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**Attachments:** Dick\_Gregory\_bio.docx;  
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Vladimir\_Putin,\_Russian\_Neocon\_PETER\_BEINART\_The\_Atlantic\_March\_24,\_2014.docx;  
Confronting\_Putin's\_Russia\_Michael\_McFaul\_NYT\_March\_23,\_2014.docx;  
Exercising\_for\_Healthier\_Eyes\_GRETCHEN\_REYNOLDS\_NYT\_March\_26,\_2014.docx;  
SLAVERY\_-\_Wikipedia\_-\_March\_30,\_2014.docx; Obama's\_not-another-cold-war\_vision,\_don't\_hate\_the\_players\_-\_play\_the\_game\_Michael\_Cohen\_The\_Guardian\_Mar\_27,\_2014.docx; WAR\_bio.docx

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**DEAR FRIEND.....**

**DICK GREGORY... ACTIVIST, SOCIAL CRITIC, SOCIAL SATIRIST, PHILOSOPHER, ANTI-DRUG CRUSADER, COMEDIAN, AUTHOR, ACTOR RECORDING ARTIST, NUTRITIONIST**  
*and ENTREPRENEUR.*



One of my favorite series on cable television is **UNSUNG** on **Channel TV1** and last week's show profiled the iconic, Richard Claxton "**Dick**" Gregory (Born, October 12, 1932, St. Louis, Mo.), African American comedian and civil rights activist whose social satire changed the way that both black and white Americans perceived African American comedians since he first performed in public. When I was growing up there was a saying "if you can't walk the walk, don't talk to talk." Not only has and still is talking the talk, Dick Gregory is walking the walk and his life is the one of the best examples of someone who has made a difference in tens if not hundreds of millions of people lives, many of whom have never met or even heard of him. With this said, I introduce (and for those who are already fans) re-introduce you to **Mr. Dick Gregory**.

## Dick Gregory: *Race, Comedy, and Justice* – Web Link: <http://youtu.be/aD9wJoEfHvE>

**Dick Gregory** entered the national comedy scene in 1961 when **Chicago's Playboy Club** (as a direct request from publisher Hugh Hefner) booked him as a replacement for white comedian, "Professor" Irwin Corey. Until then Gregory had worked mostly at small clubs with predominantly black audiences (he met his wife, Lillian Smith, at one such club). Such clubs paid comedians an average of five dollars per night; thus Gregory also held a day job as a postal employee. His tenure as a replacement for Corey was so successful — at one performance he won over an audience that included southern white convention goers — that the **Playboy Club** offered him a contract extension from several weeks to three years. By 1962 Gregory had become a nationally known headline performer, selling out nightclubs, making numerous national television appearances, and recording popular comedy albums. It's important to note that no biography of Gregory would be complete without mentioning that he and his beloved wife of 54 years, Lil, had ten kids who have become highly respected members of the national community in a variety of fields. They are: Michele, Lynne, Pamela, Paula, Stephanie (aka Xenobia), Gregory, Christian, Miss, Ayanna, Yohance and the Gregory's had one child who died at birth.

Gregory began performing comedy in the mid-1950s while serving in the army. Drafted in 1954 while attending Southern Illinois University at Carbondale on a track scholarship, Gregory briefly returned to the university after his discharge in 1956, but left without a degree because he felt that the university "didn't want me to study, they wanted me to run." In the hopes of performing comedy professionally, he moved to Chicago, where he became part of a new generation of black comedians that included Nipsey Russell, Bill Cosby, and Godfrey Cambridge. These comedians broke with the minstrel tradition, which presented stereotypical black characters. Gregory, whose style was detached, ironic, and satirical, came to be called the "*Black Mort Sahl*" after the popular white social satirist. Friends of Gregory have always referred to Mort Sahl as the "*White Dick Gregory*." Gregory drew on current events, especially the racial issues, for much of his material: "*Segregation is not all bad. Have you ever heard of a collision where the people in the back of the bus got hurt?*"

From an early age, Gregory demonstrated a strong sense of social justice. While a student at Sumner High School in St. Louis he led a March protesting segregated schools. Later, inspired by the work of leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and organizations such as the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)**, Gregory took part in the Civil Rights Movement and used his celebrity status to draw attention to such issues as segregation and disfranchisement. When local Mississippi governments stopped distributing Federal food surpluses to poor blacks in areas where SNCC was encouraging voter registration, Gregory chartered a plane to bring in several tons of food. He participated in **SNCC's** voter registration drives and in sit-ins to protest segregation, most notably at a restaurant franchise in downtown Atlanta, Georgia. Only later did Gregory disclose that he held stock in the chain.

Gregory's autobiography, *Nigger*, was published in 1963 prior to *The assassination of President Kennedy*, and became the number one best-selling book in America. Over the decades it has sold in excess of seven million copies. His choice for the title was explained in the forward, where Dick Gregory wrote a note to his mother. "Whenever you hear the word 'Nigger'," he said, "*you'll know their advertising my book.*" Through the 1960s, Gregory spent more time on social issues and less time on performing. He participated in marches and parades to support a range of causes, including opposition to the Vietnam War, world hunger, and drug abuse. In addition, Gregory fasted in protest more than

60 times, once in Iran, where he fasted and prayed in an effort to urge the Ayatollah Khomeini to release American embassy staff who had been taken hostage. The Iranian refusal to release the hostages did not decrease the depth of Gregory's commitment; he weighed only 97 lbs when he left Iran.

Gregory demonstrated his commitment to confronting the entrenched political powers by opposing Richard J. Daley in Chicago's 1966 mayoral election. He ran for president in 1968 as a write-in candidate for the Freedom and Peace Party, a splinter group of the Peace and Freedom Party and received 1.5 million votes. Democratic candidate Hubert Humphrey lost the election to Republican Richard Nixon by 510,000 votes, and many believe Humphrey would have won had Gregory not run. After the assassinations of King, President John F. Kennedy, and Robert Kennedy, Gregory became increasingly convinced of the existence of political conspiracies. Gregory wrote books such as *Code Name Zorro: The Murder of Martin Luther King Jr.* (1971) with Mark Lane, world famous author, attorney and documentary filmmaker, whose findings published in the best-selling 1966 book *Rush To Judgment* Gregory credited with reversing the nation's opinion on who assassinated the president and the facts which contradicted the official government version contained in the Warren Report. Lane's book contained answers and facts, which Gregory has espoused in Numerous lectures from then until now. Lane and Gregory have been best friends, co-authors and have lectured together for over 40 years and both live in Washington ■■■. Gregory and Lane's book on the assassination of Dr. King was recently released under another title, *Murder In Memphis*, as a trade paperback.

Gregory's activism continued into the 1990s. In response to published allegations that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had supplied cocaine to predominantly African American areas in Los Angeles, thus spurring the crack epidemic, Gregory protested at CIA headquarters and was arrested. In 1992 he began a program called ***?Campaign for Human Dignity?*** to fight crime in St. Louis neighborhoods.

In 1973, the year he released his comedy album *Caught in the Act*, Gregory moved with his family to Plymouth, Massachusetts, where he developed an interest in vegetarianism and became a nutritional consultant. In 1984 he founded Health Enterprises, Inc., a company that distributed weight loss products. In 1987 Gregory introduced the Slim-Safe Bahamian Diet, a powdered diet mix, which was immensely profitable. Economic losses caused in part by conflicts with his business partners led to his eviction from his home in 1992. Gregory remained active, however, and in 1996 returned to the stage in his critically acclaimed one-man show, *Dick Gregory Live!* The reviews of Gregory's show compared him to the greatest stand-ups in the history of Broadway.

In 1998 Gregory spoke at the celebration of the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and President Clinton were in attendance. Not long after that, the President told Gregory's long-time friend and PR. Consultant, Steve Jaffe, "I love Dick Gregory, he is one of the funniest people on the planet." They spoke of how Gregory had made a comment on Dr. King's birthday that broke everyone into laughter, when he noted that the President made Speaker Newt Gingrich ride "in the back of the plane," on an Air Force One trip overseas. In 2001, Gregory announced to the world that he had been diagnosed with a rare form of Cancer. He refused traditional medical treatment – chemotherapy – and with the assistance of some of the finest minds in alternative medicine, put together a regimen of a variety of diet, vitamins, exercise, and modern devices not even known to the public, which ultimately resulted in his reversing the trend of the Cancer to the point where today he is 100% Cancer free.

Gregory's going public with his diagnosis has helped millions of his fans around the world to understand what Cancer specialists have been trying to explain for decades, which is that "Cancer is curable." Gregory was honored recently at the Kennedy Center in Washington ■■■, by a sold out house and a tribute hosted by Bill Cosby, with special tributes by Mrs. Martin Luther King Jr., Stevie Wonder, Isaac Hayes, Cicely Tyson, Mark Lane, Marion Barry and many more. His most recent book, *Callus On My Soul*, (Longstreet Press, Atlanta, Ga.) which became a best-seller within weeks of publication, is an autobiography that updates his earlier autobiography (*Nigger*), because as Dick says, "I've lived long enough to need two autobiographies which is fine with me. I'm looking forward to writing the third and fourth volumes as well."

In 2001, Gregory escaped death once again when a massive tree fell on his car in a storm in Washington ■■■, crushing it completely, causing him to have to be extricated from the car by emergency crews. One witness said, *"I knew the driver and his passengers had died when I saw the tree fall."* Gregory said, *"I knew that God had more work for me to do when I saw the tree falling."* He saved his own life by driving into the oncoming lanes of traffic. The word of the accident circulated the globe immediately in the media, underscoring the power, influence, and support that Gregory has earned from people of all nations. Doctor's at George Washington Hospital refused to release Gregory for a few days causing his first-ever **"State of the Union Address"** to African Americans to be delayed by a month. Gregory gave the first **"State of The Union"** address live on the Internet from Los Angeles on April 21st. Now the Internet address is the latest offering on a 3 CD set. Dick Gregory **21st Century "State Of The Union."**

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## The Crime of 2010

Paul Krugman: March 23, 2014

The most important paper at the Brookings Panel was probably Krueger et al on the long-term unemployed, which basically confirmed what we're learning from a number of sources: it's really hard to get employers to look at people who have been out of work for an extended period, so any sustained increase in long-term unemployment tends to become permanent. The best way to avoid this outcome, then, is to avoid prolonged periods of high unemployment.

So let me make the obvious point, just in case anyone missed it: the *"pivot"* of 2010 — when all the Very Serious People decided that the danger from debt trumped any and all concern for job creation — was an utter disaster, economic and human. It was even a disaster in fiscal terms, because a permanently depressed economy will cost far more in revenue than was saved by slashing the deficit by a few percent of GDP in the short term.

Now, you might think that this post should be titled The Mistake of 2010 — but that would only be appropriate if it were truly an honest error. It wasn't. Some of the austerians were self-consciously exploiting deficit panic to promote a conservative agenda; some were slipping into deficit-scolding rather than dealing with our actual problems because it felt comfortable; some were just going along for the ride, saying what everyone else was saying. Hardly anyone in the deficit-scold camp engaged in hard thinking and careful assessment of the evidence. And millions of people will still be paying the price for that casual irresponsibility for many years to come.

The public has a short memory and the 24/7 continuous news cycle assault continues to make it shorter. People forget that when Barrack Obama defeated Hillary Clinton in the Democratic Primary and John McCain in the general Presidential election in 2008, the central issue of the time was the disastrous ill-conceived Iraq War. Clinton and McCain were on the hawkish side and Obama was on the dovish side. And recent remarks by both Clinton and McCain shows that little has changed, as both are talking tough on Putin, skeptical on attaining a peace deal with Iran with both advocating ratcheting up a hawkish agenda with the country's foreign policy, especially in the Middle East and recently in Ukraine and Crimea.

But the fact remains that what American people want from our future leaders is not a drift back to the old battle stations of toughness and weariness and skepticism. What they want is hope that the new political leadership can steer us from the old standoffs. Find ways to solve serious issues, even with countries who can be "*difficult*" (as if we are not), like Russia. The facts of the future remain obvious and compelling. We need to avoid military confrontation with Russia should be our most important priority.

**Number One:** Avoiding a military conflict with the Russian people from 1947 to 1991 was the key to keeping us from catastrophe during the long tricky years of the Cold War, especially when hawks on both sides believed that a war was winnable. We need people at least as brainy to get us through the years ahead with Russia.

**Number Two:** We need to avoid stirring up a new generational fight with Iran. Talking about everything being on the table is code for bullying "*I will kill you*" and a thinly disguised threat. (*Reminiscent of Nikita Khrushchev banging his shoe on a table at the UN on October 13, 1960.*) Especially when "*leaving all things on the table*" is used in regard to the failed negotiations to put off a nuclear weapons program there, is not necessarily as dangerous of a threat, but it is definitely not as good as leaning *IN*, to find a better way to make negotiations work.

Remember the stick always works better when there is also a carrot. We don't need more *war talk*. We need smarter *peace talk* and that's what the American people want, as they are telling every politician who will listen, "*we had enough of wars.*" I don't see this today in what Hillary Clinton is saying and definitely not with any Republicans with the exception of Rand Paul who comes with his one other set of problems. But Americans have to wake up that every conflict is not our problem, especially when there is no genocide involved. The Ukrainian government was corrupt long before Viktor Yanhovich took over as President and now that he is gone, most likely little will change.

We only have back. Since Hamid Karazi was elected President of Afghanistan a decade ago, sinking hundreds of billions of U.S. taxpayer's dollars in support of his corrupt regime, the truth is that the moment we stop giving him money, he and the little click around him will immediately turn on us and make amends with the Taliban. Our latest bogymen, (*although well-deserved*), is Vladimir Putin. But let's remember it was America and the EU who used the carrot of money and the possible entry into the EU and NATO that ignited the current situation in Ukraine and Crimea. Imagine if Russia had made similar overtures to Alaska and they voted to secede. We would definitely be sending American troops to Alaska.

Gunboat diplomacy hasn't work. And a nuclear Iran is no more dangerous than a nuclear Pakistan, whose people hate us and government is as shaky as Mexico's tap water is safe. The old methods of diplomacy based on U.S. dominance are over. We need leadership with new ideas. We need leadership that is measured. We need leadership that isn't insecure. Most of all, what we don't need is the knee-jerk diplomacy of John McCain, Dick Cheney, Lindsey Graham, Rudy Giuliani, Ted Cruz and lately Hillary Clinton – people who are willing to move without understanding the consequences. And no better example of this is the current situation in the Ukraine and Crimea.

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This week Michael McFaul the former US ambassador to Russia from December 2011 to February this year wrote an insightful op-ed in the **New York Times** – **Confronting Putin's Russia**. In the article he suggests that Western powers not truly understanding that they didn't win the Cold War and that Russia would benignly and gradually join the international order on their terms. And yes, many people in the former Soviet Republics and Russia embraced the new found freedoms, but once the honeymoon was over the enormous ideological and free market challenges that led to widespread insecurity and inequity both ideologically and economically, as well as the economic depression and imperial loss generated a counterrevolutionary backlash – a yearning for the old order and a resentment of the terms of the Cold War's end. Proponents of this perspective were not always in the majority. And the coming to power of an advocate of this ideology – Mr. Putin – was not inevitable. Even Mr. Putin's own thinking changed over time, waffling between nostalgia for the old rule and realistic acceptance of Russia's need to move forward. And when he selected the liberal, Western-leaning Dmitri A. Medvedev as his successor in 2008, Russia's internal transformation picked up the pace. Though Russia's invasion of Georgia in 2008 isolated Russia for a time, its integration into the existing international order eventually regained momentum.

In 2009 President Medvedev began cooperating with President Obama on issues of mutual benefit – a new Start treaty, new sanctions against Iran, new supply routes through Russia to our soldiers in Afghanistan and Russian membership in the World Trade Organization. These results of the “reset” advanced several American vital national interests. The American post-Cold War policy of engagement and integration, practiced by Democratic and Republican administrations alike, appeared to be working again. When Mr. Putin became president again in 2012, this momentum slowed, and then stopped. He returned at a time when tens of thousands of Russians were protesting against falsified elections and more generally against unaccountable government. If most Russians praised Mr. Putin in his first two terms, from 2000 to 2008, for restoring the state and growing the economy, some (not all) wanted more from him in his third term, and he did not have a clear response.

McFaul says that Mr. Putin was also especially angry at the young, educated and wealthy protesters in Moscow who did not appreciate that he (in his view) had made them rich. So he pivoted backward, instituting restrictions on independent behavior reminiscent of Soviet days. He attacked independent media, arrested demonstrators and demanded that the wealthy bring their riches home. In addition to more autocracy, Mr. Putin needed an enemy – the United States – to strengthen his legitimacy. His propagandists rolled out clips on American imperialism, immoral practices and alleged plans to overthrow the Putin government. Anti-Americanism uttered by Russian leaders and echoed on state-controlled television has reached a fanatical pitch with Mr. Putin's annexation of Crimea. He has made clear that he embraces confrontation with the West, no longer feels constrained by international laws and norms, and is unafraid to wield Russian power to revise the international order.

McFaul again: Mr. Putin has made a strategic pivot. Guided by the right lessons from our past conflict with Moscow, the United States must, too, through a policy of selective containment and engagement. The parallels with the ideologically rooted conflicts of the last century are striking. A revisionist autocratic leader instigated this new confrontation. We did not. Nor did “Russia” start this new era. Mr. Putin did. It is no coincidence that he vastly weakened Russia’s democratic institutions over the last two years before invading Crimea, and has subsequently moved to close down independent media outlets during his Ukrainian land grab.

Also, similar to the last century, the ideological struggle between autocracy and democracy has returned to Europe. Because democratic institutions never fully took root in Russia, this battle never fully disappeared. But now, democratic societies need to recognize Mr. Putin’s rule for what it is — autocracy — and embrace the intellectual and normative struggle against this system with the same vigor we summoned during previous struggles in Europe against anti-democratic governments. And, as before, the Kremlin has both the intention and capacity to undermine governments and states, using instruments like the military, money, media, the secret police and energy.

McFaul’s advice: These similarities recommend certain policy steps. Most important, Ukraine must succeed as a democracy, a market economy and a state. High on its reform list must be energy efficiency and diversification, as well as military and corruption reforms. Other exposed states in the region, like Moldova and Georgia, also need urgent bolstering. Also, as during the 20th century, those states firmly on our side must be assured and protected. NATO has moved quickly already, but these efforts must be sustained through greater placement of military hardware in the front-line states, more training and integration of forces, and new efforts to reduce NATO countries’ dependence on Russian energy.

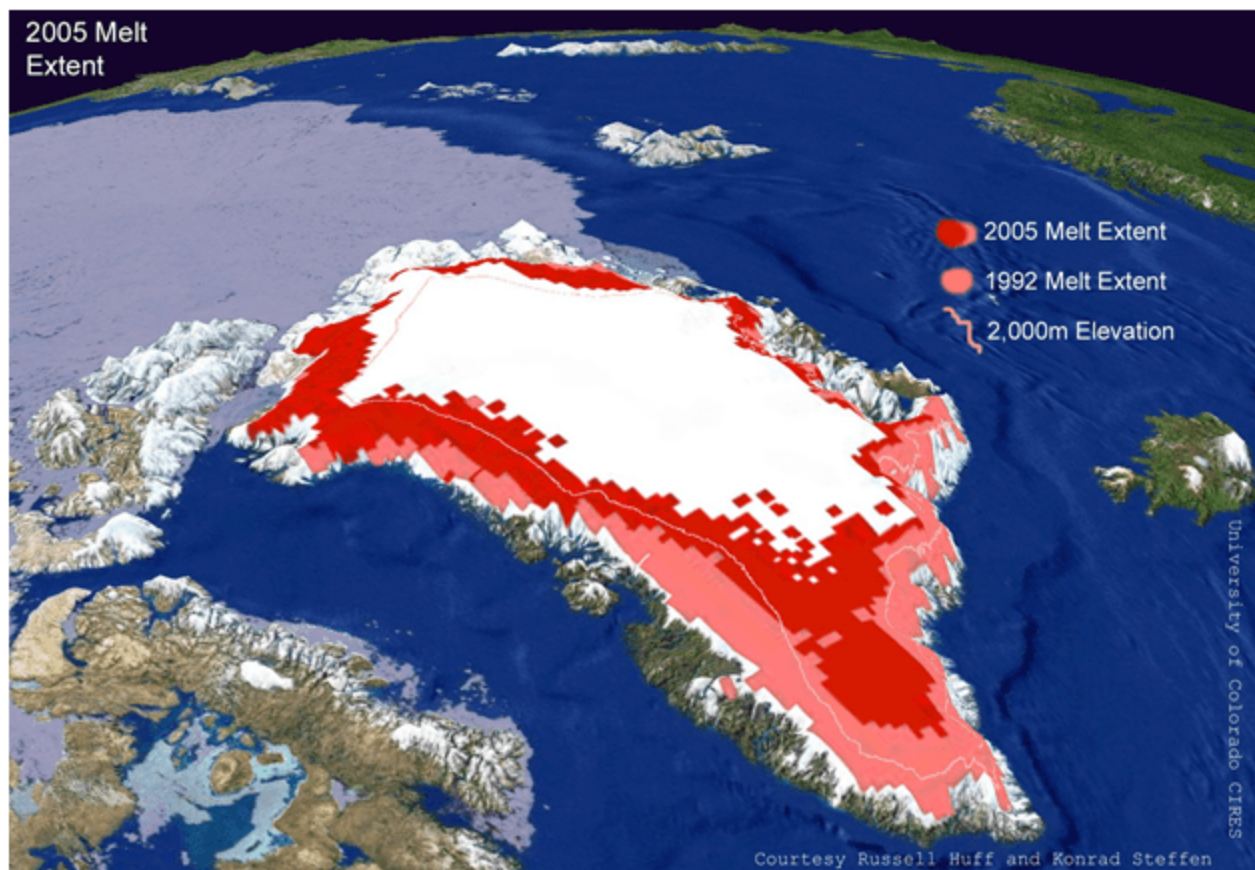
And, as before, the current regime must be isolated. The strategy of seeking to change Kremlin behavior through engagement, integration and rhetoric is over for now. No more membership in the Group of 8, accession to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development or missile defense talks. Instead there must be sanctions, including against those people and entities — propagandists, state-owned enterprises, Kremlin-tied bankers — that act as instruments of Mr. Putin’s coercive power. Conversely, individuals and companies not connected to the government must be supported, including those seeking to take assets out of Russia or emigrate. Finally, as during World War II and the Cold War, the United States and our allies can cooperate with Mr. Putin when our vital interests overlap. But this engagement must be understood as strictly transactional, and not as a means to pull Russia back into accepting international norms and values. That’s how he will see this engagement. So should we.

I take issue with McFaul’s advice. The West and especially America’s neocons keep reminding the world that **They Won The Cold War**. Imagine how that plays to Putin’s fragile ego and his need to control guys who are possibly more hawkish than he. A man who takes pictures of himself riding horses in the winter. More importantly, I am sure that the hawks in his country are nostalgically urging Putin to take a hardline with the West, America and liberals in Russia and elsewhere in the former Soviet Republics. Westerners should realize that there is actually a perception among the old hardliners in Russia, that it has been the victim of the breakup of the Soviet Union and that they have suffered enormous humiliation at the hands of the West and that they have not been allowed to maintain its sphere of influence. They have seen the EU and NATO expansion into Lithuania and Poland. They have seen US military bases opening in Kyrgyzstan. So you can see that with Ukraine they might feel that this is somehow crossing the line and it had to be stopped. Remember Putin described “Kiev as the mother of Russian cities.” And many Russians view Ukraine as an extension of Russia. Hence, I am sure that Putin sees Ukraine as one of Russia’s vital interest, in spite of isolation

and economic costs. This isn't just a simple case of Putin making a land grab. Remember in the days before the Tsars, Kiev was the capital of Russia.

We have to understand that part of Putin's intentions is to restore some of Russia's pride, and I am not suggesting that he wants to go back to the old Soviet Empire, but he believes that Russia should be an equal to the United States, EU and China, and if he is helping the West in Syria and Iran, they should not poach former Soviet satellite countries, especially those who have a historical significance in the motherland such as Ukraine and Crimea. And as such, he is not as sensitive to sanctions, especially when his approval ratings in Russia have soared as a result of the stand that he has taken in the Ukraine and Crimea. As former Speaker of the U.S. House Tip O'Neill famously said, "*all politics are local.*" There is a lot of nostalgia for the Soviet Union. Obviously many of these people are looking at this past with rose tinted glasses. But we have to realize that when Russians read neocon comments (as information is everywhere) disparaging their country, they are tired of the humiliation. As such many Russians are quite grateful to Putin for reinstating some national pride. If we don't want to ignite a new Cold War, we have to stop disparaging Russia and treating it as a second-class international citizen. I know that some of you will see this as ridiculous. But we have to make our foreign policies as win-win, and not just "*my way or the highway,*" as the days of gunboat diplomacy are over, because international cooperation requires consensus and cannot be instituted top-down.

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As you have probably experienced or observed, around the world people are experiencing extreme weather events. Hurricanes, tornados, super storms and prolong droughts are not only becoming increasingly commonplace but tragically increasingly destructive. However probably the biggest threat that humanity faces today as the earth continues to warm is sea level rise. In the last three years Greenland has experienced its highest temperatures in recorded history causing a full surface melt of

its ice sheets in our modern era. And these two events has so much potential impact on the world's oceans that many scientists have become seriously concerned.

Greenland is the world's largest island, extending more than 1,200 miles from its southern to northernmost points. Greenland is melting and its glaciers are in freefall. Every year Greenland is losing 140 billion tons of ice. This net ice loss is now responsible for a significant amount of our current global sea level rise with some of the fastest and most alarming amounts are occurring on the country's western coast where many glaciers meet the warmer ocean waters causing massive icebergs to break off in a process known as calving. In the past ten years five miles in from the coastline, ice sheets of several hundred feet are gone. The glacier retreat is a loss of ice equivalent to supplying the city of Los Angeles with enough fresh water for 2000 years.

The largest glacial calving ever recorded 2013 – Web Link: [v=zA6KCs\\_Q73Q#t=78](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zA6KCs_Q73Q#t=78)

The ice sheet which in many places miles and miles thick covers 80% of Greenland which is three times the size of the state of Texas in the US, to give you an idea how much water is contained. In some places the ice sheet in Greenland is melting at a rate of 30 feet a year. Contrary to what many people think, much of the ice sheets is not pristine white, but instead sort of a dirty gray, due to pollution and airborne soot and this dirty or dark ice accelerates melt as its color absorbs the heat rather than reflects it, at a rate of three times compared to white ice. As Greenland has warmed by an average of about 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit since the 1980s, the average ice-sheet-wide mass loss increased from about 172.4 gigatons per year from April 2003 through 2006, to 359.8 gigatons per year from April 2009 through 2012.

One of the consequences of rising global temperatures is that not only are the natural fire seasons much longer but also much dryer, creating more soot that is being deposited on top of the ice making it grayer and accelerating its melt. Another contributor is the massive amount of industrial pollution that is carried to Greenland by air currents. And when these toxic particles land they in essence drill down into the ice further accelerating its melt.

One study, by an international group of researchers from Denmark, the Netherlands, the U.S. and China, found that regional warming has likely caused three outlet glaciers bordering Fram Strait and the Nordic Sea in far northeast Greenland has receded 12.4 miles in just the past 10 years. Just to be clear how serious this current phenomena of Greenland's accelerated ice melt, if all of the ice currently covering Greenland were to melt, the world's oceans would rise on average 21 feet and this is not being speculated by scientists as a distinct possibility and if this were to happen 80 of the world's 100 biggest cities would be under water – including Boston, New York, Washington, [REDACTED], Miami, New Orleans, Los Angeles and San Francisco, as well as Shanghai, Calcutta, London, Osaka and Sidney.

It is difficult to understand the scale of the melt, as ice cliffs which are hundreds and hundreds feet high are continually caving into the sea. Mountains of ice are falling into the sea on a daily basis, and a recent study says that we are 60 years ahead of the worst case scenario and should this rate hold true fifty years from now mankind would be in a catastrophic situation. Scientists are saying that the trajectory that we are currently on is toward climate catastrophe, as there does reach a point where the melt becomes unmanageable.

Now understand we have just talked about Greenland. In addition to the sea level rise caused by melt on Greenland, we have sea level rise from glaciers around the world as well as from our polar ice caps. To slow down the current rate of sea level rise we need to stabilize glaciers and Greenland and stop adding so much heat. Scientists say that we need to cut our emissions of carbon dioxide by more than 80%. And if we don't, scientists are saying that sea level rise will accelerate to more than five to seven feet by the end of the century. And today, our emissions are going up and not down. Scientists are saying that this accelerated global warming, glacier melt and sea level rise is manmade and even if we were able to totally cut all carbon emissions, sea level rise would still continue but at a much slower pace. And that would be the hope.

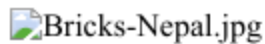
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We think of slavery as a practice of the past, an image from Roman colonies or 18th-century American plantations, but the practice of enslaving human beings as property still exists. There are 29.8 million people living as slaves right now, according to a comprehensive new report issued by the Australia-based **Walk Free Foundation**. This is not some softened, by-modern-standards definition of slavery. These 30 million people are living as forced laborers, forced prostitutes, child soldiers, child brides in forced marriages and, in all ways that matter, as pieces of property, chattel in the servitude of absolute ownership. **Walk Free** investigated 162 countries and found slaves in every single one. But the practice is far worse in some countries than others. The country where you are most likely to be enslaved is Mauritania. Although this vast West African nation has tried three times to outlaw slavery within its borders, it remains so common that it is nearly normal. The report estimates that four percent of Mauritania is enslaved – one out of every 25 people. (*The aid group **SOS Slavery**, using a broader definition of slavery, estimated several years ago that as many as 20 percent of Mauritians might be enslaved.*) And in Pakistan, it is said that there are millions and millions of people living in slavery or some sort of economic bondage in 2014, and this is after the Pakistani government formally banned slavery in 1992, as many Pakistanis see nothing wrong with keeping slaves.

**Wikipedia** describes slavery as a system under which people are treated as property to be bought and sold, and are forced to work. Slaves can be held against their will from the time of their capture, purchase or birth, and deprived of the right to leave, to refuse to work, or to demand compensation.

Historically, slavery was institutionally recognized by most societies; in more recent times, slavery has been outlawed in all countries, but it continues through the practices of debt bondage, indentured servitude, serfdom, domestic servants kept in captivity, certain adoptions in which children are forced to work as slaves, child soldiers, and forced marriage. Slavery is officially illegal in all countries, but there are still an estimated 20 million to 30 million slaves worldwide. Mauritania was the last jurisdiction to officially outlaw slavery (in 1981/2007), but about 10% to 20% of its population is estimated to live in slavery.



A slave in Kathmandu, Nepal, stacks 18 bricks at a time, each weighing four pounds, carrying them to nearby trucks for 18 hours a day

Slavery predates written records and has existed in many cultures. Most slaves today are debt slaves, largely in South Asia, who are under debt bondage incurred by lenders, sometimes even for generations. Human trafficking is primarily used for forcing women and children into sex industries.

### **Chattel slavery**

Chattel slavery, also called traditional slavery, is so named because people are treated as the personal property (*chattel*) of an owner and are bought and sold as if they were commodities. It is the original form of slavery and the least prevalent form of slavery today.

### **Bonded labor**

Debt bondage or bonded labor occurs when a person pledges himself or herself against a loan. The services required to repay the debt, and their duration, may be undefined. Debt bondage can be passed on from generation to generation, with children required to pay off their parents' debt. It is the most widespread form of slavery today. Debt bondage is most prevalent in South Asia.

### **Forced labor**

Forced labor occurs when an individual is forced to work against his or her will, under threat of violence or other punishment, with restrictions on their freedom. Human trafficking is primarily for prostituting women and children and is the fastest growing form of forced labor, with Thailand, Cambodia, India, Brazil and Mexico have been identified as leading hotspots of commercial sexual exploitation of children. The term 'forced labor' is also used to describe all types of slavery and may also include institutions not commonly classified as slavery, such as serfdom, conscription and penal labor.

### **Forced marriage**

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both of the parties is married against their will. In many places, the line between forced marriage and consensual marriage becomes blurred, because the social norms of many cultures dictate that one should never oppose the desire of one's parents/relatives in regard to the choice of a spouse; in such cultures it is not necessary for violence, threats, intimidation etc. to occur, the person simply "*consents*" to the marriage even if he/she does not want it, out of the implied social pressure and duty. The customs of bride price and dowry that exist in many parts of the world, can lead to buying and selling people into marriage. Forced marriage

is still practiced in parts of the world such South Asia, East Asia and Africa. Forced marriages also occur in immigrant communities in Europe, United States, Canada and Australia. Marriage by abduction occurs in many place in the world today, with a national average of 69% of marriages in Ethiopia being through abduction.

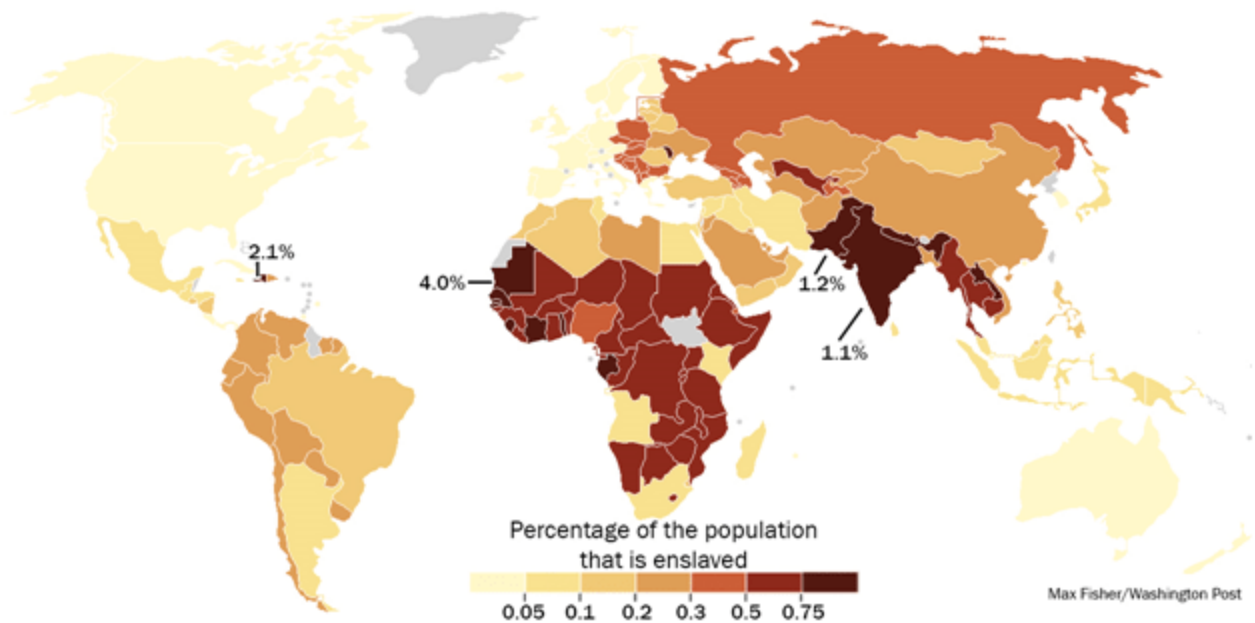
A sham marriage is a marriage of convenience entered into with the intent of obtaining various social or legal advantages (often tied to immigration status). While many of these marriages occur with the consent of both parties, in the **European Union** there exists a trafficking industry which supplies brides (often from former Communist countries which are EU members—especially the Baltic States) to foreign students or workers in EU countries (often from the Asian continent) so that these men can remain in the EU. Early and forced marriage are defined as forms of modern-day slavery by the **International Labor Organization**. The countries with the highest rates of child marriage are: Niger (75%), Central African Republic and Chad (68%), and Bangladesh (66%).

### **Three trends have contributed most to the rise of modern-slavery.**

- The first, a recent population explosion has tripled the number of people in the world, with most growth taking place in the developing world.
- The second, rapid social and economic change, have displaced many to urban centers and their outskirts, where people have no 'safety net' and no job security.
- The third, government corruption around the world, allows slavery to go unpunished, even though it is illegal everywhere.

In this way millions have become vulnerable to slave holders and human traffickers looking to profit through the theft of people's lives. This new slavery has two prime characteristics: slaves today are cheap and they are disposable. An average slave in the American South in 1850 cost the equivalent of \$40,000 in today's money; today a slave costs an average of \$90. In 1850 it was difficult to capture a slave and then transport them to the US. Today, millions of economically and socially vulnerable people around the world are potential slaves.

This "*supply*" makes slaves today cheaper than they have ever been. Since they are so cheap, slaves are today are not considered a major investment worth maintaining. If slaves get sick, are injured, outlive their usefulness, or become troublesome to the slaveholder, they are dumped or killed. For most slave holders, actually legally 'owning' the slave is an inconvenience since they already exert total control over the individual's labor and profits. Who needs a legal document that could at some point be used against the slave holder? Today the slave holder cares more about these high profits than whether the holder and slave are of different ethnic backgrounds; in New Slavery, profit trumps skin color. Finally, new slavery is directly connected to the global economy. As in the past, most slaves are forced to work in agriculture, mining, and prostitution. From these sectors, their exploited labor flows into the global economy, and into our lives.



The map above shows almost every country in the world colored according to the share of its population that is enslaved. The rate of slavery is also alarmingly high in Haiti, in Pakistan and in India, the world's second-most populous country. In all three, more than 1 percent of the population is estimated to live in slavery. A few trends are immediately clear from the map up top. First, rich, developed countries tend to have by far the lowest rates of slavery. The report says that effective government policies, rule of law, political stability and development levels all make slavery less likely. The vulnerable are less vulnerable, those who would exploit them face higher penalties and greater risk of getting caught. A war, natural disaster or state collapse is less likely to force helpless children or adults into bondage. Another crucial factor in preventing slavery is discrimination. When society treats women, ethnic groups or religious minorities as less valuable or less worthy of protection, they are more likely to become slaves.

Then there are the worst-affected regions. Sub-Saharan Africa is a swath of red, with many countries having roughly 0.7 percent of the population enslaved -- or one in every 140 people. The legacies of the transatlantic slave trade and European colonialism are still playing out in the region; ethnic divisions and systems of economic exploitation engineered there during the colonial era are still, to some extent, in place. Slavery is also driven by extreme poverty, high levels of corruption and toleration of child "marriages" of young girls to adult men who pay their parents a "dowry." Two other bright red regions are Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe. Both are blighted particularly by sex trafficking, a practice that bears little resemblance to popular Western conceptions of prostitution. Women and men are coerced into participating, often starting at a very young age, and are completely reliant on their traffickers for not just their daily survival but basic life choices; they have no say in where they go or what they do and are physically prevented from leaving. International sex traffickers have long targeted these two regions, whose women and men are prized for their skin tones and appearance by Western patrons.

Here, to give you a different perspective of slavery's scope, is a map of the world showing the number of slaves living in each country:



Yes, this map can be a little misleading. The United States, per capita, has a very low rate of slavery: just 0.02 percent, or one in every 5,000 people. But that adds up to a lot: an estimated 60,000 slaves, right here in America. Furthermore, many of the founding fathers of the United States and twelve of our presidents owned slaves and eight of them owned slaves while serving as president: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, Martin Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, James Polk, Zachary Taylor, Andrew Jackson and Ulysses S. Grant.

Former president Jimmy Carter says in a new interview that the United States is the one of the world's worst offenders when it comes to modern-day slavery, saying its slave trade is worse today than it was even in the 1700s. *"The United States is one of the most culpable countries in ... modern slavery,"* Carter said in an interview on MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell Reports. *"The slave trade now greatly exceeds anything that happened in the 19th and 18th centuries."* The United States banned the importation of slaves starting in 1808, but slavery itself persisted for another half-century. Carter said that, of the 29 million people living in bondage, 60,000 of them are in the United States. The former president said 200 young girls are sold into slavery every month in the city of Atlanta alone.

Carter interview Web Link: <http://dai.ly/x1jwjjp>

You don't have to go far to see slavery in America. In Washington, ■■■, New York in and in other major cities you can sometimes spot them on certain streets, late at night. Not all sex workers or "prostitutes" are slaves, of course; plenty have chosen the work voluntarily and can leave it freely. But, as the 2007 documentary *"Very Young Girls"* demonstrated, many are coerced into participating at a young age and gradually shifted into a life that very much resembles slavery. A less visible but still prevalent form of slavery in America involves illegal migrant laborers who are lured with the promise of work and then manipulated into forced servitude, living without wages or freedom of movement, under constant threat of being turned over to the police should they let up in their work. **Walk Free** cites *"a highly developed criminal economy that preys on economic migrants, trafficking and enslaving them."* That economy stretches from the migrants' home countries right to the United States.

The country that is most marked by slavery, though, is clearly India. There are an estimated 14 million slaves in India – it would be as if the entire population of Pennsylvania were forced into slavery. The country suffers deeply from all major forms of slavery, according to the report. Forced labor is common, due in part to a system of hereditary debt bondage; many Indian children are born "owing" sums they could never possibly pay to masters who control them as chattel their entire lives. Others fall into forced labor when they move to a different region looking for work, and turn to an unlicensed "broker" who promises work but delivers them into servitude. The country's caste system and widespread discrimination abet social norms that make it easier to turn a blind eye to the problem. Women and girls from underprivileged classes are particularly vulnerable to sexual slavery, whether under the guise of "child marriages" or not, although men and boys often fall victim as well.

One of the world's most vulnerable populations for enslavement is Haitian children. Haiti has the world's second-highest rate of slavery -- 2.1 percent, or about one in every 48 people, many of them underage. There's even a word for it: "*restaveks*," from the colonial French for "*reste avec*" or "*stay with*." Traditionally, the word refers to a poor family sending their child to live with and work for a wealthier family. Often it is innocuous. But it can also encompass parents who feel they have no choice, typically because they have no income other than what they derive from selling their children into forced labor conditions that strongly resemble slavery. About one in 10 Haitian children are believed to participate. Those who run away, according to the report, are often "*trafficked into forced begging and commercial sexual exploitation*."

What's perhaps most amazing about the prevalence of slavery around the world is how similar it can look across very different societies. The risk factors might change from one place to another, the causes varying widely, but the lives of the enslaved rarely do. If your goal is to have as few slaves as possible -- **Walk Free** says it is working to eradicate the practice in one generation's time – the above maps are very important, because it shows you which countries have the most slaves and thus which governments can do the most to reduce the global number of slaves. In that sense, the United States could stand to do a lot. The fact that in the 21st Century there are still millions of people living in slavery and in bondage for one reason or another is a blight against humanity and a moral issue that has to be addressed and eradicated.

## WEEK's READINGS

### 7 Healthy Foods that Turned Out to Be Unhealthy



If you are like me and millions of other Americans struggling to lose weight in spite of consistent and genuine efforts, it may be the case that you (*we*) have some misconceptions about what constitutes healthy eating. While things like fried chicken, cheeseburgers and soft drinks are widely known to be bad for your body, it is unfortunately true that dozens of foods and drinks with a reputation for being healthy can nonetheless cause people to pile on the pounds.

### **1) Muesli**

Many people make the move from consuming sugary cereals or fatty fried breakfasts to eating a portion of muesli in the mornings. This is no surprise, as muesli is often specifically marketed to the health-conscious crowd. However, you may be dismayed to learn that the type of muesli that you can find in most stores is actually quite bad for your body if you are trying to shed fat or maintain a healthy weight. Specifically, muesli often provides you with up to 500 calories per serving, has a high fat content and contains an unacceptable amount of added sugar.

If you hate the idea of giving up muesli but are committed to eating healthily, the best thing that you can do is make your own muesli. All you need to do is buy oats, sunflower seeds, a small amount of dried fruit, and some macadamia nuts (though you should be conservative when adding the fruit and nuts in order to keep the sugar and fat content of your muesli under control). With a serving of fat free milk, this tasty muesli will give you the fuel you need to start your day without causing your blood sugar levels to skyrocket.

### **2) Banana chips**

Anything associated with fruits or vegetables will tend to get a reputation as a healthy food, and many dieters are in denial about the idea that any type of fruit could be bad for the body. However, banana chips are made by deep frying, which means that just one serving of them will contain a staggering 10g

of saturated fat and at least 150 calories. This high saturated fat content will cause your cholesterol to spike, raising your risk of developing cardiovascular disease and potentially increasing the likelihood that you will be diagnosed with type 2 diabetes at some point in your lifetime.

In addition, it is worth noting that banana chips contain fewer of the essential vitamins and minerals that can be found in a fresh banana. Bananas themselves are virtually fat free and provide just 100 calories per average serving. If you particularly like the taste of banana chips and were not simply attracted to them because you thought they were healthy, you can try putting sliced banana in a food dehydrator or opt to bake banana slices in the oven. After a few hours of baking at a low temperature, they should emerge with a crispy texture.

### **3) Tuna sushi**

Not all unhealthy foods are bad for you because they cause you to gain weight; some are dangerous in other ways. Tuna sushi is a classic example of a seemingly healthy food that can be hazardous to your health in large doses. While sushi is compatible with trying to lose weight because it is relatively low in calories and fat, there is a hidden possibility of consuming an excess of mercury. The key fact that you need to know is that you should avoid eating more than six ounces of tuna sushi per week. In particular, you should be aware of the fact that the sushi served in restaurants typically tests as containing even more mercury than the types that you can buy in stores.

If you do end up consuming too much mercury, you can develop mercury toxicity and may develop systems such as sleeplessness, weakness, poor memory, vomiting, high blood pressure, anxiety and abdominal pain. At worst, you could be at risk of sustaining neurological damage. Further, pregnant women should be especially careful when it comes to tuna sushi, as there is a documented increase of disabilities in unborn babies whose mothers consume sources of mercury.

### **4) Energy bars**

Unscrupulous or undereducated grocery store owners might put deliberately energy bars in the aisle reserved for foods that enhance weight loss, and these bars are also prominently featured in many health food stores. However, the average energy bar is anything but good for your waistline, and may well be even worse than a candy bar when it comes to encouraging your body to store excess fat.

Most energy bars contain at least 500 calories, providing the same amount of calories as a small dinner or a large lunch. In spite of the huge amount of calories inside them, energy bars are often very small, so you are likely to feel hungry again soon after eating one. In addition, the sugar content tends to be shockingly large, so many of the calories that come from energy bars turn out to be empty. However, it is possible to find energy bars that are good for you. If you want to find a healthy one that won't undermine your attempts to lose weight or stay slim, take a close look at the labels and pick a bar that contains no more than around 220 calories and gives you at least 4 grams of protein.

### **5) Trail mix**

Trail mix is a highly convenient snack, and the fact that it typically contains plenty of nuts and dried fruit tends to create the impression that it is a healthy addition to your diet. However, most trail mix products often contain sugar-covered nuts, yogurt-coated raisins, corn syrup, and the aforementioned

deep fried banana chips. As a result, just a couple of servings of trail mix could lead you to accidentally consume up to 600 calories, a hefty amount of trans fats, and excessive amounts of empty calories in the form of refined sugars.

If you eat trail mix on a regular basis, you may be horrified and confused the next time you step onto the scales. However, it is possible to locate and purchase healthy trail mix. Bypass the mixes that are full of candy, and look out for ones that are almost entirely comprised of nuts, with a couple of pieces of dark chocolate and some dried fruit thrown in. If you can't find it in a store, you can make your own using those key ingredients. Eating conservative portions of this type of trail mix is perfectly compatible with living a healthy lifestyle and keeping a trim figure.

## **6) Prepared salads**

When you order a salad at a restaurant, you probably think that you are treating your body properly and showing remarkable restraint. However, while some salads are truly good for you, some of them can be just as bad as the burger you yearned to order. In particular, the most popular salads found in restaurants will often be drowned in extra fats and calories so that consumers will find them tastier.

In many cases, these salads are particularly unhealthy due to the chef's decision to add huge amounts of mayonnaise (which is high in both calories and fat). In addition, you may find that the meat isn't as lean as you would like it to be, and that there are fatty flakes of parmesan cheese.

If you are concerned that a restaurant salad might not be healthy, ask your waiter about the ingredients. If you receive a vague answer or learn that your salad will be full of fat, it is better to order something else from the menu. Of course, an even better option is to make your own salad at home (using green vegetables, lean meat, delicious herbs, and a modest dressing with low fat and sugar content).

## **7) Reduced fat yogurts**

Dieters often gravitate towards the low fat yogurt shelf in the dairy section, because the promise of reduced fat content implies that these yogurts will be helpful for those who want to lose weight. However, the lack of fat tends to create a taste that is bland at best, and outright disgusting at worst. In an attempt to compensate, yogurt manufacturers will often choose to heap a lot of extra sugar into their products, creating a much more palatable taste at the cost of selling an unhealthy snack. In the end, the high sugar content can make these reduced fat yogurts less healthy than a regular yogurt, so it pays to be particularly careful when choosing yogurts at the store.

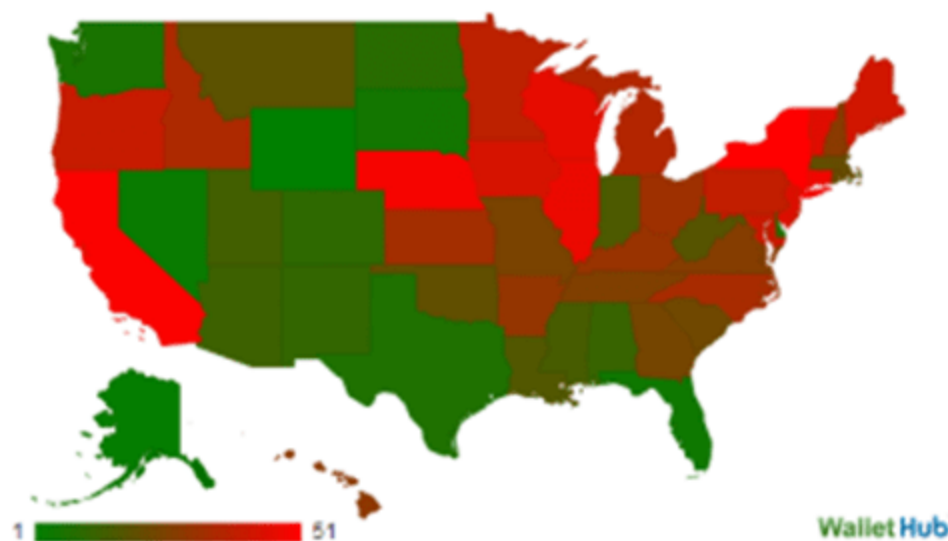
If you want to eat healthy food, you need to find yogurts that strike a good balance. The ideal yogurt will contain low levels of fat and sugar, including enough of each to create an acceptable flavor but not so much of either that the yogurt becomes unhealthy. Once your eyes are open to the range of unhealthy foods that are advertised as being healthy, your diet immediately becomes more conducive to developing a fit, slender body.

Several years ago I have weaned myself off of energy bars and trail-mix when a friend pointed out the calorie, fat and sugar content in many bars. And being a addicted to sushi, I am following the first rule

of drinking alcoholic drinks, *“when you don’t know sip slow.”* As such, you can probably eat all of the seven of the above foods as long as you consume in moderation, which is what I plan to do with sushi.

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## The best and worst states for taxpayers

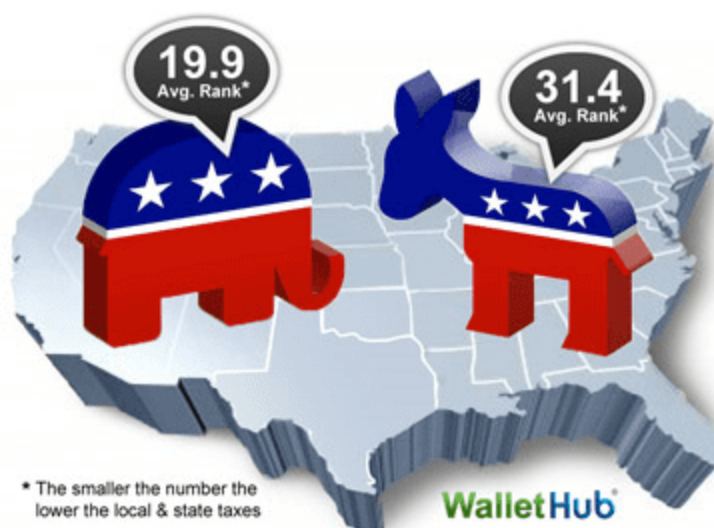


See Web Link for interactive map: [\[Redacted\]](#)

Like most people you probably hate paying taxes. The tax burden the average American pays varies tremendously, and depends a lot on where you live, according to a study by financial social media company WalletHub. The study ranked all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

An American making the median national income, driving an average car and living in the median-priced home could end up paying either 60 percent less or almost 40 percent more than the national average, based only on the state one calls home. The study's analysts created a profile of *the "average American"* based on median income (\$65,596), median home price (\$174,600) and other data, and then calculated how much the person would spend on taxes living in every state. It drew on data from several sources, including the Census Bureau, the Internal Revenue Service, the Tax Foundation, and even the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (for taxes paid on liquor).

## Red States Impose Lower Taxes Than Blue States



Wyoming had the lowest taxes for residents. That state's taxpayers shell out 66 percent less than the national median. Alaska came in closely behind, and Nevada rounded out the top three. On the other hand, New York ranked dead last — its residents pay 39 percent above the national average. California is right behind at 37 percent above the average, followed by Nebraska's 36 percent. The study accounts for everything from income taxes to alcohol and vehicle taxes, so individual results may vary. Higher taxes can also mean more social services and benefits for residents, so their impact on metrics like quality of life and social mobility may make the expense worth it. Then consider a home on the range that fits your needs, and keep as far away from New York as possible.

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Last week the government released a report that suggests that American schools are still racist. Public school students of color get more punishment and less access to veteran teachers than their white peers, according to surveys released Friday by the U.S. Education Department that include data from every U.S. school district. Black students are suspended or expelled at triple the rate of their white peers, according to the **U.S. Education Department's 2011-2012 Civil Rights Data Collection**, a survey conducted every two years. Five percent of white students were suspended annually,

compared with 16 percent of black students, according to the report. Black girls were suspended at a rate of 12 percent -- far greater than girls of other ethnicities and most categories of boys. So how does this happen in today's supposing post-racial society? And why?

Web Link: 

One reason may be is that minority students have less access to experienced teachers. Most minority students and English language learners are stuck in schools with the most new teachers. Seven percent of black students attend schools where as many as 20 percent of teachers fail to meet license and certification requirements. And one in four school districts pay teachers in less-diverse high schools \$5,000 more than teachers in schools with higher black and Latino student enrollment. Such discrimination lowers academic performance for minority students and puts them at greater risk of dropping out of school, according to previous research. The new research also shows the shortcomings of decades of legal and political moves to ensure equal rights to education. The Supreme Court's landmark 1954 **Brown v. Board of Education** ruling banned school segregation and affirmed the right to quality education for all children. The **1964 Civil Rights Act** guaranteed equal access to education.

*"This data collection shines a clear, unbiased light on places that are delivering on the promise of an equal education for every child and places where the largest gaps remain,"* U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said in a statement. *"In all, it is clear that the United States has a great distance to go to meet our goal of providing opportunities for every student to succeed."* Duncan and Attorney General Eric Holder plan to announce the survey results on Friday. The information, part of an ongoing survey by the **Education Department's Office of Civil Rights**, highlights longstanding inequities in how schools leave minority students and students with disabilities at a disadvantage. For the first time since 2000, the new version of the survey includes results from all 16,500 American school districts, representing 49 million students. *"Unfortunately, too many children don't have equitable access to experienced and fully licensed teachers, as has again been proven by the data in this report,"* said Dennis Van Roekel, president of the National Education Association, the nation's largest teachers union. *"This is a problem that can and must be addressed."*

Daria Hall, K-12 policy director at the **Education Trust**, an advocacy group, also called for action. *"The report shines a new light on something that research and experience have long told us -- that students of color get less than their fair share of access to the in-school factors that matter for achievement,"* she said. *"Students of color get less access to high level courses. Black students in particular get less instructional time because they're far more likely to receive out of school suspensions or expulsions. And students of color get less access to teachers who've had at least a year on the job and who have at least basic certification. Of course, it's not enough to just shine a light on the problem. We have to fix it."* Though 16 percent of America's public school students are black, they represent 27 percent of students referred by schools to law enforcement, and 31 percent of students arrested for an offense committed in school, according to the survey.

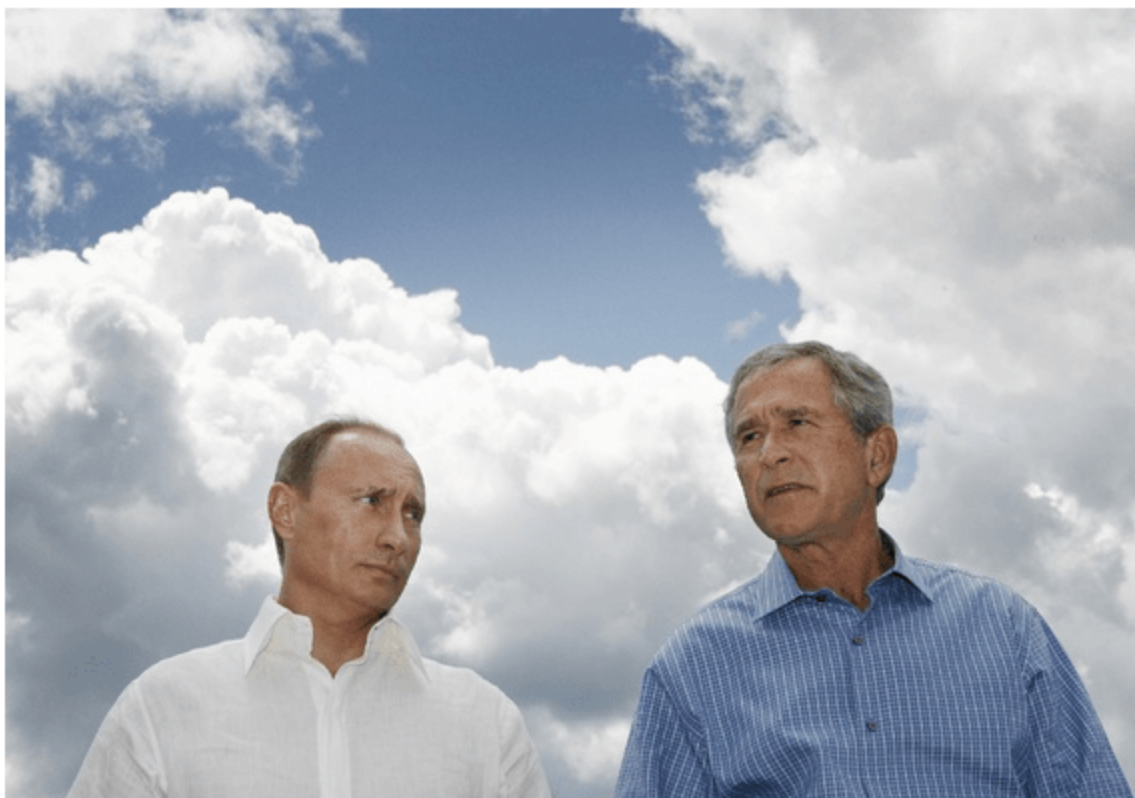
Students with disabilities make up one-fourth of students referred to law enforcement or arrested, although they represent 13 percent of the student population. Students with disabilities are twice more likely to be suspended out of school than peers, with 13 percent of such students being sent home for misbehaving. One of four boy students of color who have disabilities and one in five girl students of color who have disabilities were suspended. Students of color include all non-white ethnic groups

except Latino and Asian-American. These numbers will likely add pressure to dismantle the so-called school-to-prison pipeline, which feeds troubled students into the justice system. The push to ease discipline sometimes causes tension with schools' efforts to beef up security after school mass shootings, like the one in Newtown, Conn. Last week, a set of reports 26 academics pointed to a few local studies that found that disparate discipline outcomes did not happen as a result of certain ethnic groups acting out more than others.

According to the new data, disparities begin as early as preschool. Black students make up 18 percent of preschool enrollment, but they comprise 48 percent of preschool students receiving more than one suspension out of school. White students, representing 43 percent of preschool students, only receive 26 percent of out-of-school suspensions more than once. Randi Weingarten, who heads the **American Federation of Teachers** union, noted that despite a recent **Education Department Equity and Excellence Commission** report calling for measures to remedy discrimination, little has been done. *"It is shameful that not a single recommendation has been implemented,"* Weingarten said. *"We don't need more data to tell us we need action."*

When 81% of Asian Americans and 71% of whites have access to a full range of math and science courses in high schools, only 67% of Latinos, 57% of African Americans and less than 50% of Native Americans and Alaskan high school students think about the consequences of these students without access to the same level of basic science and math education. Simply put the consequences are devastating for us as a country in addition to the consequences for each of the kids who are in those schools, as we are not preparing our youth to be able to be productive full members of our society because we are not preparing all of our youth on a equal basis for college and career readiness. Consider the fact that only 50% of our public high schools offer calculus. I said offer..... not take.... Public education in the United States is an international embarrassment/eyesore. And the fact that it is not the number top priority in the country after food security and humane housing is not something that should not be tolerated. Without equal education we are insuring a permanent under-educated and under-class generation of Americans with fewer skills to move up the social and economic ladder.

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I read an interesting article this week in **The Atlantic Magazine** by Peter Beinart – **Vladimir Putin, Russian Neocon** – that suggest Russia's President Vladimir Putin resembles the American hawks who hate him most as his behavior and approach to foreign policy, Vladimir Putin has a lot in common with those very American hawks (or "neocons" in popular parlance) who revile him most.

## 1. Putin is obsessed with the threat of appeasement

From Irving Kristol's ***"The Politics of Appeasement"*** (Wall Street Journal, 1975) to Norman Podhoretz's ***"Appeasement by Any Other Name"*** (Commentary, 1983) to William Kristol and Robert Kagan's ***"The Appeasement Gamble"*** (Weekly Standard, 2000) to Charles Krauthammer's ***"The Wages of Appeasement"*** (Washington Post, 2011), hawks have attributed virtually every foreign-policy crisis of the last 40 years to America's supposed habit of knuckling under to our foes. In 1975, Irving Kristol called America's withdrawal from South Vietnam an act of "appeasement" that *"to those of us who have even the vaguest memories of the 1930s ... is all too chillingly reminiscent."* A generation later, his son, William Kristol, chalked up the September 11 attacks to *"two decades of American weakness in the face of terror."* Last week, in The New York Times, John McCain explained Putin's move on Crimea as the result of a global *"perception that the United States is weak."* To Kristol, McCain, and their ilk, the United States is a nation perennially bullied by adversaries who are tougher, nastier, and more resolute than we are.

The good news is that, eventually, when the humiliation becomes too much to bear, a Reaganesque or Churchillian leader raises America up off its knees. When George W. Bush attacked Iraq, Kristol declared that the *"era of American weakness and doubt in response to terrorism is over,"* while Max Boot announced ***"The End of Appeasement."*** This week, in The Washington Post, former Bush speechwriter Michael Gerson said he hoped that for Americans, Putin's actions in Crimea would mean *"the end of illusions."* Even as they denounce Putin's actions, American hawks can barely restrain their envy at his imperialistic machismo.

It's a phrase that could easily have been uttered by Putin himself. In his view, it's Russia that has been perennially bullied by tougher and nastier countries—in particular, America and its NATO allies.

*"They have lied to us many times, made decisions behind our backs, placed us before an accomplished fact,"* he explained in a speech announcing Russia's incorporation of Crimea. *"They are constantly trying to sweep us into a corner."* But now, finally, the era of appeasement is over. *"Russia found itself in a position it could not retreat from,"* Putin said. *"If you compress the spring all the way to its limit, it will snap back hard."*

For American hawks, appeasement is not merely bad foreign policy. It represents a crisis of values — an aversion to those martial, manly virtues that make nations strong and give life meaning. In his 1977 essay, ***"The Culture of Appeasement,"*** Podhoretz argued that *"one of the interesting similarities"* between Jimmy Carter's America and Neville Chamberlain's Britain *"was the prominence of homosexuals in the literary worlds"* of both eras. Under their influence, Podhoretz suggested, *"words such as soldier and fighter, which had previously carried a positive charge, now became so distasteful."* In the 1990s, David Brooks, then at The Weekly Standard, similarly warned that *"we have become a nation obsessed with risk avoidance and safety. We allow soft sentimentalism to replace demanding moral principles."* In response, Brooks, Kagan, Kristol, and McCain championed what they called *"national greatness conservatism."* Invoking Theodore Roosevelt's famous 1899 speech, ***"The Strenuous Life,"*** Brooks called for making American foreign policy *"a more demanding and a more heroic enterprise."*

Today, hawks still link appeasement and effeminacy. Last month, for instance, after comparing the *"bare-chested Putin"* to *"Barack Obama, in his increasingly metrosexual golf get-ups,"* National Review's Victor Davis Hanson suggested that Putin's aggression might finally rouse Americans to peer *"into ourselves—we the hollow men, the stuffed men of dry voices and whispers"* and get tough.

For Putin, too, overcoming appeasement requires overcoming the soft, unmanly culture that made Russia unwilling to fight. The fall of the Soviet Union, he argued last year, *"was a devastating blow to our nation's cultural and spiritual codes"* that led to *"primitive borrowing and attempts to civilize Russia from abroad."* That borrowing was not only economic but *"cultural, religious and even sexual."* And now, to reject foreign domination, Russia must also reject Western *"policies that equate large families with same-sex partnerships, belief in God with the belief in Satan."*

In the best Teddy Roosevelt tradition, Putin has made his own physical vigor a metaphor for the new vigor of Russian foreign policy. And even as they denounce Putin's actions, hawks like Hanson can barely restrain their envy at his imperialistic machismo. *"People are looking at Putin as one who wrestles bears and drills for oil,"* While Sarah Palin told **Fox News**. *"They look at our president as one who wears mom jeans."*

## **2. Putin is principled—so long as those principles enhance national power**

In recent days, Putin has talked a lot about *"democracy," "freedom," "self-determination"* and *"international law."* And conveniently for him, he insists that Russia's annexation of Crimea scrupulously adheres to those principles while America's behavior in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya violated them brazenly. Sound familiar? In the United States, both hawks and doves like to claim that they're promoting cherished principles like democracy and freedom. The difference is that doves are more willing to acknowledge that these principles can undermine American interests. For

most hawks, by contrast, the fight for democratic ideals must serve American power. If it doesn't, then what's being spread isn't really democracy at all.

That's long been true in Latin America, where Cold War hawks justified coups against democratically elected presidents like Guatemala's Jacobo Árbenz and Chile's Salvador Allende on the grounds that no pro-Soviet leader could truly enjoy democratic legitimacy. More recently, when opponents of Venezuela's democratically elected (albeit authoritarian) leader Hugo Chávez tried to oust him in a 2002 coup, the Bush administration blamed Chávez, not the plotters. In 2009, hawks generally applauded the coup that drove Honduras' democratically elected, pro-Chávez president from power.

In recent years, this willingness to bend universal principles to serve American power has been even clearer in the Middle East. From 2003 to 2005, Bush and his hawkish supporters waxed enthusiastic about the possibility that Saddam Hussein's overthrow might usher in democratic, pro-Western governments across the Arab world. But when Palestinians voted for Hamas in 2006, the Bush administration encouraged activists from Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah Party to overthrow the new Hamas government by force. Last year, when Egypt's military ousted Mohammed Morsi, the first democratically elected Egyptian leader in decades, many (though not all) hawks applauded the move. For Putin, an anti-Russian government in Kiev is illegitimate regardless of how it takes power. For many American hawks, the same is now true for a pro-Chávez government in Latin America or an Islamist government in the Middle East.

### **3. Putin doesn't understand economic power**

Last week, Bill Clinton shrewdly noted that Putin is *"deeply patriotic in terms of Russia, but he sees it more in terms of the greatness of the state and the country than what happens to ordinary Russians."* The Russian president's maneuvers abroad have everything to do with the geopolitical glory of Russia and almost nothing to do with the economic welfare of Russians. In the wake of his takeover of Crimea, Standard & Poor's is threatening to downgrade Russian bonds and Russia's own deputy economy minister is warning of a growing economic *"crisis."* Yet Putin has never looked happier.

Look closely at the way hawks write about American foreign policy, and you see something similar. In the early 1990s, Clinton argued that although America had won the Cold War, ordinary Americans, in their daily lives, were losing. The answer, he declared in 1994, was to *"put our economic competitiveness at the heart of our foreign policy."* For large stretches during his presidency, Clinton's most influential foreign-policy advisor was his treasury secretary.

Seeing economics as separate from foreign policy is what Clinton decried in the 1990s, and what makes Putin's strategy weak today. For Clinton's hawkish critics, this emphasis on geo-economics rather than geopolitics represented, in Charles Krauthammer's words, a *"holiday from history."* In 2000, William Kristol and Robert Kagan published *Present Dangers*, an edited volume that outlined the foreign policy they hoped Clinton's successor would pursue. Of the 15 essays, not one dealt primarily with international economics.

This indifference to the economic aspects of statecraft was a defining feature of the Bush administration, where treasury secretaries played a marginal foreign-policy role, and where Lawrence Lindsey, Bush's first head of the National Economic Council, was publicly reprimanded for suggesting

that the Iraq War might cost \$200 billion. (A recent study estimates that, along with the war in Afghanistan, it will cost \$4 to \$6 trillion.) John McCain, the Senate's preeminent hawk, has publicly admitted, "*I know a lot less about economics than I do about military and foreign policy issues.*"

Seeing "*economics*" as separate from "*foreign policy issues*" is precisely what Clinton decried in the 1990s, and it's the weakness in Putin's strategy today. But it's a weakness that many American hawks share. For decades now, Kristol and McCain have insisted that America relentlessly expand its global military footprint and relentlessly boost its defense budget. You rarely see either make a serious effort to explain how this should be paid for. Nor do they acknowledge that when a nation's overseas obligations exceed its domestic resources, it's a sign of weakness, not strength.

None of this is to suggest that American and Russian actions are morally equivalent. For all its errors and crimes, American foreign policy is restrained by our democratic political system in a way Russia's is not. In Europe, at least, the United States enjoys more legitimacy than Russia does, in part because via institutions like NATO we have given smaller nations a voice over our decision-making that Moscow has not. And to some degree, these systems of domestic and international restraint have helped the United States avoid the "*imperial overstretch*" that brought down Putin's beloved U.S.S.R. And the more influence hawks wield over American foreign policy, the more similar to Putin's they will be, someone clouded by ideology, nostalgic for the past, unable to show weakness and completely full of themselves.

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After middle age, people seem to lose hair and vision, while struggling to not gain weight and lose memory and forget stamina unless you are a gym rat, runner or yoga enthusiast. As I have grown older I am experiencing them all, including creaking and pains in places that I never knew existed. So when I read Gretchen Reynolds article this week in the **New York Times** – ***Exercising for Healthier Eyes*** – that there are exercises that can help eyesight. Age-related vision loss is common and devastating. But new research suggests that physical activity might protect our eyes as we age. There have been suggestions that exercise might reduce the risk of macular degeneration, which occurs when

neurons in the central part of the retina deteriorate. The disease robs millions of older Americans of clear vision. A 2009 study of more than 40,000 middle-aged distance runners, for instance, found that those covering the most miles had the least likelihood of developing the disease. But the study did not compare runners to non-runners, limiting its usefulness. It also did not try to explain how exercise might affect the incidence of an eye disease.

So, more researchers at Emory University in Atlanta and the Atlanta Veterans Administration Medical Center in Decatur, Ga., took up that question for a study published last month in *The Journal of Neuroscience*. Their interest was motivated in part by animal research at the V.A. medical center. That work had determined that exercise increases the levels of substances known as growth factors in the animals' bloodstream and brains. These growth factors, especially ones called brain-derived neurotrophic factor, or **BDNF**, are known to contribute to the health and well-being of neurons and consequently, it is thought, to improvements in brain health and cognition after regular exercise. But the brain is not the only body part to contain neurons, as the researchers behind the new study knew. The retina does as well, and the researchers wondered whether exercise might raise levels of **BDNF** there, too, potentially affecting retinal health and vision.

To test that possibility, the researchers gathered adult, healthy lab mice. Half of these were allowed to remain sedentary throughout the day, while the other animals began running on little treadmills at a gentle rodent pace for about an hour a day. After two weeks, half of the mice in each group were exposed to a searingly bright light for four hours. The other animals stayed in dimly lit cages. This light exposure is a widely used and accepted means of inducing retinal degeneration in animals. It doesn't precisely mimic the slowly progressing disease in humans, obviously. But it causes a comparable if time-compressed loss of retinal neurons. The mice then returned to their former routine — running or not exercising — for another two weeks, after which the scientists measured the number of neurons in each animal's eyes. The unexercised mice exposed to the bright light were experiencing, by then, severe retinal degeneration. Almost 75 percent of the neurons in their retinas that detect light had died. The animals' vision was failing. But the mice that had exercised before being exposed to the light retained about twice as many functioning retinal neurons as the sedentary animals; in addition, those cells were more responsive to normal light than the surviving retinal neurons in the unexercised mice. Exercise, it seems, had armored the runners' retinas.

Separately, the researchers had other mice run or sit around for two weeks, and then measured levels of **BDNF** in their eyes and bloodstreams. The runners had far more. Tellingly, when the scientists injected still other mice with a chemical that blocks the uptake of the growth factor before allowing them to run and exposing them to the bright light, their eyes deteriorated as badly as among sedentary rodents. When the mice could not process **BDNF**, exercise did not safeguard their eyes. Taken together, these experiments strongly suggest that "*exercise protects vision, at least in mice, by increasing **BDNF** in the retina*," said Jeffrey Boatright, an associate professor of ophthalmology at Emory University School of Medicine and a co-author of the study. But obviously, mice are not people, so whether exercise can prevent or ameliorate macular degeneration in human eyes is "impossible to know, based on the data we have now," said Machele Pardue, a research career scientist at the Atlanta Veterans Administration Medical Center, who is the senior author of the study. She and her colleagues are trying to find ways to determine the impact of exercise on human eyes. But such experiments will take years to return results.

For now, she and Dr. Boatright said, people who are concerned about their vision, and especially those with a family history of retinal degeneration, might want to discuss an exercise program with their doctor. "*As potential treatments go*," she said, "*it's cheap, easy and safe.*" Dr. Boatright agreed,

adding that eye researchers have been trying for some time to find a way to externally deliver growth factors or drugs to aging eyes, but the available methods typically involve injections into the retina, a process that is complicated, chancy, pricey, and fundamentally objectionable. Now, though, *“it’s beginning to look like we may have this other method”* — exercise — *“that costs almost nothing and results in you making your own growth factors, which is so much safer and more pleasant than having a needle stuck into your eyeball,”* he said, getting no disagreement from me. My personal theory is that exercising stimulates blood flow and increasing blood flow strengthens aging eyes. With this said and if you are starting to feel old like me, I look forward to seeing you on the jogging path too.

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#### obama brussels speech

Foreign policy today is more complicated than ever, while most Americans, especially our 24/7 media pundits would like to interpret it in black or white to the satisfaction of their like-minded audiences whose attention span is that of a nano-second. On top of this, Americans expect their President to be on top of every incident or crisis both here and abroad, from the mudslide in the state of Washington to Russian tanks on the border of Ukraine. Much like boxing champions years ago, our Presidents are expected to take on all comers whether it be Vladimir Putin, Bashar al-Assad, Hassan Rouhani, General Secretary of China Xi Jinping and Edward Snowden, as well as our allies who often have their own hidden agendas and the President critics such as John McCain, Lindsey Graham, Ted Cruz and Dick Cheney, who oppose everything position that the he takes. I say all of this because after reading Michael Cohen’s article – ***Obama’s not-another-cold-war vision: don’t hate the players – play the game*** – this week in **The Guardian** – foreign policy today requires a much more nuanced approach than the days of the Cold War with opposing ideologies and defined territories of influence, which the President is playing deftly today.

Instead of going full throttle against Putin, as advocated by neocons in the U.S., the President instituted sanctions that will slowly ratchet up pressure the around the Russian President, while not fanning the flames for a new Cold War. President Obama Brussels speech on March 25, 2014: *“That’s why Russia’s violation of international law ... must be met with condemnation,” Obama said in Brussels on Wednesday. ‘Not because we’re trying to keep Russia down, but because the principles that have meant so much to Europe and the world must be lifted up.’* His measured approach with Iran, has enabled us to avoid another unnecessary war of choice. His willingness to move the “red line” and not over-throw al-Assad in Syria, which would leave the country open to takeover by much more radical elements, is probably one of the smartest foreign policy decisions that he has made. Yes, the world is still a mess, but it would be a mess no matter who was in office. And the good news is that he hasn’t made it worse, which one can’t say about his predecessor.

From the day Barack Obama took office, his approach to American foreign policy has vacillated between a seemingly irreconcilable set of impulses. There’s been the sentimentalist agitating for reductions in nuclear weapons, calling for a more modest approach – and the commander-in-chief ramping up the US drone war, surging in Afghanistan, going far beyond his mandate to affect regime change in Libya. And yes there was the lawyer and internationalist drawing a *red line* on Syria’s use of chemical weapons – and the hard-headed realist who, to date, has assiduously avoided any policy that would risk miring the US in that country’s bloody civil war. But this week in Brussels, as Obama spoke about the proper response to Russia’s seizure of Crimea, those contending instincts were once again on stark display.

Michael Cohen: Yet rarely has Obama so effectively navigated the middle ground between them – or quite so lovingly embraced Europe as he cast a distinctly icy glare at Vladimir Putin. In the process, the American president offered perhaps the clearest sense of his own vision on international relations: one that upholds the international system for its role in creating a world of greater peace and security – and explaining why, in an era of retrenchment, that system matters more than ever. Early in his remarks, Obama expressed a sentiment too rare for US leaders – and often overwhelmed by warnings about the dangerous world out there:

Young people in the audience today ... were born in a place and a time where there is less conflict, more prosperity and more freedom than any time in human history. But that's not because man's darkest impulses have vanished. In Obama's formulation, peace is a product of universalist ideals, yes. But it is sustained and reinforced by an international system of laws and norms. *"Our enduring strength,"* he said, *"is also reflected in our respect for an international system that protects the rights of both nations and people – a United Nations and a Universal Declaration of Human Rights; international laws, and the means to enforce them."* This is why Moscow's actions in Crimea, declared illegal by the UN this afternoon as the Senate passed more sanctions, are so concerning – not because the crisis point to a revanchist Russia, but because they threaten to undermine the international system that has brought such lasting benefits.

So he didn't demonize Putin. Or make the crisis in Ukraine all about the security of the United States. He distinctly said *"this is not another cold war"*. Rather, Obama argued that what must be condemned is Russia's *"violation of international law"*. He said that those opposing Russia's actions are not united in their hostility toward Moscow but rather *"united in defense of ... ideals"* – as in, countries that should be able to choose their own leaders, their own allies and their own system of government without direct intervention by their neighbors. And he made clear that the issues raised by Russia's actions must be *"addressed through constitutional means and international laws"*, not brute force.

Obama is great at toeing the line, but he's pretty good at presidential-level trolling, too. On Tuesday, he called Moscow a *"regional power"* rather than a great power. A day later: *"Russia leads no bloc of nations"* and has *"no global ideology"*. The implication was clear: Russia is not just isolated and alone – Putin and Co are standing outside the tent named *"the international system"*. In short, the crisis in Crimea is about the game, not the player.

In fact, Obama pointedly argued that the US has few actual strategic interests in Ukraine: If we defined our interests narrowly, if we applied a cold-hearted calculus, we might decide to look the other way. Our economy is not deeply integrated with Ukraine's. Our people and our homeland face no direct threat from the invasion of Crimea. Our own borders are not threatened by Russia's annexation. But that kind of casual indifference would ignore the lessons that are written in the cemeteries of this continent.

Here again was idealistic Obama, using the sort of rhetoric that one could imagine coming out of the mouth of George W Bush – namely, the idea that our interests in Ukraine are not of a transactional nature, but rather reflect the need to stand firm against oppression wherever it crops up. Obama's message was much broader than that, of course, accepting the idea that *"every society must chart its own course"*. What is not negotiable, however, is the concept that the world can go back to an era when *"might somehow makes right"*.

In Obama's telling, the outrage over Ukraine isn't so much that Putin spit in the punch bowl – it's that he ruined the party. At a moment when Russia is challenging the foundations of that system – and Europe and the US are increasingly looking inward – it's that much more important to remind both Americans and Europeans that the instrumentals of global peace and security, which have a lot more to do about laws, norms and institution than they do bullets, bombs and ultimatums, are worth defending.

Just as he said *"there are no easy answers"* to the Ukraine crisis, navigating the waters of the Ukraine crisis create great personal challenges for Obama. He is president today, in large measure, because he opposed the war in Iraq and because he reflected a widely held view that the US must begin to look inward after seven long years of war. For him to argue today that the US has no interest in Ukraine and should not get involved would be consistent with his own realist impulses, but also the desires of the American people.

But anti-war candidates have far different considerations once they assume office. The pressure to respond to every crisis – to assert US *"leadership"* in practically every corner of the world and preserve *"credibility"* – is often born more out of political than strategic necessity. Still, the pressures are real, and they come not only from domestic audiences but also international ones. For five years, President Obama has often struggled in finding the right mix between leading from behind and leaning in. In calling for the US and Europe to uphold the instrumentals of global peace and security, while eschewing provocative steps or inflammatory rhetoric, Obama came pretty close to finding that foreign policy sweet spot. Not bad from a community organizer from Chicago who picks his battles so that he can win the war. And like *"Clyde"* Walt Frazier, he does it with cool and ease. And with so much ease, that most people don't know that they have checkmated until Elvis has left the building.

## THIS WEEK'S QUOTES

***"We used to root for the Indians against the cavalry, because we didn't think it was fair in the history books that when the cavalry won it was a great victory, and when the Indians won it was a massacre."***

Dick Gregory

***"History will be kind to me for I intend to write it."***

Winston Churchill

**And as my father use to say, "*history is always rewritten by the winners.*" Or people drunk on their own ego**

**Greg Brown**

## **BEST VIDEO OF THE WEEK**

***Truth and Advertising no longer exist see the amazing video that demonstrates what can be done with a photo! And then understand that this is not the exception.....***

**Web site:** <http://youtu.be/IUF2zbgBXwE>

## **HILARIOUS Ad**

**Aussie Builders surprise public with loud empowering statements**

**Web Site:** <http://youtu.be/0gjsoSY18kg>

**A new Snickers ad** has put a seemingly refreshing twist on an old stereotype: catcalling construction workers, who in this case yell out empowering statements to startled female passersby, like, *"You want to hear a dirty word? Gender bias!"* But the campaign, released in Australia and viewable on **YouTube**, may actually be doing more harm than good, according to a rising tide of social media critics. That's because the ad's confusing premise — that the men simply aren't themselves when they're hungry — seems to cement the idea that, normally, male workers are offensive cretins.

*"The moral of the new Snickers ad is that we should keep men in a state of constant hunger,"* one tweet suggests. And while some tout it for being *"great"* and *"surprisingly funny,"* more call it out for being *"puzzling," "confusing,"* and *"offensive,"* with one man noting, *"I don't really understand this Snickers ad... Eat Snickers and go back to being a lout?"*

The ad was filmed at a construction site, hidden-camera style, with actors posing as builders calling out to actual strangers on the street. *"There were a few nervous moments while we were filming the reactions but the public took the experiment in the spirit in which it was intended — to charm and amuse them,"* Snickers executive Brad Cole tells **Adweek**. It's a follow-up to the last *"You're not you when you're hungry"* Snickers campaign, which launched during the 2010 Super Bowl with the now-

legendary Betty White ad. But that time around, it was pretty clear that eating a Snickers bar was supposed to bring positive results. This ad, oddly enough, seems to show the opposite.

Besides that main confusion, there's the thorny issue of sexism — both toward men, who can apparently only be respectful when they are *"not themselves,"* as well as toward women, who are supposed to be flattered and amused by men yelling at them aggressively, just because the message has changed. And while women can point to an endless history of offensive ads, it's not the first time men have been targets, either. Last year, Samsung's *"evolutionary husband"* advertisement, which featured a husband as a useless Neanderthal, caused an outcry among men across the Internet. And recently, a study showed that women aren't the only ones hurt by advertising. It pointed to portrayed ideas of hypermasculinity including toughness as emotional control and calloused attitudes toward women as serving to normalize such behaviors, often harming the men, too.

But the Snickers ad is an equal-opportunity offender. As Jezebel points out, *"Unfortunately, these women look terrified to have people they don't know threateningly yelling these messages at them, even if they are refreshing for once."* Junkee concurs: *"The ad also exhibits a fundamental misunderstanding of the problem it seems to be drawing attention to. If you happen to be a woman walking down a street, and a tradesman happens to yell at you, it doesn't matter what he's yelling: it's going to be intimidating."*

On **YouTube**, where the ad has been viewed half a million times since Tuesday, the opinions of nearly 1,500 commenters were divided; some found it *"brilliant,"* others *"sexist,"* and still others, confusing. *"Can't tell if this commercial is sexist or not..."* one woman wrote.

**Facebook's Snickers page**, meanwhile, was blowing up with bad reviews, several even calling for a boycott. *"Your 'gender equality' advert was so good... until you ended it telling men to be their normal misogynistic, sexist selves. I'll be boycotting Snickers from now on, since you represent this attitude as normal and manly,"* was among the pans. Another woman posts, *"Your latest ad is dreadful. The reason I find it so very offensive is because what was motivational and raised optimism in me, turned out to be a joke at my expense. Thank you crappy corporation for reminding me that it is not empowering to think of men respecting women, that rather it is a sign of being hungry and not yourself."*

## THIS WEEK'S MUSIC



**WAR** (originally called *Eric Burdon and War*) is an American funk band from California, known for the hit songs "*Low Rider*", "*Spill the Wine*", "*Summer*", "*Why Can't We Be Friends?*", "*The Cisco Kid*", and "*The World Is a Ghetto*". Formed in 1969, War was a musical crossover band which fused elements of rock, funk, jazz, Latin, rhythm and blues, and reggae. The band also transcended racial and cultural barriers with a multi-ethnic line-up. **War** was also subject to many line-up changes over the course of its formation, leaving member Leroy "*Lonnie*" Jordan as the only original member in the current line-up.

Although War's lyrics are often socio-political in nature, their music usually had a laid-back, California funk vibe. A particular feature of **War's** sound is the use of harmonica and saxophone playing melody lines in unison, sounding like a single instrument, for example in the melody of "*Low Rider*". The music has been sampled and recorded by many singers and groups, ranging from R&B/pop singers such as Janet Jackson to nu metal band Korn and hip hop groups like TLC and A\$AP Mob.

In 1962, Howard E. Scott and Harold Brown formed a group called **The Creators** in Long Beach, California. Within a few years, they had added Charles Miller, Morris "*B. B.*" Dickerson and Lonnie Jordan to the lineup. Lee Oskar and Papa Dee Allen later joined as well. They all shared a love of diverse styles of music, which they had absorbed living in the racially-mixed Los Angeles ghettos. **The Creators** recorded several singles on **Dore Records** while working with Tjay Contrelli, a saxophonist from the band Love. In 1968, **The Creators** became **Nightshift** (named because Brown worked nights at a steel yard) and started performing with Deacon Jones, a football player and singer.

The original **WAR** was conceived by record producer Jerry Goldstein ("*My Boyfriend's Back*", "*Hang on Sloopy*", "*I Want Candy*") and singer Eric Burdon (ex-lead singer of the British band **The Animals**). In 1969, Goldstein saw musicians who would eventually become **War** playing at the **Rag Doll** in North Hollywood, backing Deacon Jones, and he was attracted to the band's sound. Jordan claimed that the band's goal was to spread a message of brotherhood and harmony, using instruments and voices to speak out against racism, hunger, gangs, crimes, and turf *Lowriders*, and promote hope and the spirit of brotherhood. Eric Burdon and War began playing live shows to audiences throughout Southern California before entering into the studio to record their debut album *Eric Burdon Declares "War"*. The album's best known track, "*Spill the Wine*", was a hit and launched the band's career.

Eric Burdon and War toured extensively across Europe and the United States. A reviewer from New Musical Express called War "*the best live band I ever saw*" after their first UK gig in London's Hyde Park. A second Eric Burdon and War album, a two-disc set titled ***The Black-Man's Burdon*** was released in 1970, before Burdon left the band in the middle of its European tour. They finished the tour without him and returned to record their first album as War. War (1971) met with only modest success, but later that year, the band released All Day Music which included the singles "*All Day Music*" and "*Slippin' into Darkness*". The latter single sold over one million copies, and was awarded a gold disc by the R.I.A.A. in June 1972. In 1972 they released *The World Is a Ghetto* which was even more successful. Its second single, "*The Cisco Kid*" shipped gold, and the album attained the number one spot on **Billboard**, and was **Billboard** magazine's ***Album of the Year*** as the best-selling album of 1973.

On 21 April 2008, **Eric Burdon and WAR** reunited for the first time in 37 years to perform a one-time-only concert at the **London Royal Albert Hall**. The reunion was actually only between Eric Burdon and Lonnie Jordan, as the other original surviving members had not been asked to be a part of the reunion. The concert coincided with **Avenue / Rhino Records'** Eric Burdon and War reissues which included Eric Burdon Declares "**War**" and ***The Black-Man's Burdon***, plus compilations ***The Best of Eric Burdon and War and Anthology***. In 2008, Lonnie Jordan's edition of War released their only album so far, a live album / DVD of songs originally from 1969 to 1975: ***Greatest Hits Live***. War were unsuccessfully nominated for 2009 induction into the **Rock and Roll Hall of Fame**. There were rumors that Burdon would join them again in summer 2009, but it did not happen. In 2011, **WAR** played "**Low Rider**" and many other hits at the **Rack n' Roll** in Stamford, Connecticut with Remember September and Westchester **School Of Rock**.

### Current Members

Leroy "Lonnie" Jordan – keyboards, vocals (1969–present)

Sal Rodriguez – drums, percussion, vocals (1990–present)

Marcos Reyes – percussion (1998–present)

Stuart Ziff – guitar, vocals (2002–present)

Francisco "Pancho" Tomaselli – bass, vocals (2003–present)

David Urquidi – saxophone, flute (2011–present)

Stanley Behrens – harmonica (2011–present)

***With this brief bio, I invite you to enjoy the music of the incomparable band WAR.***

Eric Burdon & War – ***Spill The Wine*** -- <http://youtu.be/3ioDMbCKnAg>

War – ***The World Is A Ghetto*** -- <http://youtu.be/ngkWwdJq6-c>

WAR (Lowrider Band) – ***Cisco Kid*** -- <http://youtu.be/QNw7cPuwnoM> and <http://youtu.be/rvYODVTHC2I>

War – ***All Day Music*** -- <http://youtu.be/8MHoUuCOIwY>

War – **Summer** -- <http://youtu.be/-MyH1TcqAhI>

War – **Deliver The Word** -- <http://youtu.be/kFXappvYSlo>

War – **City Country City** -- <http://youtu.be/NiVrD98G750>

War – **Slippin' Into Darkness** -- <http://youtu.be/6L-2IQMDwcA>

War – **Me and Baby Brother** -- <http://youtu.be/Wf5dox-NtVo>

War – **Low Rider** -- <http://youtu.be/OrCrDaKqS9s>

WAR – **Don't Let No One Get You Down** -- <http://youtu.be/MEqhJqudKOY>

War – **Four Cornered Room** -- <http://youtu.be/WFmCCxMp7BE>

Eric Burdon & War – **Paint It Black** -- <http://youtu.be/jTbvJ-bYPh8>

Eric Burdon & War – **Tobacco Road** -- <http://youtu.be/Ig4jQrofnBI>

Eric Burdon & War – **Spirit/Love Is All Around/Train** -- [http://youtu.be/wln\\_zQsynNY](http://youtu.be/wln_zQsynNY)

WAR – **Gypsy Man** -- <http://youtu.be/5pFPqUb3ntE>

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

Sincerely,

**Greg Brown**

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