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Subject: Greg Brown's Weekend Reading and Other Things....

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Here's_why_I'm_backing_Barack_Obama_Sunday_Times_Aug_26_2012.pdf;

Has_'Europe'_Failed_Nicholas_Sambanis_NYT_August_26_2012.pdf;

Paul_Ryan's_Social_Extremism_NYT_Editorial_August_26_2012.pdf;

Paul_Ryan_And_Private_Charity_Andrew_Sullivan_The_Daily_Beast_21_Aug_2012.pdf;

College_Tuition's_1,120_Percent_Increase_Bloomberg_Businessweek_August_23_2012.pdf;

What_the_F_Wrong_With_Republican_Men_Kathleen_Parker_August_28_2012.pdf;

Andrew_Sarris_Village_Voice_Film_Critic_Dies_at_83_Michael_Powell_June_20_2012.pdf;

Jobless_generation_puts_brakes_on_US_Shannon_Bond_FT.com_August_30_2012.pdf;

Fact_checking_the_GOP_convention's_second_night_Glenn_Kesslerat_TWP_Aug_30_2012.pdf;

Did_the_Founding_Fathers_Really_Want_Two_Parties_Willard_Sterne_Randall_Huff_Post_8_31_12.pdf;

Mr._Romney_Reinvents_History_NYT_EDITORIAL_August_30_2012.pdf;

Why_Apple_needs_to_lose_the_Samsung_appeal_Vivek_Wadhwa_TWP_August_30_2012.pdf

Dear Friends.....

Over the next weeks we will hear many promises from both parties. They both will claim that they are going to lower taxes, reform entitlements, reverse the deficit and grow the economy. They will talk allot about what they will do for the Middle Class and both parties will try to allay the fears of the rich that that their policies won't hurt them. But neither party will seriously push for policies that favor the poor. We live in a country where a sports team last week acquired four players whose combined salaries exceeded a quarter of a billion dollars, and many politicians chose to not support the notion that every citizen should have access to affordable (or free) comprehensive healthcare. We live in a country where we celebrate the winners as American Exceptionism but refuse to understand that we are only as strong as our weakest citizens. We live in a country where our children are ranked 14th in Reading, 17th in Science and 25th in Math.... and still we are cutting funding for Public Education so that we can extend tax breaks for the rich. Our politicians tell us that we have the best healthcare in the world, while The World Health Organization ranks the US 37th – just before Slovenia and after Costa Rica – with more than 40 million Americans not covered. We live in a country where we call rich people "job creators" and suggest that civil servants are moochers and that union workers should take additional pay cuts and pension reductions, while Wall Street bonuses are the largest ever.... Something is wrong with this picture and I am not sure that I have the answers either, but I do know that doubling down on the failed Bush/Cheney policies will only make things worse, as they did during the eight years under their Administration.

Still Republicans and their Conservative supporters see no problem with the Ryan budget that would devastate social services/programs and cuts food stamps to the poor. And they want you to think they're applying the savings to the deficit, but they're not. What they're doing is they're cutting taxes for the wealthy. Preferential treatment to protect the poor was an essential component in America for the past hundred years. Today this commitment is gone. We have the elderly who can't make it on their social security payments or pension payments that they have. We have millions of single-parent families and now two-parent families living in poverty. We have kids out of college who can't get a job that pays enough to pay rent or their student loans. And that most of the jobs available today are minimum wage, basic pay, and this just doesn't cut it anymore. At the

same time Goldman Sacks paid \$15.38 billion, or \$430,700 per employee in bonuses last year with more 90% going to the top 100 employees.

Since supply-side economics became policy in the 1980s during the Reagan Administration, economic inequality has grown to a staggering proportion. According to calculations by Council of Economic Advisers chairman Alan Kruegar, *"the shift in income inequality over the last three decades has been the equivalent of moving \$1.1 trillion of income from the 99 percent to the top 1 percent every single year."* And this is not going to change with more tax cuts for the rich. The federal budget recently passed by the Republican Majority in the house, titled *"The Path to Prosperity,"* by its author, Republican Congressman, and now Vice Presidential candidate, Paul Ryan does not have any provisions to reverse this inequality or strengthen the safety net for the poor. In the richest country in the world, why spend almost 30% of the budget on the Military and at the same time not try to protect our most venerable citizens with a safety net?

For those who didn't see the season finale **HBO's *THE NEWSROOM*** created & written by Aaron Sorkin, you should as this week's show *'The Greater Fool'* theme is about 'voter suppression' and distortion of facts, science, history, etc and most of all, it is as thoughtful and smart as good television can get. Like most great art, theater, music, poetry, comedy and the visual media, ***THE NEWSROOM*** employs multiple themes over its dramatic storylines, providing depth and accessibility.

This week's show blasts the Tea Party and unveils the myth of Republican claim of voter fraud.

THE NEWSROOM is at its best and brightest when it covers issues in the news. The most revealing and scathing segment of *'The Greater Fool'* is when ACN delves into the claim by Republican conservatives of rampant nationwide voter fraud sweeping across the U.S. It's this story that rallies Will (our central character) from his hospital bed and gets his butt back in the anchor seat. The idea of the story comes to Will's attention after an outraged nurse storms into Will's hospital room. The nurse demands he cover the news about her 90-year-old aunt who has been voting for 70 years, but now is barred from voting because she doesn't have a driver's license or a passport to qualify for getting registrated under the new voting laws in her state.

While Republicans cite a government issued photo ID as a requirement to vote, the truth is that this is a veiled excuse to keep people who typically vote for Democrats out of the voting booth permanently. Will uncovers that over the past eight years only 84 voters throughout the entire U.S. fraudulently vote, which isn't even a full one thousand of 1% of all votes cast. Republicans hope in barring people the right the vote, they can keep a whopping 11% of the entire voting population from casting a vote in the Democrats' favor. 33 states have proposed or adopted voter ID laws supposedly to cut down on voter fraud. Of the 33 voter ID laws, 32 were proposed by Republican legislators, past by Republican control state houses and signed by Republican Governors. Hence, the real intent of the new wave of ID laws....

Also telling is ***THE NEWSROOM's*** scathing coverage of the Tea Party. Several members of the Tea Party are quoted for their blatant hatred of Obama and their Christian zealotry. Perhaps the best scene of the night was when a long list of damning qualities about the Tea Party were presented in Will's news broadcast. *"Today's Republican Beliefs are:"*

- Ideological purity
- A fundamentalist belief in scriptural literalism
- Compromise as weakness
- Denying science
- Unmoved by facts
- Undeterred by new information
- A hostile fear of progress
- A demonetization of education
- A need to control woman's bodies
- Severe xenophobia
- Tribal mentality

- Intolerance of dissent
- A pathological hatred of the US Government

Will intones the Tea Party as xenophobic; ignores the facts; impedes progress; claims it works for America, but hates Americans; is ruled by tribal mentality; and tries to control women's bodies.

- Tea Party believes in loving America but hating Americans: **Rep. Allen West** (R) Florida, *"I must confess, when I see anyone with a Obama bumper sticker, I recognize them as a threat to the gene pool."*
- The Tea Party believes in loving America but hating its government: **Grover Norqvist**, Founder & President, Americans For Tax Reform, *"I don't want to abolish government I simply want to reduce it to the size that I can drag it into the bathroom and drown it in the bathtub."*
- The Tea Party believes that anyone who disagrees with them have sinister anti-American motives: **Herman Cane** *"the objective the liberals it to destroy this country the objective of liberals is to make this country mediocre."*
- The Tea Party believes that most of all you most never and under any circumstance seek to reach a with compromise with your opponent: **Senator Mitch McConnell** (R) Kentucky *"Our top political priority over the next two years is to deny President Obama a second term."*
- The Tea Party believes that if you are poor it means that you are either too lazy or to stupid to be rich: **Lt. Governor Andre Bauer** (R) South Carolina. *"My grandmother was not a highly educated woman but she told me as a small child to quit feeding stray animals. You know why? Because they breed."*

Will concludes.... *"the Tea Party is the American Taliban. When seen in that light perhaps the real enemy isn't some remote terrorist organization in Afghanistan. Our worst enemy has hijacked our government and is holding our country hostage."* I hate to quote facts from a television entertainment show, but themes in the show mirror the ugly truth of the current state of partisan politics in America, where candidates and their supporters are willing to distort the truth, ignore the facts, malign opponents and cheat to win at all cost.

A example of the re-write of history is that Republicans will tell you that America was founded as a Christian nation.... *But this absolutely is not true....*

- **John Adams:** (The Treaty of Tripoli) *"As the government of the United States is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion..."*
- **Thomas Jefferson:** *"That our civil rights has no dependence on our religious opinions"*
- **1st Amendment in the US Constitution:** *"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion,...."*

As Will surmise in the season finale of **THE NEWSROOM**, *"Its almost hard to believe that Republicans can't get a 92 year old black woman to vote for them."* Please read again and then think back to this week's Republican National Convention..... *Because you will see that it is all true....* When I was growing up there was a saying *"that even television couldn't make this shit up."* Today, it doesn't have to.....

One of the major themes at the GOP Convention in Tampa this past week centered around President Obama for his **"you didn't build that line"** about job creation in America which Mitt Romney and the GOP have hammered for past weeks. So on Wednesday night the theme of RNC shenanigans is **"We Built It."** The infamous, truncated line from President Barack Obama's Roanoke, Va., speech appears at least once in every single set of remarks from the stage.. But if you cut through the "code" the theme really was, **"let me tell you something" was how the uppity, socialist incompetent prez who told businessmen that they never achieved anything."** **AND MOST OF ALL, HE IS NOT ONE OF US.....**

HERE IS WHAT THE PRESIDENT ACTUALLY SAID

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S **"YOU DIDN'T BUILD THAT"** TRANSCRIPT - Remarks by the President at a Campaign Event in Roanoke, Virginia

"But you know what, I'm not going to see us gut the investments that grow our economy to give tax breaks to me or Mr. Romney or folks who don't need them. So I'm going to reduce the deficit in a balanced way. We've already made a trillion dollars' worth of cuts. We can make another trillion or trillion-two, and what we then do is ask for the wealthy to pay a little bit more. (Applause.) And, by the way, we've tried that before — a guy named Bill Clinton did it. We created 23 million new jobs, turned a deficit into a surplus, and rich people did just fine. We created a lot of millionaires. There are a lot of wealthy, successful Americans who agree with me — because they want to give something back. They know they didn't — look, if you've been successful, you didn't get there on your own. You didn't get there on your own. I'm always struck by people who think, well, it must be because I was just so smart. There are a lot of smart people out there. It must be because I worked harder than everybody else. Let me tell you something — there are a whole bunch of hardworking people out there. (Applause.) If you were successful, somebody along the line gave you some help. There was a great teacher somewhere in your life. Somebody helped to create this unbelievable American system that we have that allowed you to thrive. Somebody invested in roads and bridges. If you've got a business — you didn't build that. Somebody else made that happen. The Internet didn't get invented on its own. Government research created the Internet so that all the companies could make money off the Internet. The point is, is that when we succeed, we succeed because of our individual initiative, but also because we do things together."

The point is that when we succeed because of our individual initiative, and because we worked together with others, on the shoulders of those who proceed and helped us, including the government. During the GOP Convention there was much talk about the Founding Fathers and the US Constitution, but here was little to no mention, that the moon landing, desegregation, transcontinental highway system, GI Bill, Internet and World War II were all events and things in which government played the leading role. Look, if you've been successful, you didn't get there on your own. I'm always struck by people who think, well, it must be because I was just so smart. There are a lot of smart people out there. It must be because I worked harder than everybody else — there are a whole bunch of hardworking people out there. If you were successful, I can promise that somebody along the line gave you some help. There was a great teacher somewhere in your life. Somebody helped to create this unbelievable American system that we have that allowed you to thrive. Somebody invested in roads and bridges. If you've got a business — you didn't build it by yourself..... because as any grandmother will tell you, *"to really raise a child you need a community/village....." - family, friends, church, school, doctor, daycare, Boys & Girls Clubs, Pop Warner League, and most of all the government, local, state and federal - and building a business is like raising a child.*

As Robert Reich wrote in his blog this week, **the most troubling economic trend facing America today is the increasing concentration of income, wealth, and political power at the very top --** among a handful of extraordinarily wealthy people -- and the steady decline of the great American middle class. Inequality in America is at record levels. **The 400 richest Americans now have more wealth than the bottom 150 million of us put together.**

Republicans claim the rich are job creators. Nothing could be further from the truth. In order to create jobs, businesses need customers. But the rich spend only a small fraction of what they earn. They park most of it wherever around the world they can get the highest return. The real job creators are the vast middle class, whose spending drives the economy and creates jobs. But as the middle class's share of total income continues to drop, it cannot spend as much as before. Nor can most Americans borrow as they did before the crash of 2008 -- borrowing that temporarily masked their declining purchasing power. As a result, businesses are reluctant to hire. This is the main reason why the recovery has been so anemic.

As wealth and income rise to the top, moreover, so does political power. The rich are able to entrench themselves by lowering their taxes, gaining special tax breaks (such as the *"carried interest"* loophole allowing private equity and hedge fund managers to treat their incomes as capital gains), and ensuring a steady flow of corporate welfare to their businesses (special breaks for oil and gas, big agriculture, big insurance, Big Pharma, and, of course, Wall Street). All of this squeezes public budgets, corrupts government, and undermines our democracy. The issue isn't the size of our government; it's who our government is for. It has become less

responsive to the needs of most citizens and more to the demands of a comparative few. The Republican response -- as we saw dramatically articulated this past week in Tampa -- is to further reduce taxes on the rich, defund programs for the poor, fight unions, allow the median wage to continue to fall, and oppose any limits on campaign contributions or spending. And it does not take a great deal of brainpower to understand this strategy will lead to an even more lopsided economy, more entrenched wealth, and more corrupt democracy.

Weekend Reading

We live in a world where there is so much information and so many distractions that we often miss things that were and are important to us. Today I found out that one of my heroes died two months ago without me noticing. Although he was not a famous movie star, director, producer or studio executive he was one of the most important influences in American cinema, as he championed the *auteur theory*, and one of the main reasons why people bought **The Village Voice** every week. **My hero Andrew Sarris died on June 20, 2012 in New York City at the age of 83.**

It's hard to imagine that there was a time when Alfred Hitchcock, Jean-Luc Godard, Orson Welles, John Ford and Martin Scorsese were not considered artists — and "*Laurence of Arabia*," "*The Bicycle Thief*," "*High Noon*" and "*Citizen Kane*" as art or --- at least not the in way they are today. But it took a critic to argue that a movie director could call a work his own in the same way any poet or novelist or painter could. And for this, American filmgoers should thank Andrew Sarris. And although he didn't invent this notion — now called *auteur theory* — but he did bring it to American shores, and in the United States he gave it its name.

Taking his cue from Cahiers du Cinéma critics like François Truffaut, Sarris argued loudly for the primacy of the director as the creator of a film. In 1968 he laid out his judgments on each of these artists in **The American Cinema: Directors and Directions (1929-1968)**, still one of the most influential books on the way we think about the movies.

While widely accepted by American movie lovers and critics today, Sarris's ideas and arguments were at first quite controversial. In the 1960s film fans paired off between Pauline Kael's Paulettes, who found the theory too reductive, and Sarris's Sarristes. The rivalry was vicious; Kael called the *auteur theory* "*an attempt by adult males to justify staying inside the small range of experience of their boyhood and adolescence, that period when masculinity looked so great and important.*" While battles about authorial intent have since fallen out of fashion across the arts, Sarris's ideas helped legitimize the cinema as a great art form, and animated many of the directors of the New Hollywood.

In addition to popularizing these ideas, Sarris will be long remembered for the pointedness of his pen. Simply look to Sarris's first review for **The Village Voice**, of Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*. While **New York Times** critic Bosley Crowther wrote a review that now seems square and even tone-deaf—he criticized the film's lack of subtlety, and found its shocks to be a bit juvenile—Sarris found the art in Hitchcock's commercial effort, wasting no time before declaring, "A close inspection of *Psycho* indicates not only that the French have been right all along, but that Hitchcock is the most-daring avant-garde film-maker in America today."

Although Sarris's fights with Kael, and these historic debates as a whole, would soon cool down (Kael, who later became less resistant to *auteur theory*, died in 2001), Sarris remained combative into his 80s. He left the *Village Voice* for the *Observer* in 1989, and continued to review films there until 2009. Like almost every other would-be young filmmaker in the late 1960s, I remember buying "*The American Cinema: Directors and Directions 1929-1968*" in 1969 and hoping that one day I would make it into **The Pantheon... He truly was a giant... who change the way that Americans and the world view cinema...** Please feel free to read his **New York Times** obituary, written by Michael Powell.

Please feel free to read the article by Nicholas Sambanis in the **New York Times**, "*Has 'Europe' Failed?*," as it challenges Germany's leaders to come clean with their people "what it means to be European, how good

European citizens should behave toward other Europeans and why a strong Europe is good for German interests in a world dominated by the United States, China and emerging powers like India and Brazil. Without such a discussion, and real concessions to Greece, a Greek exit is inevitable — and with it the triumph of parochialism in Europe.” Because if Greece pulls or is forced out of the Eurozone, the Eurozone most likely will come apart creating a huge problem with German banks who have propped up Greece and the other troubled economies.

During this current silly season of presidential politics, Hurricane Isaac and the last season of MTV's *'Jersey Shore,'* it is easy to miss one of the one of the most important litigation going -- Apple vs Samsung lawsuit whereby Apple alleged that at least 17 Samsung products infringe its patents. In the litigation, Apple is seeking to halt U.S. sales of a number of Samsung products including its hugely successful Galaxy S3 Smartphones (**10 million sold in the first three months**) and Galaxy Note/Note 10.1. In documents filed, Apple said those 21 Samsung smartphones, media players and tablets released after August 2011 were "copycat products."

Apple: "Rather than innovate and develop its own technology and a unique Samsung style for its smartphone and tablet computer products, Samsung has chosen to copy Apple's technology, user interface and innovative style," Apple said in one document.

In Vivek Wadhwa's article, *'Why Apple needs to lose the Samsung appeal'* in **The Washington Post** this week, he says that he hopes that Apple loses the lawsuit — because *"I am worried about the future of innovation — not only in Silicon Valley, but also at Apple. Another Apple victory will escalate the patent wars and cause more innovative startups to get trampled while tech-industry titans battle each other. Another patent victory could also cause Apple to become complacent — just as Microsoft was at the height of its Windows monopoly. Innovation requires a thriving ecosystem — one in which companies build on each other's ideas and where they are forced to continually reinvent themselves."*

Wadhwa believes that patents have become a destructive force in the technology sector. Fledgling startups have to constantly worry about big companies such as Apple or Samsung — or worst of all—a patent troll, bankrupting them with a frivolous lawsuit. Research has shown between 1990 and 2010, patent lawsuits have caused a loss of half-a-trillion dollars in wealth and forced U.S. companies to divert substantial resources from production to litigation support.

He points out that Apple also got its start by building on technology developed by others. The graphical user interface and mouse that the Macintosh popularized and the tablet computer were in different stages of development at institutions such as Stanford Research Institute and Xerox's Palo Alto Research Center (PARC). Steve Jobs built on these innovations. If he was embroiled in lawsuits or had to pay hefty fees to patent trolls, the Macintosh computer, iPhone, iPad, and iPod would very likely not have existed. Wadhwa's believes that if Apple wins Samsung's anticipated appeal, it will escalate the patent wars and cause more innovative startups to get trampled.

Since 1978 college tuition has increase by 1,120 Percent, as schools are investing and building more than ever — and students are paying for it. See the attached **Bloomberg Businessweek** graph *'College Tuition's 1,120 Percent Increase.'* As schools are investing and building more than ever — and students are paying for it

State spending for public colleges and universities has dropped sharply over the last three decades, as the state-by-state numbers contained in this special report from the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education demonstrate. At the same time, tuition and required fee charges rose significantly in many states, and some states reduced their student financial aid programs. The result was the worst fiscal news for public higher education institutions and their students in at least a decade, as the economic recession struck almost every state. So far this year, the picture looks even bleaker, with states continuing to cut higher education appropriations and campuses responding by raising tuition even higher, imposing new fees and reducing student financial assistance.

For many years, it has been unknown to the general public that all of the major elements comprising the student lending system (i.e. lenders, collection companies, guarantors) made far more money when students defaulted on their loans. Nevertheless, this is a fact, and it is well documented. It is most disturbing, however, that recent analysis of the President's Budget data reveals that even the US Department of Education, on average, recovers \$1.22 for every dollar paid out in default claims. Assuming generous collection costs, and even allowing for a nominal time value of money of a few percent (the governments cost of money is very low), it still appears that the federal government, even, is making a pretty penny from defaults.

How could this be possible? The primary reason for this is that unlike all other types of debt, bankruptcy protections, statutes of limitations, and other standard consumer protections have been removed from federal student loans, and draconian collection powers have been given to collect on hugely inflated, defaulted student loan debt. Today Americans owe more than \$1 trillion in student loans. Forget taxes, we have saddled our current generation with more than \$1 trillion that they have to repay. With the increasing need for higher education for young people and workers of all age to stay competitive, accept that the cost of education will continue to rise, government spending for education cut and Americans saddled with more and more debt.

Echoing the above is an article in the **Financial Times** by Shannon Bond, '*Jobless generation puts brakes on US.*' The story centers around Andrew Grzywacz, a 23-year-old who graduated from Boston's Emerson College in December with a degree in film and television writing and now has a job that pays \$8.50 an hour – and more than \$30,000 in student debt. According to the International Labour Organisation, youth unemployment has reached crisis levels around the world, with almost 13 per cent of the global youth labour force out of work this year. But the problem has a unique in the US, where the weak job market has collided with record levels of educational debt – about \$25,000 for the average graduate. Together, they pose a threat to the future earning power of young Americans such as Mr Grzywacz – and could have long-lasting effects on US growth.

One of the great myths that Americans believe and is often touted by our politicians is that the Founding Fathers envisioned, believed and supported our two-party system. As Willard Sterne Randall points out this week in his article in the **Huffington Post**, '*Did the Founding Fathers Really Want Two Parties?*' - Nothing could be further from the truth. First of all, George Washington ran unopposed in the first two presidential elections but ever since 1796, the first election in which there were two competing candidates, Jefferson and John Adams, one political party has always tried to utterly destroy the other. From the outset, American presidential elections have been vicious. They didn't just get that way in the 21st century.

To begin with, the Constitution did not provide for any political parties. It's not that the Founding Fathers didn't think about them but, to them, even the word "*party*" was anathema. They preferred a presidential election, the linchpin of our political system, in which the top vote-getter got to be president; the number two man, vice president. Why would you need parties? *To the Founders, opposition to the new nation's political leadership meant opposition to the government -- treason.*

Jefferson's Democratic-Republicans became Andrew Jackson's Democrats. They held power, except for a single term, for 60 years. And then it was Abraham Lincoln's turn. His new Republicans were ushered into the White House by the nearly terminally-divisive Civil War. To oppose the governing party again became treason, Lincoln's critics rounded up and incarcerated, the writ of habeas corpus suspended. No Democrat would be elected president for another generation. The GOP of Abraham Lincoln held sway, with only two brief interruptions, for nearly 80 years until Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Through much of our nation's history, in effect, there has been only one real national political party thriving at any given time in our winner-take-all system. And even though the pendulum swings may be shorter these days, neither party seems to want to relinquish the possibility of utterly destroying the other. *Another myth debunked.*

Politics

The real stupidity of the week started when Rush Limbaugh alleged that Obama Tampered With Isaac Forecasts To Get GOP To Cancel Convention. Rush Limbaugh had a typically unique take on the threat of Tropical Storm Isaac during his Monday show, appearing to suggest that the Obama administration had tampered with the forecasts of the storm to hurt the Republicans. To hear Limbaugh tell it, though, that was the point. *"With none of this am I alleging conspiracy,"* he said on Monday. It sure sounded like he was alleging one, though. He went on to note that the Hurricane Center that monitors such things is *"the regime,"* as he put it. *"It's the government. It's Obama."* Limbaugh said that he grew suspicious because he noticed that the forecast for Isaac had shifted dramatically away from Florida soon after the Republicans canceled the first day of the convention. *"What could be better for the Democrats than the Republicans to cancel a day of this?"* he said. *"...I'm alleging no conspiracy. I'm just telling you, folks, when you put this all together in this timeline, I'm telling you, it's unbelievable!"*

The highlight of the second night of the Republican National Convention was Rep. Paul Ryan's speech accepting the vice presidential nomination. (As a long-time Condoleezza Rice watcher, The Fact Checker was also fascinated by the enthusiastic response to her primetime speech.) I would like to go point to point but the speeches were so much full of bull, that is almost impossible. So I urge you to read Glenn Kessler's article in **The Washington Post**, *'Fact checking the GOP convention's second night,'* and remember **Benjamin Franklin's** wise words about partisan politics, *"Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain and most fools do."*

As **Fox News** columnist Sally Kohn wrote in her article this week, *'Paul Ryan's RNC Speech Was Attempt To Set World Record For Blatant Lies,'* about vice presidential nominee Paul Ryan's speech at the Republican National Convention on Wednesday *"was an apparent attempt to set the world record for the greatest number of blatant lies and misrepresentations slipped into a single political speech."* In her column, **Kohn called out four lies in Ryan's speech.** She criticized Ryan for blaming President Obama for the shutdown of a General Motors plant in Janesville, Wis., that actually was closed during the Bush administration. She also knocked Ryan for pinning the blame for S&P's downgrade of U.S. debt on Obama, when Republicans in Congress helped precipitate the downgrade by threatening to refuse to raise the debt ceiling. *"The good news is that the Romney-Ryan campaign has likely created dozens of new jobs among the legions of additional fact checkers that media outlets are rushing to hire to sift through the mountain of cow dung that flowed from Ryan's mouth,"* Kohn wrote. Playing the role of *"Romney's attack dog,"* Ryan has made the calculation that the misleading won't hurt him with voters. And the shame is that he might be right. **CNN's** David Gergen, while acknowledging some *"misstatements"* in Ryan's address, suggested that pundits focus elsewhere. *"But let's not forget that this was a speech about big ideas,"* he told his audience. As Charles Blow wrote in his op-ed piece titled *'The G.O.P. Fact Vacuum'* this week in the **New York Times**, *"Honesty is a lost art. Facts are for losers. The truth is dead."* And *"Saying incredible things in a credible way is the art; using math of vapors to sell dreams of smoke is the craft."*

In **The Daily Beast** article, *'Paul Ryan And Private Charity'* by Andrew Sullivan, "A critical element in the GOP's attempt to unravel the 20th century's welfare state is the argument that individual charity will step in to help those in need. Many private charities, including religious ones, do amazing work in part because they are independent of the state and driven by zeal. The Salvation Army springs to mind - but so do countless food banks, shelters, volunteerism etc. Enlarging the space for these groups is essential if we are to restrain government and not forsake the needy." And like Andrew Sullivan, I too would abolish every single tax deduction but that for charity.

Sullivan.... *"The Bureau of Labor Statistics' latest survey of consumer expenditure found that the poorest fifth of*

U.S. households contributed an average of 4.3 percent of their incomes to charitable organizations in 2007. The richest fifth gave at less than half that rate, 2.1 percent. Paul Ryan falls into the richest fifth category: The Ryans donated \$12,991 to charity in 2011, and \$2,600 to charity in 2010 — which are 4 percent and 1.2 percent of his income, respectively. Lets round it out at 2.5 percent. The average is 3.5 percent. How much did the Obamas give in 2010? 14.2 percent - compared with Ryan's 1.2 percent - and Santorum's 1.7 percent. Romney was far more generous, largely through tithing - but he was still beaten in percentage terms by Obama in 2010. But it's Ryan who is the most prominent advocate of replacing state care with private charity. It's just that others will have to supply the charity. Judging by his past, he sure won't."

Also please read the **New York Time's** Editorial, '**Paul Ryan's Social Extremism**' as it points out that the Republican Party's Vice Presidential candidate is the most extremist far right nominee in recent history and sending the strongest signal of solidarity to those who have made the party unrecognizable to moderates. Strident conservatives had been uneasy with Mr. Romney, but it is the rest of the country that should be nervous about conservatives' now-enthusiastic acceptance of the Republican ticket. Although not new news, it echoes the sentiment that the values and policies of the Republican party are no longer mainstream to the point that they are extreme.

Echoing the above sentiment, attached is the formal endorsement of President Obama in the 2012 election by former Florida Governor Charlie Crist in last Sunday's Tampa Bay Times, calling him "*the right leader for our state and the nation.*" Today, there is no room in the Republican Party for moderates like Crist, Simpson, Weicker, Powell and Bloomberg.....(cynically referred to by Conservative Republicans as RINOs - *Republicans In Name Only*) and if they were still alive - Eisenhower, Rockefeller, Javits, Reagan or Lincoln either. *WHY?*

Although they would like you to believe that It's just Akin. By pushing some of the most invasive state policies in modern history, the men of the GOP are driving their party off a cliff. Included is an article in **Newsweek Magazine** by Kathleen Parker, '**What the *#@% Is Wrong With Republican Men?!**' The article points out that Akin's comments were not in isolation. They followed a year of explosive events and remarks involving Republican lawmakers and leaders, from laws attempting to require transvaginal probes for women seeking abortion to promises to defund Planned Parenthood to Rush Limbaugh's calling law student Sandra Fluke a "slut" when she testified about the need for insurance coverage for contraception. Agree or not with a woman's decision to end a pregnancy, elected officials shouldn't parse the definition of rape as "legitimate" or otherwise. For the record, the bill to redefine rape as "forcible" had 227 Republican cosponsors.

Taken in isolation, Akin's comments might have been only a blip in the news cycle. But coinciding with the GOP's platform and Mitt Romney's selection of Paul Ryan as his running mate, Ryan's signature issues — a human life amendment to the Constitution that could preclude abortion even for rape or incest – Ryan having coauthored with Akin legislation seeking to redefine rape as "forcible" (as opposed to statutory) as a way of limiting public spending on abortion. The GOP Platform endorsing the Ryan Budget that proposes cutting government funding from some of the most popular social programs favored by women, students, minorities, gays, elderly and the poor - their hard stance on Immigration and promise to resend and fight same-sex marriage..... you have to question the thinking of the Republican Party given the change in mainstream attitudes and the continuing shift in demographics to a more and more racially diverse and multi-cultural country.

Recently conservative political commentator Ann Coulter gleefully cheered "**We Have Killed Off The Rockefeller Republicans**" - Ann Coulter speaking about Mitt Romney: "*I think he is the strongest candidate. I think of the four remaining, he is the most conservative as I said before. More conservative than any of the other candidates running other than Michele Bachmann, particularly on the most important issue facing the country, which is illegal immigration. By in large, I think conservatives should be celebrating. We've killed off the Rockefeller Republicans. In 2008 we had one candidate who was pro-abortion, one candidate who opposed Clinton's impeachment, we had one candidate who wanted to shut down Guantanamo, voted against Bush's tax*

cuts, called waterboarding torture, oh, and that's the one we ran."

"We have killed off Rockefeller Republicans. Basically all of them have conservative positions now. I think Romney is appealing. He's gentlemanly. I think that's what you need from looking at how Reagan ran in 1980." - Obviously Ann Coulter is acknowledging that the moderate wing of the Republican Party is irrelevant, if not not dead and Romney is a hardline Conservative, willing to push a far right agenda. - Remember..... These people don't believe in bipartisanship or compromise.... Republicans want absolute power, and we saw how well this worked when Republicans, packed the courts and enjoyed majorities in both houses of Congress under Bush-Cheney..... As historian and moralist Lord John Emerich Edward Dalberg Acton, first Baron Acton (1834–1902) said in a letter to Bishop Mandell Creighton in 1887 *"...Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely."* **But is this what we want..... a return to the failed policies of Bush-Cheney polices on steroids, with a government believing that they have a Divine Mandate to decimate the safety-net for the elderly, immigrants and poor in favor of unbridled power/access/support for the special interests groups, big businesses, Wall Street and rich individuals who financed their election, with the added compensation of reduced regulatory oversight in the name of democracy and the reinterpretation of The US Constitution?**

There were so many lies and distortions in the speeches at the Republican Party Convention that it was had to pick out the Biggest Lie until Romney gave his acceptance speech were he suggested that his party rallied behind President Obama when he won in 2008, hoping that he would succeed. "That president was not the choice of our party," he said. "We are a good and generous people who are united by so much more than divides us." When the truth is that the Republicans charted a course of denial and obstruction from the day Mr. Obama was inaugurated, determined to deny him a second term by denying him any achievement, no matter the cost to the economy or American security — even if it meant holding the nation's credit rating hostage to a narrow partisan agenda.

The Second Biggest Lie was his claim that a "Romney-Ryan Administration will protect and strengthen Medicare." - When it is their goal to dismantle and kill the program. The idea that that they are deficit hawks is a joke being that Ryan proposes \$4.3 trillion in tax cuts over the next decade versus only \$1.7 trillion in specific spending cuts which has been endorsed by Mitt Romney dispels any myth that either one of them are serious honest conservatives.

Some of the distortions/fibs were trivial but telling, like Ryan suggesting that President Obama was responsible for a closed auto plant in his hometown, even though the plant closed before Mr. Obama took office. Others were infuriating, like his sanctimonious declaration that "the truest measure of any society is how it treats those who cannot defend or care for themselves." This from a man proposing savage cuts in Medicaid, which would cause tens of millions of vulnerable Americans to lose health coverage. But we have to remember that two years ago, Mitch McConnell said that Republicans top priority was to make Obama a One Term President – a failed Presidency and when any country has a failed Presidency the country and its people suffer – which leads me back to why Romney's assertion that he and other Republicans wanted and tried to help President Obama to be successful, which as we all know should receive **Four Pinocchios**. Please feel free the **New York Times** EDITORIAL, *'Mr. Romney Reinvents History.'*

The fact that the Republicans did not invite Presidents **George H Bush** or **George W Bush**, Vice President **Cheney**, Secretary of Defense **Rumsfeld**, Secretary of State **Collin Powell**, advisor to President George W. Bush, **Karl Rove** and GOP House Majority Leader **Tom Delay** or their most recent Vice Presidential Nominee (**Sarah Palin**) and most of the recent runners up from your most recent primary, (**Rick Perry**, **Michele Bachman** and **Herman Cain**) to the GOP Convention in Tampa this past week is most telling, because it shows that the party leadership has decided to run away from the failed policies of the Republican administrations since 1988, due

to the failed supply-side economics policies, gun boat diplomacy and war mongering nation building were unmitigated disasters.... while ignoring the GOP's recent history.

For Republicans in Tampa, life started with a "white" God who created the world in seven days and move to the Founding Fathers who wrote the most perfect document after the Bible, although it did not include blacks, native Americans and women, followed by the first Republican President Abraham Lincoln and then skipping to Ronald Reagan, ignoring the twelve years of Bush Administrations – enabling them to blame the current economic problems, foreign policy malaise and erosion of the standard of living and quality of life in the Middle Class on the policies enacted during last three and a half years under President Obama.

And YES, Mr. Romney..... *The country is better off today prior to the day when President Obama took office..... Remember - on January 19, 2009 we were in two wars with no end, Al Qaeda & Bin Ladden was mocking America from their safe havens, the country's international prestige was at an all-time low, the stock market was half of what is it is today, hundreds of thousands of families were being evicted from their homes each month, the financial markets were in free-fall, with the economy bordering on a depression and the country was losing, than 700,000 jobs a month with the US auto industry and the major banks on the verge of bankruptcy, leaving the country with a trillion yearly deficit..... and the Bush/Cheney Administration didn't have a clue on how to fix any of this.....*

As such, I ask what will be different if Romney-Ryan are elected, being that they have promised to double-down on Bush/Cheney failed policies; including extending the Bush Tax Cuts, increase military spending, diluting regulatory oversight, rekindling confrontational gun boat diplomacy to deal with Iran, China and Russia, at the expense of dismantling safety net programs (*Medicare, food stamps, adult education Pell Grants, pre & after school care*) that protect the elderly, poor, unemployed, students and children.... Not to mention trying to make things so tough that eleven million immigrants will flee the country.... Obviously, if this vision comes to pass the reality will be ugly, but then when past mistakes are not acknowledged, chances are they will be repeated.... Hence, the number one reason to not vote for the Romney-Ryan ticket or support the 2012 GOP Platform..... ***They Offered Their Vision This Past Week In Tampa..... It Was Based on Lies..... And It Is Ugly.....***

Something Special

How to Get to Mars. Very Cool! HD - YouTube Check it out.....

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRCIzZHpFtY&feature=related>

Very cool video-animation of Spirit / Opportunity's flight to mars!

NASA's Mars Exploration Rover Mission (MER) is an ongoing robotic space mission involving two rovers, Spirit and Opportunity, exploring the planet Mars. It began in 2003 with the sending of the two rovers—MER-A Spirit and MER-B Opportunity—to explore the Martian surface and geology.

This Week's Music

This week I am feeling *Earth Wind & Fire* which in my Pantheon List is one of the greatest live bands to ever grace the stage..... so please enjoy EWF close your eyes and remember where you were when you first heard these songs.... And as they use to say back in the day.... "So nice, I had to send some tracks twice....." Again please enjoy...

Earth Wind & Fire - That's the way of the world - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_R2RsP43rmg and http://youtu.be/_R2RsP43rmg

Earth Wind & Fire - Keep your Head to the Sky - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10JTNNvodu4&feature=related> and <http://youtu.be/10JTNNvodu4>

Earth Wind & Fire - Devotion - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXrgnZvRg-c&feature=BFa&list=AL94UKMTqg-9AIdf-oDDL0ZRzIehPw5WY6> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXrgnZvRg-c&feature=share&list=AL94UKMTqg-9AIdf-oDDL0ZRzIehPw5WY6>

Earth Wind & Fire - Reasons (Live) - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YYQrLakDLR4> and <http://youtu.be/YYQrLakDLR4>

Earth Wind & Fire - I write a song for you - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOk6o5MZ8Bw&feature=related> and <http://youtu.be/jOk6o5MZ8Bw>

Earth Wind & Fire (Live) - SEPTEMBER - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bF9X7qnWro&feature=related> and <http://youtu.be/8bF9X7qnWro>

Earth, Wind & Fire - Sunday Morning - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_2Xy84EPP0&feature=mr_meh&list=AL94UKMTqg-9AIdf-oDDL0ZRzIehPw5WY6&playnext=0 and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_2Xy84EPP0&feature=share&list=AL94UKMTqg-9AIdf-oDDL0ZRzIehPw5WY6

Earth Wind & Fire (Live Concert) - Keep your - Head to the Sky - Devotion - Reasons - That's the way of the world - Sing a Song - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Scm4y-ND3M&feature=related> and <http://youtu.be/Scm4y-ND3M>

Joke of the Week

Judge's Dilemma

In a small town, a person decided to open up a brothel right opposite a church. The church and its congregation started a campaign with petitions to block the brothel from opening and prayed daily against his business.

Work progressed. But when the brothel was complete and about to open, lightning struck it and burnt it to the ground. The church folks were rather smug after that, till the brothel owner sued the church authorities on the grounds that the church through its congregation and prayers was ultimately responsible for the destruction of his brothel, either through direct or indirect actions or means.

In its reply to the court, the church vehemently denied all responsibility or any connection, or that their prayers were reasons for the act of God.

As the case made its way into court, the judge looked over the paperwork at the hearing and commented: *"I don't know how I'm going to decide this case, but it appears from the paperwork that we have a brothel owner who believes in the power of prayer and we have an entire church that doesn't."*

Quote of the Week

"Democracy is the theory that the common people know what they want, and deserve to get it good and hard."

H. L. Mencken

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Gregory Brown
Chairman & CEO
GlobalCast Partners, LLC

