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**Subject:** .Greg Brown's Weekend Reading and Other Things.... 10/12/2014  
**Date:** Sun, 12 Oct 2014 07:32:38 +0000

**Attachments:** Kool & the Gang bio.docx; Israel's Worst-Kept Secret The Atlantic Sept. 16, 2014.docx; Why South Africa Gave Up the Bomb Foreign Affairs December 1993.docx; The 9 Biggest Myths About ISIS Debunked Andrew Hart Huff Post 09 30 14.docx; Why Do Americans Hate Beheadings But Love Drone Killings Coleen Rowley Huff Post 09 28 2014.docx; Ebola virus disease - fact sheet - September 2014.docx; Geoffrey Holder bio.docx; The Diversity of Islam Nicholas Kristof NYT OCT 8, 2014.docx

**Inline-Images:** image.png; image(1).png; image(2).png; image(3).png; image(4).png; image(5).png; image(6).png; image(7).png; image(8).png; image(9).png; image(10).png; image(11).png; image(12).png; image(13).png; image(14).png; image(15).png

**DEAR FRIEND.....**

## Why Do Americans Hate Beheadings But Love Drone Killings?



One of the articles that caught my eye recently was Coleen Rowley's article in **The Huffington Post** – **Why Do Americans Hate Beheadings But Love Drone Killings?** – Because I really wanted to know why. Rowley says that the answer lies in human psychology and psychological manipulation. Because how else can one explain members of peace groups supporting US bombing whereas these same peaceniks view the beheadings by ISIS militants as barbaric. Isn't killing..... killing? So why the videotaped beheading of a human being is understood to be more egregious than the explosion (almost totally invisible to the public) of a human being by a missile or bomb fired from a drone.

There are at least four main reasons that explain why Americans care far more about the beheadings (thus far) of two Americans and one U.K citizen, than they care -- here's the polling -- about the thousands of foreign victims of US drone bombing. Here's how people are likely being manipulated into believing that more US bombing is the answer to such terroristic killings even when almost all military experts have admitted that it won't work and "there's no military solution":

- 1) "Us versus them" mentality, the group bonding also known as tribalism, nationalism, group elitism, etc. seems partially learned behavior but also hard-wired into humans (like other animals) to enable group survival. The worst, most excessive forms of group bonding are also known as racism. Yet it's an innate part of human psychological makeup to identify most closely with those whom we are close to and with whom we share group affinity, so Americans are always going to care more about Americans/Westerners as opposed to more distant foreigners;
- 2) The gruesome beheadings were deliberately and dramatically videotaped to ensure that US media brought the scenes into all US living rooms whereas the drone bombings of citizens of foreign countries are almost never filmed nor covered at all by US media. Thus to the majority of Americans, drone killings seem sterile, sanitized and surgical even though drone pilots who see the results up close know differently and some are even committing suicide.
- 3) It's apparent that even a large segment of the "peace" community does not understand that US wars and US-orchestrated regime changes indirectly created Islamic State (and other Al Qaeda type terrorist groups) and that US drone (and other aerial) bombing is giving rise to MORE terrorism, rather than working to reduce it. These two articles "**How the West Created the Islamic State**" and "**How ISIS Is Using Us to Get What It Wants**" describe the dynamic. As in all wars, the leaders of both sides are opportunistically using each other to empower each other. Robert Greenwald puts it most succinctly in his video: "**How Perpetual War Fuels Terrorism.**" (But the opposite is also true: terrorism fuels war). This is well-known by Western intelligence analysts and foreign policy experts, and it's garden variety war manipulation for everyone except the duped US public. (Borowitz isn't really joking when he reports: "**Americans Who Have Not Read a Single Article About Syria Strongly Support Bombing It.**") It's depressing otherwise to learn how many uninformed people there are that still think "**bombing the village to save it**" somehow can work. Such "**war on terror**" propaganda is actually effective on the liberal-minded who are more vulnerable to having their emotional buttons -- fear, hate, greed, false pride and blind loyalty -- pressed than it is on more pragmatic, cool-headed realists. It's being reported that a number of US journalists who should know better have even fallen for hyped terror threats used to justify the launching of bombing upon Syria.
- 4) A fourth reason why most Americans now go happily along with perpetual war in a kind of blissful stupor, cheering on their favorite war hawk politician comes from the lessons learned so well from the Vietnam War. Getting rid of the military draft and putting the trillions of dollars of mounting war costs on the ever-expanding and perfectly elastic national debt card was a stroke of genius on the part of the military industrial complex to wipe away any remaining "**Vietnam Syndrome.**" The new "**poverty draft**" that we're left with constitutes another layer of "**us versus them**" type manipulation geared to getting the liberal, intellectual middle class on board as they perceive little or no costs and only benefits to perpetual war. Even when not directly profiting by working for military or national security contractors, many Americans have come to believe war creates jobs and ensures they are supplied with cheap gas and other resources. But this is BS.

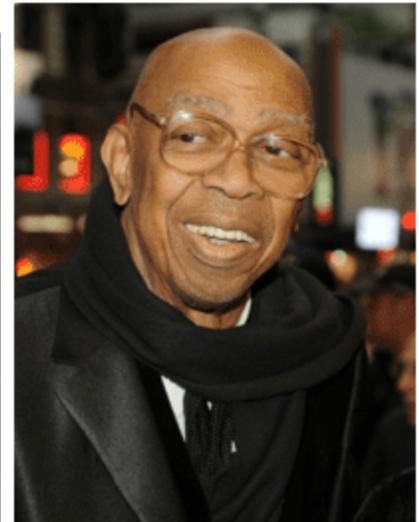
Think about it, if the United States had spent the \$4 to \$6 trillion dollars on rebuilding the country's infrastructure instead of wasting it in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq wouldn't the country and its citizens be much better off? I read an article that said that U.S. military operations targeting the Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria since June have already cost U.S. taxpayers between \$780 and \$930 million. War is not cheap if you are trying to do it without getting dirty. And getting back to beheadings verses drone attacks, neither are civilize because at least with a beheading there is no collateral deaths or damage. War is ugly. War is not cheap. And to sugar coat it is almost as egregious as war itself. And there is no moral high ground with either.

Web Link: <http://youtu.be/utjx3GQF5A>

Since 1980, we have militarily intervned at least 35 times in more than 27 countries. We keep bombing, we continue spending trillions of dollars, but we're no safer as a result. Please take a look at the video on the web link above because we have to get out of this perpetual war syndrome

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## Geoffrey Holder



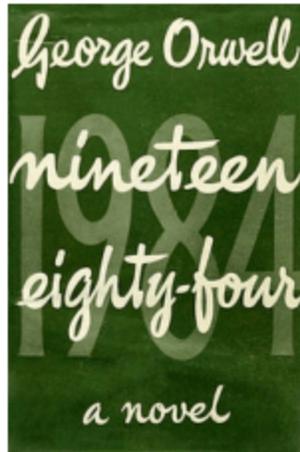
He was larger than life and it helped that he was 6'6" with a "heartly laugh" and heavily accented baritone/bass voice that could be heard throughout any room no matter how large or crowded. He was a fixture in New York's cultural scene for more than five decades. Geoffrey Lamont Holder (1 August 1930 – 5 October 2014) was a Trinidadian actor, choreographer, director, dancer, painter, costume designer, singer and voice-over artist. Born in Port of Spain, Holder was of African descent and one of four children, of parents who had emigrated from Trinidad, Holder attended Tranquillity School and then secondary school at Queen's Royal College in Port-of-Spain. At the age of seven, he began dancing in the company of his brother, Boscoe Holder, who was a Tony Award-winning stage director and costume designer. In 1952, the choreographer Agnes de Mille saw Holder dance in St. Thomas. She invited him to New York; he would teach at the Katherine Dunham School of Dance for two years. Holder was a principal dancer with the Metropolitan Opera Ballet in New York from 1955-56. He then made his Broadway debut in *House of Flowers*, a musical by Harold Arlen (music and lyrics) and Truman Capote (lyrics and book). He also starred in an all-black production of *Waiting for Godot* in 1957.

Holder began his movie career in the 1962 British film *All Night Long*, a modern remake of Shakespeare's *Othello*. He followed that with *Doctor Dolittle* (1967) as Willie Shakespeare, leader of the natives of Sea-Star Island. This was a trying experience for Holder, as he had to contend with casual racism from Rex Harrison's then-wife, Rachel Roberts, and his entourage. In the 1972, he was cast as the Sorcerer in *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex\**. The following year he was a henchman – Baron Samedi – in the Bond movie *Live and Let Die*; He contributed to the film's choreography. In addition to his movie appearances, Holder became a spokesman for the 1970s 7 Up soft drink "uncola" advertising campaign. In 1975 Holder won two Tony Awards for direction and costume design of *The Wiz*, the all-black musical version of *The Wizard of Oz*. Holder was the first black man to be nominated in either category. He won the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Costume Design. The show ran for 1672 performances over a four-year period; it was revived in 1984.

As a choreographer, Holder has created dance pieces for many companies, including the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, for which he provided choreography, music and costumes for *Prodigal Prince* (1967), and the Dance Theatre of Harlem, for which he provided choreography, music and costumes for *Douglas* (1974) and designed costumes for *Firebird* (1982). In 1978, Holder directed and choreographed the Broadway musical *Timbuktu!* Holder's 1957 piece "Bele" is also part of the Dance Theater of Harlem repertory. In the 1982 film version of the musical *Annie*, Holder played the role of Punjab. He was in the 1992 film *Boomerang* with Eddie Murphy. He was also the voice of Ray in *Bear in the Big Blue House* and provided narration for Tim Burton's version of Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. He reprised his role as the 7 Up Spokesman in the 2011 season finale of *The Celebrity Apprentice*, where he appeared as himself in a commercial for "7 Up Retro" for Marlee Matlin's team.

Holder was a prolific painter (patrons of his art included Lena Horne and William F. Buckley, Jr.), ardent art collector, book author and music composer. As a painter, he won a Guggenheim Fellowship in fine arts in 1956. A book of his photography, *Adam*, was published by Viking in 1986. In 1955, Holder married dancer Carmen de Lavallade, whom he met when both were in the cast of the musical *House of Flowers*. They lived in New York City and had one son, Leo Anthony Lamont. They were the subject of a 2004 film, *Carmen & Geoffrey*. Holder's brother was artist Boscoe Holder. Geoffrey Holder died in Manhattan from complications from pneumonia on 5 October 2014 at the age of 84. He was survived by his wife, Carmen de Lavallade, and their son, Léo. I am sure that there will be many other larger than life cultural iconoclast but there will never be another Geoffrey Holder. He was a one man creative force and he will be missed. God Bless him....

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As writer Stephen King said in an interview last week, the world is looking more and more like George Orwell's vision in 1984 where war is a constant thing. We (United States) went into the Middle East in the wrong direction with George Bush's adventures in Iraq when the real problem of bringing down the Taliban was in Afghanistan and since that happened the entire region has become destabilized. Obviously Saddam Hussein was a terrible man but his presence provided a sort of stability that doesn't exist anymore. Today in much of the Middle East there is a kind of anarchy. And although we contain al Qaida in the past, today we are now facing ISIS and when they are contained there will be someone else. And one of the reasons that these extremist element continues, is that containment only deals with the symptoms not the underlying causes.

Think about it, the states that we label moderate and we chose to support, include Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, U.A.E., Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and Egypt are all dictatorships. As for Yemen, Iraq and Libya one could describe them as failed or failing states. And Palestine is being occupied by Israel. No wonder there is discontent among the people in these countries when the freedom that we in the West that we take for granted is beyond their grasp. And as a result these countries are a fertile ground for anyone wanting to stoke discontent. Add to this are the war profiteers from Romania to North Korea to Brazil to South Africa to the United States would like crack dealers prey on the misery of others.

But in the United States, we live in a country that believes that war leads to peace. Well that is not true. Only negotiation leads to peace. And yes, you usually have to negotiate with enemies. Of course there are groups who are too dangerous because they themselves do not value life. And often times the only way to deal with them is through soundly defeating and eradicating as much of their presence as possible. But we have to also realize that we are in a perpetual state of war, and something is wrong with this picture.

In the George Orwell classic 1984, there is a state of perpetual war between the nations of Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia. The enemy in the conflict is ambiguous, and the battlefield exists in an elusive and distant land. The enemy could be Eurasia one day, and Eastasia the next, but that location is really insignificant. The mission of perpetual war for these superpowers is to justify psychological and physical control over their populations, to keep their people busy, fearful and hateful towards the enemy. The perpetual war also serves as an excuse for a nation's failings and shortcomings. The economy, the labor force and industry are all centered around war rather than consumer goods. People live a miserable existence with poverty and no hope of improving their standard of living.

War. What is it good for? Absolutely nothing! That is what soul singer Edwin Starr said, but it is also what Major General Smedley D. Butler, a two-time Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, believed as well. In fact, he called war a racket. *"A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of the people,"* he said. *"Only a small 'inside' group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few, at the expense of the very many. Out of war a few people make huge fortunes."* The answer to ending war, Butler concluded, is not through disarmament conferences or peace talks, but by taking the profit out of war.

And upon his departure from office, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, a former general, warned of the military-industrial complex and its threat to democracy and liberty. *"In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist,"* he said.

America is in a state of perpetual war. Before it was the Cold War, and now it is the War on Terror. And the boogeyman du jour is Al Qaeda and Islamic terrorism rather than Communism. And it doesn't seem to matter whether the government is controlled by Democrats or Republicans. This is the nature of the beast. There were wars in Iraq and Afghanistan under Bush, and these wars have not abated under Obama. Add to that Pakistan, perhaps Yemen, who knows, and any other nation that comes up in the future. Things were supposed to be different under an Obama presidency, as people did not vote for more war when they voted for "change" in November 2008. After all, the huge, costly, senseless and deadly mess called the Iraq war made people yearn for a better way. But in all fairness, Obama had pledged in the presidential campaign to step things up in Afghanistan. Yet, last week the Obama Administration and NATO sign a new security pack with the new leadership in Afghanistan that will leave more than 10,000 troops in the country.

As human rights activist and writer, David Love wrote several years ago: We are told that the real threat to the United States comes from foreign terrorism, with the latest example brought to us in the form of a B-list al Qaeda groupie from Nigeria, with explosive airline undergarments no less. He follows in the footsteps of another misguided soul, a Jamaican-British terrorist wannabe who tried to blow up his shoes on an airplane several years ago. Such incidents have resulted in reactionary security measures by the government that are ostensibly designed to make us safer, such as the ban on liquids on the plane, or pat downs, or taking off your shoes at the airport. In the end, these measures only make us neurotic and fearful, fail to make us safer, and render air travel an impractical and unpleasant prison-like experience. Meanwhile, while it seems impossible to prevent every potential act of terrorism, the systems that should keep such undesirables off the plane in the first place are not working.

My goal is not to make light of terrorism and the threat it may or may not pose. At the same time, there are many domestic threats that seem to pose a greater risk to national security, including the U.S. economic system itself. Consider, for example, the massive loss of wealth precipitated by the housing crisis, disproportionately felt in the black and Latino communities. Or, take a look at the jobless numbers, and the deplorable 20 percent unemployment rate for working-age men. A nation that claims to be a superpower, yet has one out of every four of its children dependent on food stamps, has far larger issues than a Nigerian with combustible drawers and a few beheadings in Iraq and Syria.

And should we not concern ourselves with the daily acts of terror committed in this violent society, the proliferation of firearms, the mass shootings and the school shootings? Every year, on average, more than 100,000 people are shot with a gun in America, and over 30,000 of them die. This level of violence and killing is not tolerated in a truly free and democratic society. If we are to have a perpetual war, it must be a war against injustice and deprivation at home and abroad. We need to get our own house in order, rather than demolish and rebuild other nations that did not invite us there. And as far as the so-called terrorism problem is concerned, maybe we should stay out of other folks' backyards and it will go away. So if you haven't read George Orwell's classic novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* recently, I urge everyone to do so because we have to find a way to stop the state of perpetual war.

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## Ben Affleck Angrily Defends Islam Against Bill Maher/Sam Harris



Bill Maher and Ben Affleck look on as Sam Harris, author of *Waking Up: A Guide to Spirituality Without Religion*, speaks during *Real Time With Bill Maher*

**Web Link:** [http://youtu.be/EN52CP2\\_FoU](http://youtu.be/EN52CP2_FoU)

*"Ben Affleck was quick to call out what he felt was Bill Maher's "gross, racist, disgusting," ideas about Islam during a heated debate.*

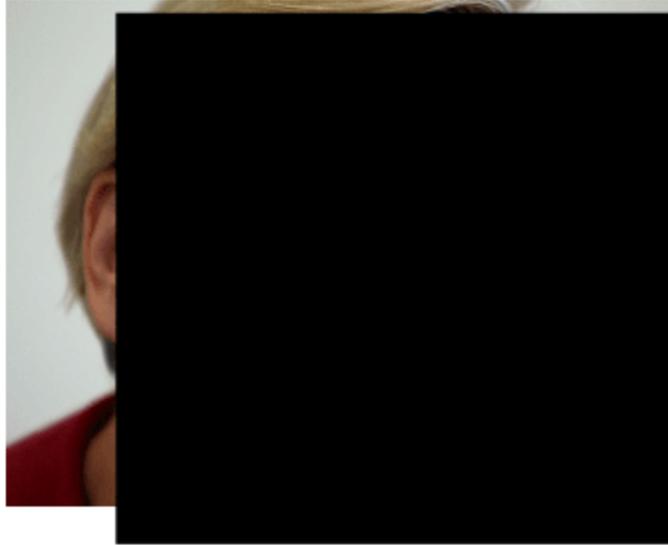
I have to call out one of my favorite Liberals/Progressives, **Bill Maher** who last week on **HBO's REAL TIME WITH BILL MAHER** for his intolerant bigoted comments on Islam during a panel discussion with his guests – Sam Harris, Ben Affleck, Michael Steele and Nicholas Kristof on ISIS. Affleck reacted furiously to claims by Maher that Islam manifested as *"the only religion that acts like the mafia"* and which would *"fucking kill you if you say the wrong thing, draw the wrong picture or write the wrong book"*. Affleck, who was promoting his new film, the David Fincher thriller **GONE GIRL**, responded: *"Hold on – are you the person who officially understands the codified doctrine of Islam? It's gross and racist. It's like saying, 'Oh, you shifty Jew!' Your argument is, 'You know, black people, they shoot each other.'"* The exchange heated up with Ben Affleck over Maher's use of sweeping generalizations to define Islam. In fact, Affleck went as far as to dub Maher's views of Muslims as "gross" and "racist." He added: *"How about more than a billion people who aren't fanatical, who don't punch women, who just want to go to school, have some sandwiches, pray five times a day, and don't do any of the things you're saying of all Muslims. It's stereotyping."*

First of all, historically, Islam was not particularly intolerant, as it initially elevated the status of women. Also, anybody looking at the history even of the 20th century would not single out Islam as the bloodthirsty religion; it was Christian/Nazi/Communist Europe and Buddhist/Taoist/Hindu/atheist Asia that set records for mass slaughter. Likewise, it is true that the Quran has passages hailing violence, but so does the Bible, which recounts God ordering genocides, such as the one against the Amalekites. Beware of generalizations about any faith because they sometimes amount to the religious equivalent of racial profiling. Hinduism contained both Gandhi and the fanatic who assassinated him. The Dalai Lama today is an extraordinary humanitarian, but the fifth Dalai Lama in 1660 ordered children massacred *"like eggs smashed against rocks."* Christianity encompassed the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and also the 13th century papal legate who in France ordered the massacre of 20,000 Cathar men, women and children for heresy, reportedly saying: Kill them all; God will know his own.

But back to Bill Maher, I totally agree with Ben Affleck, Because the nonsense that Bill Maher and Sam Harris spouted was racist and I don't care how liberal both men are – to indict an entire religion of 1.6 billion because of the crazy fringe is as ridiculous as suggesting that Catholicism promotes pedophilia because of the acts of a large number of Priest. Being an agnostic, atheist or a freethinker is a form of religion itself. And to use it as a bully pulpit is as egregious as my friends on the Christian right who insist on broadly generalizing the ideas and deeds of a few radicals with the entire Muslim community and Islam. Our country, the United States, was founded on the premise that people had freedom of religion. And when liberals like Bill Maher and Sam Harris try to stereotype an entire people based on little evidence other than their religion they are bigots. Hats off to Ben Affleck and shame on you Bill Maher and Sam Harris. And to all of my many Muslim friends, please accept my apology for these and other American assholes like them. And please pardon my French.....

As Nicholas Kristof wrote in an op-ed — **The Diversity of Islam** (*which is attached and I suggest everyone read*) in the **New York Times** this week — Let's not feed Islamophobic bigotry by highlighting only the horrors while neglecting the diversity of a religion with 1.6 billion adherents — including many who are champions of tolerance, modernity and human rights. The great divide is not between faiths, but one between intolerant zealots of any tradition and the large numbers of decent, peaceful believers likewise found in each tradition. **And again, please pardon my French.....**

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In an age where it is fashionable to say that government is bad and for a stronger economy there should be less government oversight and interference, today's generations forget that it took a massive government effort to help the tens of millions American families back on their feet. Coming out of the Great Depression the country's leadership under FDR realized that we didn't have a boom and bust economy where millions of people got wiped out. That we could really start pitching into together. That we could have some tough rules on Wall Street. We could have some tough rules for the banks. And we could start building something together. And we did it. We gave kids a better opportunity for education. We built more infrastructure. TVA, Hoover Dam, bridges, tunnels, expansion of the electric grid, hospitals, schools and national parks. We made all of those investments, as well as those in research. By doing so we built a future for this country. And we did it together.

We use to be a country that believed in investing and working collectively to build a better future for our kids. We have lost our way for this and turned into a different direction. We now have a government that works for millionaires, billionaires and Fortune 500 companies, naively believing that somehow the largess will trickle down. But these policies are leaving real families, real people behind and eviscerated the country's Middle-Class. And as my favorite politician, Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren advocates, we have to fight and we got to be willing to take this/our country back.

The big ugly is that no one should work full-time in America and live in poverty. Hence we should immediately raise the minimum wage. There should be equal pay for equal work. And it is not any employer's business what kind of birth control you use. We should be willing to provide preschool education for every child. At the same time we should make sure that every senior and child never goes to bed hungry. And the American government should not be making a profit on student loans. In fact I believe that one of the best investments our country could make is offer college and university education, so that we didn't have generations of Americans saddled with overwhelming student debt until they are middle aged. While at the same time, we should close tax loopholes for millionaires and billionaires so that they pay the same rate of their salaried workers.

Most of all, we need to correct the misnomer that the rich are job creators when it was a thriving Middle-Class in the 1950s and 1960s that made America the greatest nation on earth and the envy of everyone around the world. The idea that shareholders should be a management's #1 priority is wrong. A company's customers should be first, followed by employees and then shareholders. And our environment should be placed ahead of any financial concerns. We have to refrain from saying ME and begin to think in WE. Individually we are much weaker, since it is collective efforts that makes us strong. Finally we have to get beyond our partisan bickering and racial hatred. Because as Elizabeth Warren says, we have lost our way.... **And this is my rant of the week...**

## WEEK'S READINGS

### The 9 Biggest Myths About ISIS Debunked



When it comes to ISIS, ISIL or the Islamic State, the extremist group that has seized large swaths of Iraq and Syria using horrifying tactics, there is no shortage of speculation about its history and ambitions. But not all the claims about the organization now targeted by the U.S. hold up. Here's a look at some of the biggest and most troubling misunderstandings about the Islamic State.

#### **MYTH 1: ISIS = AL-QAEDA**

First of all ISIS is not al-Qaeda. In fact, the groups are on less-than-friendly terms. Here's the backstory:

ISIS' roots lie in a Sunni Islamist militant group founded by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who pledged allegiance to Osama bin Laden in 2005 and named his group al-Qaeda in Iraq. Their relationship was sometimes tense, and the groups developed different tactics, goals and styles of leadership. After al-Zarqawi was killed in a U.S. strike in 2006, the group took the new name the Islamic State in Iraq. The group's current leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, decided to expand into Syria after the country's civil war broke out in 2011. In April 2013, al-Baghdadi proclaimed his group's merger with al-Qaeda's branch in Syria, the Nusra Front, calling the new venture the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or ISIS. But the al-Qaeda group denied the alliance, and when al-Baghdadi refused orders to focus on Iraq, al-Qaeda's top leadership cut ties with ISIS. Since then, the two can be thought of as competitors.

#### **MYTH 2: ISIS WAS CREATED BY THE CIA**

One of the more eyebrow-raising theories about ISIS is that it is a creation of U.S., British and/or Israeli intelligence agencies. New York Times reporter Thomas Erdbrink told HuffPost Live that the belief is common among Iranians. The theory was traced back to a dubious blog post that was picked up by Iranian and other Middle Eastern media. Conservative media got hold of it, using it as an example of a government conspiracy. Politifact bestowed the theory its "Pants on fire" rating.... **TOTAL LIE!!!**

#### **MYTH 3: ISIS REPRESENTS ALL MUSLIMS**

As Alastair Crooke explains in a blog for the WorldPost, ISIS practices an ultra-radical interpretation of Sunni Islam.

In late September, a group of Muslim scholars from around the world issued a letter rebuking ISIS' extreme ideology. The scholars tore down the group's practices as un-Islamic, offering a point-by-point summary of how its ideology breaks from what most Muslims believe. The scholars wrote that in Islam, it is forbidden to torture, kill the innocent and attribute evil acts to God, rejecting how ISIS has sought to kill people they call "kafir" -- or infidels who have not pledged allegiance to a single Muslim leader. For ISIS, the kafir may include other Muslims. The scholars go on to denounce other ISIS actions and beliefs, including forcing others to convert to its ideologies, destroying the tombs of prophets. Muslims around the world have condemned ISIS' extreme beliefs. A movement started by British Muslims flooded social media with messages of "#NotInMyName," rejecting ISIS' brutal tactics and accusing the group of "hiding behind a false Islam."

#### **MYTH 4: ISIS HAS NO OBJECTIVE**

Despite ISIS' craven tactics and irrational aims, the group is not acting without motives and strategies. Its goal is to establish a caliphate -- an Islamic state obedient to its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. It has worked to this end by waging jihad in a fashion that captivates attention, exploits fears, woos disaffected communities, takes advantage of weaknesses in the region, spreads its message, enlists new recruits, and adds wealth and resources. If ISIS is mad, it is mad like a fox. But what is important is that the caliphate that ISIS would like to create is the lands that include Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Kuwait and parts of Saudi Arabia, Israel, Palestine and the UAE. And its war against the US, Western Europe and other nations is to try to dissuade their support for the targeted countries in the Middle East.

#### **MYTH 5: ISIS IS POISED TO INFILTRATE THE U.S. VIA MEXICO**

Politicians, including Texas Gov. Rick Perry (R), Rep. Lou Barletta (R-Pa.), Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), and Rep. Trent Franks (R-Ariz.), and media reports have claimed recently that the U.S.-Mexico border could, and potentially already has, been used as a U.S. entry point for ISIS forces. However, the allegations aren't holding up. Franks' claim that ISIS is presently in Mexico is highly unlikely, according to fact-checker Politifact. Top security officials said the U.S. has no evidence ISIS agents are crossing the U.S. border with Mexico, and there was no indication that it intends to do so. The Mexican government called the idea "absurd." This is blatant fear mongering by Republicans who are willing to do anything to discredit the President and his administration.

#### **MYTH 6: ISIS IS INVINCIBLE**

Despite ISIS victories in Iraq and Syria, and the ineptitude of the Iraqi military to stop its advance, analysts argue it is not unstoppable.

Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, a scholar and senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, argued that ISIS' "strategy is a mess," because it has surrounded itself with enemies. Gartenstein-Ross and William McCants, a scholar of militant Islamism, both have noted that in declaring the Islamic State caliphate, ISIS has hinged its credibility on an unsustainable idea. Vox's Zach Beauchamp wrote that there are geographic and demographic limits that will keep ISIS from becoming an unstoppable force. In addition, the group's brutal tactics could alienate allies and potential conscripts, and may prevent it from wider public support. And the U.S. and other opponents of ISIS believe the group can be contained to its former manifestation as a "rural insurgency," a strategy outlined by Michael Knights, a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Like anything else ISIS will have its 15 minutes of fame and then it will either flame out or be contained by others.

#### **MYTH 7: ISIS IS JUST A REGIONAL PROBLEM**

Wouldn't this be convenient if true? Obama has stressed that if ISIS were to establish a permanent foothold in the Middle East, American interests would be at risk.

As mentioned earlier, ISIS has stated it aspires to extend its caliphate beyond Syria and Iraq. In addition, there are hundreds of American troops in Iraq, and U.S.-linked oil companies are based in the northern Iraq region of Kurdistan.

A Middle East in the grips of ISIS may also become an incubator for attacks directed at targets outside of the region, noted Michael Singh of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Through its command of social media and propaganda, ISIS has sought to inspire and recruit beyond the borders of Iraq and Syria. Analysts estimate there are thousands of Westerners among ISIS' ranks, including Americans. U.S. officials said they fear ISIS may launch attacks in the U.S. and other Western nations as it broadens targets. There also is concern that ISIS' Western recruits may return to the U.S., an Obama administration official acknowledged.

Finally, ISIS has beheaded two American journalists, a British aid worker, Lebanese soldiers, and others in Iraq and Syria. ISIS is believed to be holding more Westerners and journalists hostage. A separate extremist group in Algeria beheaded a French hostage last week over France's participation in the campaign against ISIS. But the reality is that with a unified effort headed by the U.S. along with NATO members as well as the support of neighboring countries in the Middle East and elsewhere around the world will lead to the eradication of ISIS, if it doesn't implode by its own over-reach.

#### **MYTH 8: THE RISE OF ISIS IS OBAMA'S FAULT**

The "blame Obama" argument focuses on the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq in 2011, and the American president's hesitancy to intervene in the Syrian civil war.

Critics argue that if the U.S. had kept a larger military presence in Iraq, ISIS would not have been able to rebound after incurring heavy losses in 2006.

The argument that President Barack Obama blew it by not supporting moderate rebel forces in Syria earlier in the civil war was recently fueled by Hillary Clinton, the former secretary of state and likely 2016 presidential candidate, in an interview with The Atlantic's Jeffrey Goldberg. Clinton told Goldberg, "The failure to help build up a credible fighting force of the people who were the originators of the protests against Assad -- there were Islamists, there were secularists, there was everything in the middle -- the failure to do that left a big vacuum, which the jihadists have now filled."

Yet the rise of ISIS is a product of many factors. Focusing only on the presence of U.S. forces in Iraq or Obama's hesitancy to intervene in Syria fails to acknowledge other important developments that affected ISIS and the world's failure to contain it, including:

- The government of former Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki gave the U.S. little choice on leaving American troops in Iraq.
- Despite its size and strength, the Iraqi military's fight against ISIS was plagued by missteps.
- ISIS took advantage of bitter tensions between Iraq's Shia and Sunni Muslims.
- Maliki's government in Iraq kicked the country's Sunnis to the curb. ISIS seized on the Sunnis' great discontent, and took up a sectarian war against the Shia.
- ISIS efforts to win public support included creating community programs, charming local children, distributing propaganda, and providing relief for suffering communities.
- Some experts are skeptical that deeper U.S. involvement in the Syrian civil war would have prevented the rise of ISIS. They say the nature of the battles in Syria and the ragtag composition of the rebel forces likely would have limited the extent that U.S. assistance would have made a dent in the growth of ISIS.

***The real truth is that shit happens.....***

#### **MYTH 9: SEN. JOHN MCCAIN MET WITH ISIS**

Another wild claim bouncing around the Internet links ISIS and Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), a vocal proponent of escalating the U.S. response to the militants. It started with a photo McCain posted online of a meeting with Free Syrian Army fighters during a 2013 trip to Syria. The photo was later inaccurately framed as showing McCain meeting ISIS militants and posted on social media and conspiracy theory blogs. From there, speculation grew, suggesting McCain had a role in ISIS' creation, and had a relationship with ISIS leader al-Baghdadi, with photoshopped images of McCain pinning a medal on the chest of the ISIS leader as evidence. Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) propelled the McCain-ISIS conspiracy in an interview with The Daily Beast, saying, "Here's the problem. He [Sen. John McCain] did meet with ISIS, and had his picture taken, and didn't know it was happening at the time."

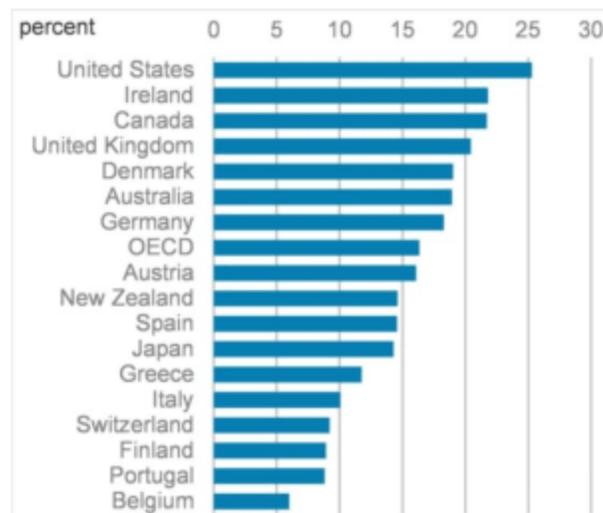
The theory has been thoroughly discredited. According to The Washington Post's fact-checker, "there is zero evidence that any of the men that McCain met with in Syria are linked to the Islamic State." The rebels who were portrayed as ISIS fighters were, in fact, members of the Free Syrian Army, who oppose both ISIS and Syrian President Assad. **Again..... Total Bullshit.....**

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## America Has More Low-Paying Jobs Than Any Other Developed Country

America may be exceptional in many ways, but it also tops the charts of a new, troubling ranking. The U.S. has more low-paying jobs than any other country in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, an economic group of 34 developed countries, according to a research note released by Morgan Stanley on Monday. Economists Ellen Zentner and Paula Campbell based their analysis on the OECD Economic Outlook Report, which documents employment and labor trends in each member nation. The OECD defines "low-paying" as jobs that earn less than two-thirds of a country's median income. On average, around 16 percent of jobs in OECD countries are considered low-paying. In the U.S., over 25 percent of all jobs qualify as such. See the chart below, from Morgan Stanley:

**Exhibit 4: Share of Low Wage Paying Jobs by Country, 2013**



Source: OECD Employment Outlook 2013, Morgan Stanley Research

The ranking reflects America's problem with income equality. Even though the U.S. has one of the highest household median incomes in the world (about \$44,000 compared to roughly \$10,000 worldwide), there's a wide gulf between those making much more than the median income and those making much less. According to the Morgan Stanley economists, income inequality is stifling U.S. economic growth because low-income Americans aren't able to spend enough to boost the greater economy. Wages will need to rise so that households can buy more things. "Stronger growth in wages and salaries is essential," wrote Zentner and Campbell. "It would help households spend more broadly across the income spectrum." The OECD recommends that all its members have a "sensible" minimum wage, increase progressive taxation and "scale up" in-work benefits to address income inequality.

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## **REPORT: Humans Wiped Out Half Of Wildlife Population In 40 Years**



About 3,000 species of wildlife around the world have seen their numbers plummet far worse than previously thought, according to a new study by one of the world's biggest environmental groups. The study Tuesday from the Swiss-based WWF largely blamed human threats to nature for a 52 percent decline in wildlife populations between 1970 and 2010. It says improved methods of measuring populations of fish, birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles explain the huge difference from the 28-percent decline between 1970 and 2008 that the group reported in 2012. Most of the new losses were found in tropical regions, particularly Latin America.

WWF describes the study it has carried out every two years since 1998 as a barometer of the state of the planet. "There is no room for complacency," said WWF International Director General Marco Lambertini, calling for a greater focus on sustainable solutions to the impact people are inflicting on nature, particularly through the release of greenhouse gases. The latest "**Living Planet**" study analyzed data from about 10,000 populations of 3,038 vertebrate species from a database maintained by the Zoological Society of London. It is meant to provide a representative sampling of the overall wildlife population in the world, said WWF's Richard McLellan, editor-in-chief of the study. It reflects populations since 1970, the first year the London-based society had comprehensive data. Each study is based on data from at least four years earlier.

Much of the world's wildlife has disappeared in what have been called five mass extinctions, which were often associated with giant meteor strikes. About 90 percent of the world's species were wiped out around 252 million years ago. One such extinction about 66 million years ago killed off the dinosaurs and three out of four species on Earth. In the new WWF study, hunting and fishing along with continued losses and deterioration of natural habitats are identified as the chief threats to wildlife populations around the world. Other primary factors are global warming, invasive species, pollution and disease. "This damage is not inevitable but a consequence of the way we choose to live," said Ken Norris, science director at the London society. "There is still hope. Protecting nature needs focused conservation action, political will and support from industry."

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This week organizers opened a new node in the Occupy Central demonstrations, this time at the shopping district of Tsim Sha Tsui. The purpose, they said, was to spread their pro-democracy message to international shoppers who might not otherwise know about the movement. "So twenty people came here," he said, his face lit by a building-tall LCD screen flashing a Burberry ad. Their numbers soon grew to several hundred. But the decision to occupy Tsim Sha Tsui was motivated by more than just a desire for international publicity. The neighborhood is famous for the high volume of tourists from mainland China, and has become a focus for Hong Kong's anti-mainland movement, led by groups such as Civic Passion and the Proletariat Political Institute. Since the handover from Britain in 1997, nativist sentiment in Hong Kong has grown, fueled by a flood of mainland tourists coming to Hong Kong to purchase luxury goods with no sales tax, buy up property, and in some cases deliver babies. (Mainland tourists account for 75 percent of visitors to Hong Kong.)

In 2012, Hong Kongers marched through Tsim Sha Tsui denouncing mainlanders as "locusts" eating up the city's resources. In recent years on June 4, the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, anti-mainlanders have staged a rally in the shopping district for those who think the main candlelight vigil at Victoria Park is too timid. "You could call it a racist movement," said Cheung Wing Hang, 27, a student in cultural studies at Ling Nan University, who added that a number of the protesters there on Wednesday were "extreme localists." Occupy Central organizers have done their best to distance themselves from the anti-mainland movement and keep the focus on election reform and universal suffrage. Addressing the crowd in Tsim Sha Tsui, Caleb Lam, 27, tried to keep things positive. "All you tourists, Hong Kong welcomes you," he said into the microphone. "I'm glad you're here to witness this." Offstage, he told me that many protesters have been taking the mic to rail against mainlanders. "It happens all the time," he said. "We try to get them offstage."

But pro-democracy ideas and anti-mainland sentiment can be difficult to tease apart in Hong Kong. Many protesters want autonomy for Hong Kong in order to boost policies that will mitigate the influence of mainland Chinese on the island. For example, they support limiting the number of properties that mainlanders can buy in Hong Kong and tightening visa regulations. (Ironically, the much-denounced chief executive C.Y. Leung has promoted some of these policies.) Of course, defensive policy positions easily blur with personal feelings toward mainland Chinese. Even Lam, the polite public speaker, was having trouble containing his feelings about mainlanders. "To put it bluntly, tourists would take a dump in public," he told me. "They jump in front of everybody in line. We can't take it anymore. We've tried the whole 'We're all Chinese people' thing. It's not working."

Other protesters I spoke with voiced similar frustrations. "They break the law," said Ronald Fung, a high school math teacher. "They eat on the MTR [the subway], they urinate in the street." Police won't enforce the law, he said, for fear of creating conflict with the mainland. Leona Ho, 25, mourned the transition of the

neighborhood from small businesses to jewelry and handbag stores targeting wealthy tourists. "Canton Road is a famous street in Hong Kong, but it's not for Hong Kong people anymore," she said. "If you come here on a holiday, you never hear Cantonese, everyone's speaking Mandarin."

Needless to say, mainland shoppers passing through Tsim Sha Tsui didn't feel especially welcome. "It's not safe here," said Zhen, a 25-year-old woman from Wuxi who had come to Hong Kong for the national holiday. "If I knew about this before, I would have canceled my trip." (In fact, Beijing suspended tour groups to Hong Kong this week.) She added that protests like this would never happen back home. "Everybody there wants peace," she said. "We just pay attention to our own affairs." A young woman named Liu, who also declined to give her full name, said Hong Kongers should be grateful that mainlanders are supporting their economy. "I don't think they should complain," she said. "During the more than hundred years of British occupation, they didn't do this." Most of the mainlanders don't want to talk at all. "It's just a small conflict," one woman said without stopping. "It'll be resolved soon."

Under British rule, the Hong Kong Chinese felt that they enjoyed a superior quality of life than their counterparts on the Mainland and for the most part this is true for the average Chinese person living in Hong Kong. Except that due to the sheer size of the new middle class of more than 250,000 million people living on the Mainland, the privilege/entitled lives could be easily erased if they lose their special status which was guaranteed in a deal when the UK handed Hong Kong back to China in 1997. Under the principle of "one country, two systems," Hong Kong was afforded economic and political freedoms outside the traditional socialist rule of the People's Republic of China. This system is supposed to remain in place until 2047, yet what is to happen after that time has never been officially stated. Herein lies the underlying reason for the Occupy Central protests. And ultimately, in spite of whatever the protesters do, eventually this special status that Hong Kong currently enjoys will end.

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## Ebola virus disease



The diagnosis of the first Ebola patient on U.S. soil last week may have put people in a panic, fearing the exotic virus more than mundane germs – such as influenza – that pose a far greater threat to the average American. The Ebola outbreak in West Africa – the largest in the 40-year history of the virus – has infected 7,178 and killed 3,338, according to the World Health Organization and that there could be another 14,000 cases that have gone unreported. Still, because Ebola is rare and relatively difficult to transmit, it kills far fewer people than diseases of which Americans are no longer afraid, such as measles and influenza, says Peter Hotez, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine and professor at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. "It's important to keep these things in perspective," says Lisa Maragakis, associate hospital epidemiologist at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. She compared Americans' fear of Ebola to the fear of flying. Though many people are afraid to fly, Maragakis points out that far more people are killed in cars.

But it is difficult to believe this when the headlines in the national and international media is saying: Ebola Nightmare: Hospitals Become Morgues... Sweeps Into New Regions Of Africa Not Prepared To Combat... Patients Lie Amongst Bodies, Human Excrement... 'A Lot Of Babies Are Dying Here'... Aid Efforts Failing... 'Not At All Under Control'...

As deadly diseases go, Ebola isn't nearly as contagious as tuberculosis, which can be spread through the air. And it isn't as deadly as HIV/AIDS. So far this year, during the worst Ebola outbreak in history, the virus has killed about 3000 people in West Africa. That puts it on par with other deadly, yet preventable ailments.

Diarrhea -- a preventable and treatable condition -- kills about 1.5 million children each year -- more than malaria, AIDS and measles combined, according to global health organizations. The H1N1 swine flu pandemic killed more than 284,000 people in 2009 and 2010, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Yet Ebola's deadliness and the danger it poses to civil society in affected countries have made this epidemic a problem of global proportions: In September, the United Nations announced that it is establishing an "Ebola Crisis Center," with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issuing an "international rescue call."

And after an in-person briefing in mid-September from the staff at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, President Barack Obama announced a "major increase" in the U.S. response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and that the United States are sending troops, material to build field hospitals, additional health care workers, community care kits and badly needed medical supplies.

Since the Ebola outbreak began in February, around 300,000 people have died from malaria, while tuberculosis has likely claimed over 600,000 lives. Ebola might have our attention, but it's not even close to being the biggest problem in Africa right now. Even Lassa fever, which shares many of the terrifying symptoms of Ebola (including bleeding from the eyelids), kills many more than Ebola – and frequently finds its way to the US.

**Here is the skinny.....**

**Influenza**, which many people mistake for a "bad cold," claims up to 49,000 lives a year and sends more than 200,000 to the hospital, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Half of the more than 100 children who died from flu in the USA last year were healthy kids with nothing to suggest they were more vulnerable than other children.

**Measles**, one of the most infectious diseases in the world, is far easier to catch than Ebola. If a person with measles comes in contact with 10 susceptible people — those who have never had measles or who are unvaccinated — nine of those people will come down with measles, says Julia Shaklee Sammons, medical director of infection prevention and control at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. On average, people with measles spread the disease to 12 to 18 other people, according to the Michigan Center for Public Health Preparedness. In contrast, people with Ebola in West Africa spread the disease to one to two others, according to the WHO.

Unlike Ebola, measles spreads through the air. The measles virus is so hardy that it can linger in the air for two hours after an infected person leaves the room — and still infect the next person to walk by, according to the WHO. Measles is much stealthier than Ebola. People infected with measles can spread the virus for four days before breaking out in tell-tale red spots, according to the WHO. Even with a mortality rate of 2% to 15% — far lower than the 70% mortality rate seen in the West African Ebola outbreak — measles kills 122,000 people around the world each year, Hotez says. Before vaccines, measles killed 2.2 million every year.

**Norovirus**, the most common cause of both food-borne illness and stomach-related misery in the USA, can live on surfaces for days, so people can pick up the virus just from touching a door handle or a toy, Sammons says. Norovirus — which causes diarrhea, vomiting and stomach cramps — afflicts up to 21 million Americans a year and kills up to 800, according to the CDC.

If Ebola spread that easily, there would be millions of cases, not thousands, Hotez says. "In general, Ebola is not easy to get," Sammons says. Unlike people with measles, patients infected with Ebola can spread the virus only after they begin to show symptoms, such as a fever, Tom Frieden, director of the CDC, said at a news conference Tuesday. Ebola can't spread through the air. It can spread only through direct contact with bodily fluids, primarily blood, Sammons says.

Chances are, anyone exposed to Ebola is going to know about it, Sammons says. That gives them time to seek medical help and isolate themselves to prevent them from spreading the virus. Ebola could be far less lethal in a developed country that has access to modern intensive care and basic measures, such as keeping patients hydrated and maintaining a steady blood pressure.

One reason Ebola has spread so widely in Africa — in spite of all of these obstacles — is that the countries most affected are extremely poor. Many people lack running water and soap in their homes. So do many hospitals, according to the CDC. If one family member comes down with Ebola, there's a good chance that others in the home will become infected, especially if patients bleed and vomit profusely. Families without modern toilets and washing machines have trouble cleaning up after patients who lose control of their bowels and produce huge amounts of diarrhea. Even burying the dead can spread Ebola in these countries, because common burial rites involve washing the dead and preparing the bodies.

As devastating as Influenza, Measles and Norovirus, as well as H1N1 (Swine Flu), Whooping Cough or SARs are, the main differentiator between Ebola and other illnesses remains the lack of treatment. Moreover, the crippling lack of infrastructure and proper facilities in many of the African nations where Ebola is most dangerous has worsened the disease, and made it more difficult to address. The WHO estimates that 20,000 people will be infected by Ebola over the next six months and possibly half of them will die. But mostly due to the lack of treatment.

Researchers with the National Institute of Health announced last week that they would begin clinical trials for an experimental Ebola vaccine next week. NIH workers will work alongside pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline in hopes of finding a solution, and sending it to affected nations as quickly as possible. Trials for other drugs will also take place outside of the United States, including the United Kingdom, Gambia and Mali. Pressures to conduct tests within the hardest-hit countries, notably Liberia and Sierra Leone, have met with significant resistance from both scientists and drug makers alike, as *"the infrastructure in those places would not allow the kind of careful Phase I studies that you would like to do,"* said Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in the press conference.

Both doctors working with the WHO in Africa and the CDC and NIAID here in the U.S. have identified treatment and protocols that appears to be able to cure the Ebola disease. And through containment and the fact that experts believe that promising vaccinations will soon arrive. And with that, Ebola will hopefully be relegated to the dustbin of history much like Smallpox, Polio, Tetanus, Rabies, Yellow and Typhoid fevers. Therefore, if you are living anywhere else other than in West Africa, you have a much higher chance to be in a fatal car accident than dying from Ebola.

Finally, one should realize that another deadly disease is set to hit the shores of the US, UK and much of the rest of the northern hemisphere in the coming months. It will swamp our hospitals, lay millions low and by this time next year between 250,000 and 500,000 worldwide will be dead, thousands of them in the US and Britain. Despite the best efforts of the medical profession, there's no reliable cure, and no available vaccine offers effective protection for longer than a few months at a time. If you've been paying attention to recent, terrifying headlines, you may assume the illness is the Ebola virus. Instead, the above description refers to seasonal flu — not swine or bird flu, but regular garden variety influenza. Our fears about illness often bear little relation to our chances of falling victim to it, a phenomenon not helped by media coverage, which tends towards the novel and lurid rather than the particularly dangerous.

Ebola has become the stuff of hypochondriacs' nightmares across the world. In the UK, the Daily Mirror had "Ebola terror as passenger dies at Gatwick" (the patient didn't have Ebola), while New York's news outlets (and prominent tweeters) experienced their own Ebola scare. Even intellectual powerhouses such as Donald Trump have fallen into panic, with the mogul calling for the US to shut off all travel to west Africa and revoke citizens' right to return to the country — who cares about fundamental rights during an outbreak? Not to be outdone, the endlessly asinine "explanatory journalism" site Vox informed us that "If the supercontinent Pangaea spontaneously reunited, the US would border the Ebola epidemic".

Yes, Ebola is a horrific disease that kills more than half of people infected by it, though with specialist western treatment that death rate would likely fall a little. It's unsurprising that the prospect of catching it is a scary one. The relief is that it's not all that infectious: direct contact with bodily fluids of a visibly infected person is required, meaning that, compared with many illnesses, it's easily contained especially in countries that have strong medical infrastructures. So relax..... and for more information please feel free to download the attached Ebola virus disease key facts.

## THIS WEEK'S QUOTE

*The further a society drifts from the truth, the more it will hate those who speak it.*

George Orwell

## BEST VIDEO OF THE WEEK

### Attraction Black Light - SHADOW THEATRE GROUP



BEST AUDITION EVER! ON BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT 2013

Web Link: <http://youtu.be/t3HEEJ2JISY>

**Attraction** are a Hungarian shadow theatre group from Budapest, Hungary. They rose to fame during a performance at the Hungarian Olympic Oath Ceremony for the London 2012 Olympics, in which they did a rendition of many of the traditional sports within the five rings of the Olympic Games logo. Less than a year later, they won the seventh series of Britain's Got Talent on 8 June 2013, beating joint favorite Jack Carroll.

History

## 2004: Formation

The group was founded in 2004 by Zoltán Szűcs. Szűcs himself was a performer who achieved national success in the mid-1990s with his pop group Hip Hop Boyz, when he was known as Real Action. Attraction itself consists of twelve members, although only eight were able to perform on *Britain's Got Talent*: Torda Katalin, Tóth Alexandra, Fehér Norbert, Lakatos Andrea, Szűcs Zoltán, Szentinek Csaba, Szabados Flóra and Kántor Janka.

## Das Supertalent (2012)

In 2012, they finished in 7th place in the German version of the Got Talent franchise: *Das Supertalent*. The German judges found Attraction very creative, though they also said that Attraction could do more with their talent. Their stunning black light performance did not have enough power to convince the Germans of letting them pass on to the finals. Judge Thomas Gottschalk said he had never seen anything quite like this and that he was stunned by their performance.

## Britain's Got Talent (2013)

For their Britain's Got Talent auditions, they acted out a story of a couple who meet under a bridge, fall in love, marry, and have a child. The father goes off to war, shortly after their baby is born, and dies tragically. The piece ends with an image of the mother and daughter standing beside his tombstone. Judge Amanda Holden fought back tears and called the performance 'moving' and they received a loud standing ovation from the audience and judges.

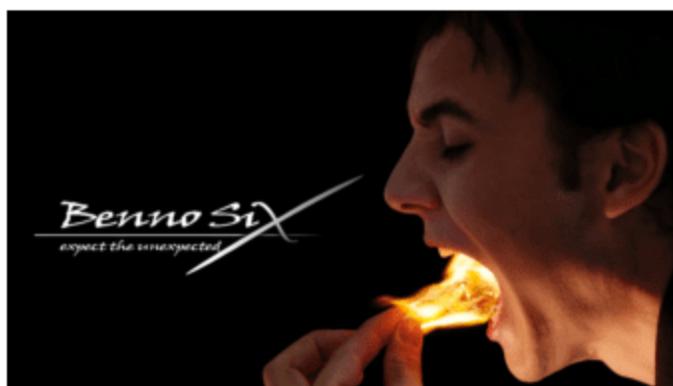
For their semi-final performance, Attraction depicted a mother giving birth to her son, the son going off to college, getting married, and eventually the mother dies in her son's arms. At the end, the son's wife reveals that she is pregnant. The story was based on Szűcs' life story, who dedicated the performance to his late mother. They got high praise from the judges, with Holden stating that she even saw Simon Cowell shed a tear. They got first place on the 5th semifinal vote sending them straight to the finals.

In the final Attraction performed a tribute to Britain, the highlights being when a lion was formed with their bodies and the face of Queen Elizabeth II they formed with their bodies at the end of the performance. Once again they received a standing ovation and again Holden shed a tear. They were announced the winners and became the first foreign act to win Britain's Got Talent and the third group act to win.

## Post Talent

It has been reported that they will perform at The Mirage in Las Vegas. As winners of Britain's Got Talent, they performed at the Royal Variety Performance on 9 December 2013. The group has also been invited to perform at the 2014 CCTV New Year's Gala on China Central Television, showing renditions of landmarks and icons of China, such as Huangshan, The Great Wall of China, The Temple of Heaven, the giant panda, and a Changzheng launch vehicle. The performance ends, in applause, with a configuration of the Chinese character for spring (春), followed by another configuration of the digits 2014 in the shape of a horse, the Chinese zodiac for the lunar year 2014.

## GREAT MAGIC TRICKS



Web Link: <http://youtu.be/5gRcp8EccfM> and <http://youtu.be/Zp9PqBa5arA>

*Mentalist, illusionist, magician Benno Six has performed for celebrities such as Karl Lagerfeld, Lil John, Wladimir Klitschko and Prince Saud of Saudi Arabia..... Benno Six has toured the world bending forks like Uri Geller and other amazing illusions as performed by David Copperfield, Criss Angel and David Blaine on national TV.*

## THIS WEEK'S MUSIC

### Kool & The Gang



From the late 1960s and through the Millennium when you were partying in the New York – Tri-State area and elsewhere around the world and they put on a Kool & The Gang -- the partying is definitely going to rock. And I can say this because I was there and the same thing happens today. Kool & The Gang from Jersey City, New Jersey has sold over 70 million albums worldwide and influenced the music of three generations. Thanks to songs like *Celebration*, *Cherish*, *Jungle Boogie*, *Summer Madness* and *Open Sesame*, they've earned two **Grammy Awards**, seven **American Music Awards**, 25 Top Ten R&B hits, nine Top Ten Pop hits, and 31 gold and platinum albums. Kool & The Gang has performed continuously for the past 35 years, longer than any R&B group in history. Their bulletproof funk and tough, jazzy arrangements have also made them the most sampled band of all time.

**BACKGROUND:** In 1964 Khalis Bayyan (AKA Ronald Bell) and his brother, Robert "Kool" Bell, joined Jersey City neighborhood friends Robert "Spike" Mickens, Dennis "Dee Tee" Thomas, Ricky Westfield, George Brown, and Charles Smith to create a unique musical blend of jazz, soul and funk. At first calling themselves the Jazzias, they went through various names – The New Dimensions, The Soul Town Band, Kool & The Flames – before settling on their moniker. Over the next several years, they solidified their musical chemistry on the rough-and-tumble East Coast music scene, supporting acts like Bill Cosby, Ritchie Havens and Richard Pryor. Their self-titled 1969 debut album introduced their signature instrumental sound and fierce horn arrangements, and spawned their first Billboard R&B charted single, Kool and the Gang.

In 1969 Kool & The Gang released their self-titled debut album. It was the introduction to a theme, music is the message, that Kool & The Gang stands by today. The instrumental album was an expression of their deep love of music. It was also an introduction to their signature sound and the fierce horn arrangements created by Khalis, Dee Tee, and Spike. Their debut album spawned their first Billboard R&B charted single Kool and the Gang and later *Let The Music Take Your Mind*.

In 1970, their audacious sophomore set *Live At The Sex Machine* peaked at #6 on Billboard's R&B chart and yielded three hit singles: *Funky Man*, *Who's Gonna Take The Weight* and *I Want To Take You Higher*. Next came *The Best Of Kool & The Gang* Featuring The Penguin, Kool & The Gang Live at PJ's, *Music Is The Message*, and *Good Times*, all of which helped solidify a sound that wowed not only fans but such contemporaries as James Brown and Nina Simone.

The band's stellar reputation grew with each album, but 1973's gold disc *Wild & Peaceful* took Kool & The Gang to another level (#6 R&B, #33 Pop), spurred by the immortal party anthems *Funky Stuff*, *Hollywood Swinging* and the platinum smash *Jungle Boogie*. Hits like *Higher Plane* (#1 R&B), the classic *Summer Madness* (featured on the Grammy-winning movie soundtrack *Rocky*) and LPs *Spirit of the Boogie*, *Love & Understanding* and *Open Sesame* followed. The latter's title track was featured on the top-selling movie soundtrack of all time, *Saturday Night Fever*, earning the group their second Grammy.

In 1979, Kool & The Gang unveiled a smooth new sound with *Ladies Night*. Produced by the legendary Pop/Jazz musician Eumir Deodato, it became their first platinum album. The #1 R&B title track also reached #8 at Pop. It was followed by *Too Hot* (#3 R&B, #5 Pop). The '80s would see them dominate the mainstream, starting with the double platinum-selling album *Celebrate* (driven by the international monster hit *Celebration*, which spent six weeks atop the R&B chart and became a #1 Pop single). *Celebration*, which played as the American hostages returned from Iran, remains de rigueur at joyous occasions worldwide. The smashes *Get Down On It*, *Take My Heart*, *Let's Go Dancing*, *Joanna*, *Tonight*, *Misled*, the #1 R&B, #2 Pop giant *Cherish* and the #1 R&B anthem *Fresh* (these last three from the multi-platinum LP *Emergency*) solidified the group's international superstardom. Kool & The Gang landed global commercial endorsements, supported countless charitable causes and were the only American group to participate in *Band Aid's 1984 Do They Know It's Christmas* project for famine victims in Africa.

With the explosion of hip-hop in the '90s, Kool & the Gang's incredible catalog of grooves made them DJ favorites, and they were second only to R&B icon James Brown as sources of rap-music samples. 2004's *The Hits Reloaded* found the band collaborating with such acolytes as Lil' Kim, Sean Paul, Ashanti, and Blackstreet, among others. Kool & The Gang continues to perform to packed audiences of new and old fans around the world. The band re-entered the Billboard R&B chart with 2006's *Steppin' Into Love*. In 2006, Kool & The Gang received the NARM (National Association of Recording Merchandisers) Chairman Award for lifetime achievement in record sales.

Kool & The Gang remains one of the most active touring bands, performing hundreds of shows every year. In 2012, they embarked on a U.S. national tour with legendary rock band, Van Halen, while also appearing on *The Tonight Show* with Jay Leno, *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon*, *Dancing with the Stars* and *PBS' 4th of*

July Celebration Concert, A Capitol Fourth. With this said, this week I would like to share the music of Kool & The Gang..... so please enjoy and rock on....

- Kool & The Gang – **Jungle Boogie** -- <http://youtu.be/Bom03LffCmU>
- Kool & The Gang – **Too Hot** -- <http://youtu.be/wPwgQCWYBYk> and <http://youtu.be/m6amG6w8jw8>
- Kool & The Gang – **Get Down on It** -- <http://youtu.be/7ucSqiMErdI>
- Kool & The Gang – **Hollywood Swinging** -- <http://youtu.be/JKWkeLL7lha>
- Kool & The Gang – **Funky Stuff** -- <http://youtu.be/umVRhoRpiI4>
- Kool & The Gang – **Summer Madness Live** -- <http://youtu.be/QvxMpm4DwIo> and [http://youtu.be/o9j\\_PZgWCpQ](http://youtu.be/o9j_PZgWCpQ)
- Kool & The Gang – **Ladies Night** -- <http://youtu.be/OpXNIyo-Uw>
- Kool & The Gang – **Cherish** -- <http://youtu.be/TEbynwliYgM>
- Kool & The Gang – **Joanna** -- <http://youtu.be/968amygQcBE>
- Kool & The Gang – **Tonight** -- <http://youtu.be/pA4XXhvGFzU>
- Kool & The Gang – **Lets Go Dancin** -- [http://youtu.be/hJF6\\_iURK1Y](http://youtu.be/hJF6_iURK1Y)
- Kool & The Gang – **(When You Say You Love Somebody) In The Heart** -- <http://youtu.be/quEJAp5PNw>
- Kool & The Gang – **Fresh** -- <http://youtu.be/lwfAABrahos>
- Kool & The Gang – **Open Sesame** -- <http://youtu.be/cD7AWFshTBA>
- Kool & the Gang – **Celebration** -- <http://youtu.be/h8iN2WqoShU>

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

Sincerely,

Greg Brown

—  
Gregory Brown  
Chairman & CEO  
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