mr. Jackie Wilson. He was truly a gifted singer of

considerable range and a charismatic showman who commanded a stage like few before or since.

Wilson possessed a natural tenor. He sang with the graceful control of Sam Cooke and moved with the frenzied dynamism of James Brown. With all the flair and finesse at his disposal, Wilson routinely drove audiences to the brink of hysteria. A mainstay of the R&B and pop charts from 1958 to 1968, Wilson amassed two dozen Top Forty singles, all released on the Brunswick label. I remember standing in a line at the Apollo Theater in Harlem in a line that spanned around the block and feeling that I was lucky and after seeing him, like everyone else he delivered to our wildest expectations.

The Detroit-born Wilson turned to R&B after stints as a gospel singer and amateur boxer. (He won the American Amateur Golden Gloves Welterweight boxing title.) Wilson initially gained fame in his early years as a member of the R&B vocal group Billy Ward and His Dominoes as lead singer in 1953 replacing Clyde McPhatter when the latter left to join the Drifters. He went solo in 1957 and recorded over 50 hit singles that spanned R&B, pop, soul, doo-wop and easy listening. This included 16 R&B Top 10 hits, including 6 R&B # 1's. On the Billboard Hot 100, he scored 14 Top 20 Pop hits, 6 of which made it into the Pop Top 10. On September 29, 1975 while headlining a Dick Clark Oldies Concert, he collapsed on stage from what was later deemed to be a massive heart attack, and subsequently slipped into a coma slowly awakening over a period of 8 months. He remained semi-comatose in a nursing home for the 9 years preceding his death in 1984, at the age of 49; he was deemed conscious but incapacitated in early June, 1976.

A two-time Grammy Hall of Fame Inductee, Wilson was inducted to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987. In 2004, Rolling Stone magazine ranked Jackie Wilson #69 on their list of the 100 Greatest Artists of All Time. And as Rolling Stone Magazine said, Jackie Wilson remains unmatched in the category of loosened-tie, high-energy rhythm & blues vocalists. The operatic drama in his voice, his on-the-beat phrasing and his clear, high range on late-Fifties hits like "*Reet Petite*" and "*Lonely Teardrops*" influenced everyone from Al Green to Elvis Presley. "Oh, God, was he exciting," says Sam Moore, of soul's dynamic duo Sam and Dave. "One time I was watching him from the wings at the Apollo, singing, 'You better stop . . . yeaahh!' — and he twists, jumps, falls into a split and slides back up holding the note — 'your doggin' around!' James Brown could do that, but he was a shouter. Jackie Leroy Wilson had a pure voice. He was a complete singer within himself."

Jackie Wilson gained fame in his early years as a member of the R&B vocal group Billy Ward and His Dominoes, he went solo in 1957 and recorded over 50 hit singles that spanned R&B, pop, soul, doo-wop and easy listening. This included 16 R&B Top 10 hits, including 6 R&B # 1's. On the Billboard Hot 100, he scored 14 Top 20 Pop hits, 6 of which made it into the Pop Top 10. Wilson was an inspiration to Elvis Presley, Bruce Springsteen, James Brown and Michael Jackson to name a few. He was one of the most influential artists of his generation and definitely in the front row of the *Pantheon of Rock 'n' Roll*. With this, I hope that you enjoy the music of Mr. Excitement.... The one and only.... Mr. Jackie Wilson.... Also take the look at the bonus video — ***The Man Behind The Music*** — as it provides a window into how artist like Wilson are routinely victimized and cheated in the world of commercial music.

Jackie Wilson — ***Lonely teardrops*** -- <https://youtu.be/2nEfuE8Pw4U>

Jackie Wilson — ***I'll Be Satisfied*** -- <https://youtu.be/2QfVms-NAjg>

Jackie Wilson — ***Stardust*** -- <https://youtu.be/YSR31a4SZE5>

Jackie Wilson — ***Danny Boy*** -- <https://youtu.be/sS9xhiudphU>

Jackie Wilson – *Alone At Last* -- [REDACTED]

Jackie Wilson – *Whispers "Gettin' Louder"* -- <https://youtu.be/jj-IHgT3mOk>

Jackie Wilson – *Higher And Higher* -- [https://youtu.be/k1odvp-\\_bhk](https://youtu.be/k1odvp-_bhk)

Jackie Wilson – *Baby Workout* -- <https://youtu.be/1WXZmjUtlJw>

Jackie Wilson – *That is Why* -- <https://youtu.be/9POh4ATtuBw>

Jackie Wilson – *Shake, Shake, Shake & No Pity (In The Naked City)* -- <https://youtu.be/rAqGOIH7E6w>

Jackie Wilson – *Stop Doggin' Me Around* -- <https://youtu.be/8m-euOarB0k>

Jackie Wilson – *I'm Comin' On Back To You* -- <https://youtu.be/ZjOSUOr1DiA>

Jackie Wilson – *To Be Loved* -- <https://youtu.be/t99mJmbeLvU>

Jackie Wilson – *A Woman, a Lover, a Friend* -- <https://youtu.be/HvPs7nzIt0s>

Jackie Wilson – *Nobody But You* -- <https://youtu.be/9eczoH-5Pxo>

## BONUS

Jackie Wilson – *The Man Behind The Music* -- <https://youtu.be/Xb9y1PTqa4c>

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

Sincerely,

**Greg Brown**

--

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