

Welcome to the June 22nd, 2016 Edition of THE REVENGE OF HUMP DAY!

Last Sunday we celebrated Father's Day at Casa Bolgeo and I had a wonderful day with the family. Alexander the Grape gave me a memorable present in the form of a virus that laid me low. So, while the party was going around me, I was firmly planted in my easy chair. Jason, the Deposed Emperor, brought his grill over and every one brought their steak of choice to the festivities. SHE WHO MUST BE OBEYED and SWMBO Jr. took charge of all the arrangements and the food was wonderful. After dinner, Alexander the Grape and Bubba Bear were wrestling on the living room floor. It was wonderful watch Alex carefully rough housing with Tristan. Cousins need to develop bonds of family to keep use together in the future. Even though I felt like hell, It was a wonderful day and will live in my memory.

I have been trying to complete my LibertyCon work this week. We lost one of the Hucksters in our huckster room and I have been busily trying to find a good replacement. Happily, I got in touch with Shane Grubb of Dicehead Games and he will be taking the two tables that Dena and Matt Brown let go. So, we are sold out in the Huckster Room again. Brandy dropped the hotel work order setup documents on me to check against my setup document. I plan on getting on that one tonight. And to make matters even busier, I am preparing the Huckster Flyer for next year. Thank goodness that Fritz is helping me with the graphic on that one.

On a more serious note, I have been watching all the crazy political shenanigans that have been going on after the Orlando Shooting. I really am having trouble processing some of the liberal knee jerk reactions to ban 'military assault weapons'. The poor people in the plus nightclub were targets of terrorism. It was a hate crime that was motivated by a Fanatical Homophobic Islamic Extremist that political correctness let split through the cracks again. Shouldn't we be spending out time and resources trying to stop these kind of people and one of the best ways we can stop this kind of madness is to harden up the soft targets.

I know a lot of you don't agree with me, but I have been an advocate for many years about protecting our children in schools with armed guards or armed teachers. When I think about this I smile because I was always taught to be respectful of teachers because we just assumed that all of the female teachers carried a 38 snubnose revolver in their purses. Honest, that is what my father told me once. But I never believed it about the nuns who taught me. The never needed a gun, they carried a 12" ruler and trust me those things hurt like hell. (Yes children, even in the worst of times I try to find some humor to keep me going.)

So, on that "Historical Note", why don't y'all sit back and relax because here's the best in gossip, jokes and science for your reading pleasure!

Uncle Timmy

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THE LAST MEETING BEFORE LIBERTYCON WILL TAKE PLACE ON SUNDAY, JUNE 26 @ 2:00 PM @ CASA SPRAKER

From: "Brandy Spraker" Brandy@LibertyCon.org

MEETING TIME CHANGE!!! The last meeting before LibertyCon will take place on Sunday, June 26 at 2:00 pm at Casa Spraker. We will be going over tons of last minute details, so it will NOT be a short meeting. On the plus side, we will have plenty to eat as Vonn is going to have us sample many of the goodies that she is preparing for the consuite! See you Sunday!

Interested in volunteering? Please fill out the form on LibertyCon.org. We would love to your help. Also, if you are interested in attending the meeting and do not know how to get to Casa Spraker, please email Brandy at brandy@libertycon.org. let me know and I will send you directions.

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'STAR TREK' ACTOR ANTON YELCHIN DEAD IN FREAK ACCIDENT

From: "Tim Bolgeo" tbolgeo@comast.net

FoxNews.com, Published June 19, 2016

<http://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/2016/06/19/star-trek-actor-anton-yelchin-dead-in-freak-accident.html?intcmp=hpff>

Anton Yelchin, best known for playing Chekov in the recent "Star Trek" movies, was found dead early Sunday morning after apparently being pinned between his car and a brick mailbox on his property, TMZ reported. He was 27.



Yelchin's publicist, Jennifer Allen confirmed the actor's death.

He was found around 1 a.m. by friends who had been alarmed when Yelchin did not show up for a rehearsal, TMZ reported. The car's engine was running and the car was in neutral, law enforcement sources told TMZ. Yelchin's driveway was on a steep incline.

Officials do not suspect foul play, TMZ reported.

Yelchin began acting as a child, taking small roles in independent films and various television shows, such as "ER," "The Practice," and "Curb Your Enthusiasm." His breakout big-screen role came opposite Anthony Hopkins in 2001's "Hearts in Atlantis."

He transitioned into teenage roles in films such as the crime thriller "Alpha Dog" and the teen comedy "Charlie Bartlett." He also played a young Kyle Reese in 2009's "Terminator Salvation."

Yelchin, an only child, was born in Russia. His parents were professional figure skaters who moved the family to the United States when Yelchin was a baby. He briefly flirted with skating lessons, too, before discovering that he wasn't very skilled on the ice. That led him to acting class.

"I loved the improvisation part of it the most, because it was a lot like just playing around with stuff. There was something about it that I just felt completely comfortable doing and

happy doing," Yelchin told The Associated Press in 2011 while promoting the romantic drama "Like Crazy." He starred opposite Felicity Jones.

"(My father) still wanted me to apply to college and stuff, and I did," Yelchin said. "But this is what I wanted."

His biggest role to date has been in the rebooted "Star Trek" films as the heavily accented navigator Chekov, for which he was able to draw on his Russian roots. The third film in the series, "Star Trek Beyond," comes out in July.

"What's great about him is he can do anything. He's a chameleon. He can do bigger movies or smaller, more intimate ones," "Like Crazy" director Drake Doremus told the AP in 2011. "There are a lot of people who can't, who can only do one or the other. ... That's what blows my mind."

Yelchin transitioned between the big sci-fi franchise and voicing a part for "The Smurfs." He also appeared in more eccentric and artier fare, like Jim Jarmusch's vampire film "Only Lovers Left Alive" and Jeremy Saulnier's horror thriller "Green Room," a cult favorite that came out earlier this year.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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THE LAWSUIT AGAINST A STAR TREK FAN FILM ISN'T GOING AWAY JUST YET

Katharine Trendacosta, June 16, 2016

<http://io9.gizmodo.com/thelawsuit-against-a-star-trek-fan-film-isnt-going-away-1782116151>



Image: Star Trek, CBS

Even though it sounded like we may be getting close to ending the battle between the fan film Axanar and the studios that own Star Trek, the latest court action hints that it's just starting.

Last month at a Star Trek fan event, J.J. Abrams indicated that they believed that CBS and Paramount's lawsuit against

the fan film Axanar would be settled. At the time, he said that Star Trek Beyond director Justin Lin was "outraged by this as a longtime fan" and that they both realized "this was not an appropriate way to deal with the fans."

Except that the legal proceedings haven't stopped yet. The parties were back in court today, with CBS and Paramount (the plaintiffs) taking center stage. The state of the case is this: Paramount and CBS sued Axanar Productions for copyright infringement in late 2015.

The judge rejected the defendant's motion to dismiss the case, finding that the studios had sufficient cause and provided enough notice to the fan film to proceed. He also dismissed a separate brief, refusing to decide on whether Klingon as a language was copyrightable.

On May 23, 2016, Axanar Productions filed a counterclaim, asking the judge to declare that their film didn't infringe on Paramount and CBS' copyrights. In the counterclaim, Axanar Productions produced Abrams' comments and a statement from Paramount and CBS confirming settlement discussions and work on fan film guidelines.

As a result of that move, CBS and Paramount gave their response to Axanar's counterclaim to the federal court yesterday. Instead of asking for an extension—perhaps as a sign that they thought the settlement negotiations would bear fruit—the studios have acted as though the suit will continue. They admit the statements is about the talks, but say they speak for themselves and maintain that Axanar is not protected by fair use.

So, even though we may have thought this was all coming to a close, the battle of the studios and the fans is not nearly done.

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TEACHABLE MOMENTS

From: "Rich Garber" rsgarber@hotmail.com

After reading the piece by Thomas Sowell, I wanted to pass along a story my friend (whos in his seventies) told me about a conversation between his son and granddaughter.

It seems she had come home from her freshman year talking about all the great things Bernie Sanders was going to do. Such as free college, minimum wage for everyone, etc, etc. Her father replied, "that's socialism". She asked, "what do you mean"? So, as an example, he compared her grades (straight A's) to her friends grades (straight C's) and stated, "Socialism is where they take your grades, averages them with their grades, and gives everyone a B-". Her response was "that's not fair, I work harder than she does". (light bulb moment occurs...).

For his second example he asked if she had read what Bernie's tax plan was in order to pay for all of his promises. No. So he showed her what his current taxes were, then recalculated them using Bernie's plan and compared the difference (in this case \$40,000). Her response again was "that's not fair", where upon her dad reinforced "but that's socialism".

I just love teachable moments...

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News Media lied to you

From: "Patrick Gibbs" PJG@patgibbs.com

Regarding your opening letter to today's issue of Revenge ...

The Jihadist in Orlando murdered 49 people (unless one of the 50+ wounded has died in the hospital in the last few hours) and not 50.

The media lied to everyone by adding the murderer himself to the list of casualties from HIS murderous rampage.

Why would they do that? Because that is what they always do when guns are involved. The gun-control program of the leftists has been using a statistical manipulation of adding suicides and justifiable homicides to actual murders so as to inflate the number of "gun deaths" in the US -- rightfully assuming that lay people will equate the stat with the number of homicides in the US. There are actually about 8-10,000 homicides in the US involving firearms (as I recall the last statistic from 2014). That number has been decreasing in recent years as the number of states with "shall issue" laws on concealed carry permits has risen to an overwhelming majority.

The media has also not bothered to tell you that the Pulse in Orlando was a "gun free" zone under Florida law. The relevant statute made Pulse off limits (for CCW license holders) because it has a bar located in every decent size room and all portions of the establishment that sell liquor for consumption on the premise are "gun free zones."

That is why no one was able to shoot back at the SOB.

If you value your life, you will not enter a commercial establishment that is a gun free zone. It is nothing less than a happy hunting ground for murderers.

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Re: Opening comments on guns in The June 15th, 2016 Edition of THE REVENGE OF HUMP DAY!

From: "Jim Woosley" Jimwoosley@aol.com

Thought for the day

One bereft of arms has no right to life beyond the benevolence of whomever disarmed her.

Do you trust the benevolence of Hillary Clinton?

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Re: Opening comments on guns in The June 15th, 2016 Edition of THE REVENGE OF HUMP DAY!

From: "Frank Brayman" afranklin3@gmail.com

The Orlando massacre is actually only No. 3 for deadly attacks in America. Here are the top 5:

1. Twin Towers 9/11/2001, 2,977 dead.
2. Murrah Federal Building bombing, Oklahoma City, 1995, 168 dead.
3. Orlando, 49 dead (as of right now.)

4. Bath Consolidated School bombing, Bath, Michigan, 1927, 45 dead.
5. UpStairs Lounge firebombing, New Orleans, 1973, 32 dead.

The hijacked airliners were a one-shot that will never work again. No. 2 was committed with an easy-to-make truck bomb concocted from diesel fuel and fertilizer. No. 4 was committed with dynamite. No. 5 was committed with 50 cents worth of gasoline in a wine bottle, and anybody can manage that.

So, no one used a gun in 4 out of the top 5. I've found stories of massacres in China committed with cleavers, knives and ball peen hammers. They killed at least 25 in the published accounts in 2010-12 alone, and who knows how many others in unreported incidents. You don't need a gun to commit murder.

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Re: Opening comments on guns in The June 15th, 2016 Edition of THE REVENGE OF HUMP DAY!

From: "Michael Banks" mynewbook@aol.com

Well said, Tim.

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Re: Opening comments on guns in The June 15th, 2016 Edition of THE REVENGE OF HUMP DAY!

From: "Jack McDevitt" cryptic@gate.net

Hi Tim, There's not much you have to say that I disagree with. But your reasoning on guns is something of a challenge. AK-47's are good for only two things I can think of: hanging on a gun-collector's wall, and killing people. Maybe we should encourage the collector to switch over to shotguns?

Another aspect of this issue: AK-47's are a favorite of gang members across the country. Most police officers, I suspect, would love to see us get rid of them.

JACK, ACTUALLY SEMIAUTOMATIC AK-47'S AND THEIR CLOSE COUSIN, THE SKS, ARE USED QUITE CALLED THE POOR MAN'S DEER RIFLE. WHILE NOT AS GOOD AS A 30-06 BOLT ACTION RIFLE, WHEN FIRST IMPORTED INTO THIS COUNTRY THEY WERE CONSIDERABLY CHEAPER THAN REMINGTON, RUGER, BERNELLI AND THE LIKE. ALSO, FOR THOSE WHO ENJOY MEDIUM RANGE TARGET SHOOTING, THEY HAVE CONSIDERABLY LESS KICK THAN A 30-06 OR A 308. THE AMMO IS ALSO CONSIDERABLY CHEAPER IN THE 7.62X39 FOR THE AK'S AND SKS'S. WITH REGARD TO SHOTGUNS, MOST SEMIAUTOMATIC SHOTGUNS ARE TUBULAR FED AND LIMITED TO 5 OR 6 ROUNDS. BUT, THERE ARE NEW VARIATIONS THAT ARE CLIP FED AND CAN CARRY BETWEEN 10 AND 20 ROUNDS. SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU HAND AROUND GUN PEOPLE, THEY HAVE A TENDENCY TO EDUCATE YOU. ;^) UT

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From: "Mike Waldrip" waldripk@gmail.com

WHAT WAS JESUS

There were 3 good arguments that Jesus was Black:

1. He called everyone brother
2. He liked Gospel
3. He didn't get a fair trial

But then there were 3 equally good arguments that Jesus was Jewish:

1. He went into His Father's business
2. He lived at home until he was 33
3. He was sure his Mother was a virgin and his Mother was sure He was God

But then there were 3 equally good arguments that Jesus was Italian:

1. He talked with His hands
2. He had wine with His meals
3. He used olive oil

But then there were 3 equally good arguments that Jesus was a Californian:

1. He never cut His hair
2. He walked around barefoot all the time
3. He started a new religion

But then there were 3 equally good arguments that Jesus was an American Indian:

1. He was at peace with nature
2. He ate a lot of fish
3. He talked about the Great Spirit

But then there were 3 equally good arguments that Jesus was Irish:

1. He never got married..
2. He was always telling stories.
3. He loved green pastures.

But the most compelling evidence of all - 3 proofs that Jesus was a woman:

1. He fed a crowd at a moment's notice when there was virtually no food
2. He kept trying to get a message across to a bunch of men who just didn't get it
3. And even when He was dead, He had to get up because there was still work to do

Can I get an AMEN!!

<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>

MAKES SENSE TO ME - I think.

I had amnesia once --- maybe twice.

I went to San Francisco. I found someone's heart. Now what?

Protons have mass? I didn't even know they were Catholic.

All I ask is a chance to prove that money can't make me happy.

If the world were a logical place, men would be the ones who ride horses sidesaddle.

What is a "free" gift? Aren't all gifts free?

They told me I was gullible ...and I believed them.

Teach a child to be polite and courteous in the home and, when he grows up, he'll never be able to merge his car onto the freeway.

Experience is the thing you have left when everything else is gone.

One nice thing about egotists: they don't talk about other people.

My weight is perfect for my height--which varies.

I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not sure.

How can there be self-help "groups"?

If swimming is so good for your figure, how do you explain whales?

Show me a man with both feet firmly on the ground, and I'll show you a man who can't get his pants off.

Is it me – or do buffalo wings taste like chicken?

<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>

THE LORD'S PRAYER?

A friend sent this to me. True or not? -- I don't know, but I got a good chuckle from it.

John Cassis is one of our nation's finest motivational speakers. He told a story recently about a time when he was serving as one of the Chaplains for the Chicago Bears during their glory years of the 80's.

As John tells it, Mike Ditka was about to deliver a locker room pep talk one day. He looked up and saw defensive tackle William "Refrigerator" Perry. How could he not see him? At 338 pounds the Fridge stood out even in a crowd of pro football players. Ditka gestured to the Fridge. "When I get finished," he said, "I'd like you to close with the Lord's Prayer." Then the coach began his talk.

Meanwhile, Jim McMahon, the brash and outspoken quarterback, punched John Cassis. "Look at Perry," McMahon whispered, "he doesn't know the Lord's Prayer."

Sure enough, Perry sat with a look of panic on his face, his head in his hands. He was sweating profusely. "Everybody knows the Lord's Prayer," said Cassis to McMahon in

disbelief. After a few minutes of watching the Refrigerator leaking several gallons of sweat, McMahon nudged Cassis again. "I'll bet you 50 bucks Fridge doesn't know the Lord's Prayer."

As Cassis tells the story, he stops to reflect on the absurdity of it all: "Here we were sitting in chapel and betting 50 bucks on the Lord's Prayer."

When Coach Ditka finished his pep talk, he asked all the men to remove their caps. Then he nodded at Perry and bowed his head. It was quiet for a few moments before the Fridge spoke in a shaky voice, "Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord, my soul to keep..."

Cassis felt the tap on his shoulder. It was Jim McMahon. "Here's the 50 dollars," he whispered. "I had no idea Perry knew the Lord's Prayer."

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A SMALL ZOO

A small zoo in Alabama obtained a very rare species of gorilla. Within a few weeks the gorilla, a female, became very difficult to handle. Upon examination, the veterinarian determined the problem: the gorilla was in heat. To make matters worse, there was no male gorilla available. Thinking about their problem, the Zoo Keeper thought of Bobby Lee Walton, a redneck part-time worker responsible for cleaning the animal cages. Bobby Lee, like most rednecks, had little sense but possessed ample ability to satisfy a female of any species. The Zoo Keeper thought they might have a solution. Bobby Lee was approached with a proposition. Would he be willing to mate with the gorilla for \$500.00? Bobby Lee showed some interest, but said he would have to think the matter over carefully. The following day, he announced that he would accept their offer, but only under five conditions:

"First", Bobby Lee said, "I ain't gonna kiss her on the lips." The Keeper quickly agreed to this condition.

"Second", he said, "She must wear a 'Dale Earnhardt Forever' T-Shirt." The keeper again agreed to this condition in spite of the possible difficulties involved.

Third", he said, "you cain't not never tell no one about this." The keeper again readily agreed to this condition.

Fourth", Bobby Lee said, "I want all the children raised Southern Baptist." Once again it was agreed.

And last," Bobby Lee said, "I'm gonna need another week to come up with the \$500.00

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BULL

I recently spent \$6,500 on a young registered Black Angus bull. I put him out with the herd but he just ate grass and wouldn't even look at a cow. I was beginning to think I had paid more for that bull than he was worth. Anyhow, I had the Vet come and have a look at him.

He said the bull was very healthy, but possibly just a little young, so he gave me some pills to feed him once per day.

The bull started to service the cows within two days, all my cows! He even broke through the fence and bred with all of my neighbor's cows! He's like a machine!

I don't know what was in the pills the Vet gave him but they kind of taste like peppermint.

<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>



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9 Months Later...

Keith decided to go skiing with his buddy, Bob.

So they loaded up Keith's minivan and headed north. After driving for a few hours, they got caught in a terrible blizzard. They pulled into a nearby farm and asked the attractive lady who answered the door if they could spend the night.

'I realize its terrible weather out there and I have this huge house all to myself, but I'm recently widowed,' she explained. 'I'm afraid the neighbors will talk if I let you stay in my house.'

'Don't worry,' Keith said, 'We'll be happy to sleep in the barn, and if the weather breaks, we'll be gone at first light.'

The lady agreed, and the two men found their way to the barn and settled in for the night. Come morning, the weather had cleared, and they got on their way. They enjoyed a great weekend of skiing.

But about nine months later, Keith got an unexpected letter from an attorney. It took him a few minutes to figure it out, but he finally determined that it was from the attorney of that attractive widow he had met on the ski weekend.

He dropped in on his friend Bob and asked, 'Bob, do you remember that good-looking widow from the farm we stayed at on our ski holiday up north about 9 months ago?'

'Yes, I do.' said Bob.

'Did you happen to get up in the middle of the night, go up to the house and pay her a visit?'

'Well, um, yes!,' Bob said, a little embarrassed about being found out, 'I have to admit that I did.'

'And did you happen to give her my name instead of telling her your name?'

Bob's face turned beet red and he said, 'Yeah, look, I'm sorry, buddy, I'm afraid I did. Why do you ask?'

'She just died and left me everything.'

<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>

THOSE WHACKY BRITS

Hello all,

A friend of mine has managed to get some tickets for the Euro final in France.

Unfortunately, he has realized that he is getting married on the same day so he can't go. He has asked, if anyone wants to go in his place. It's at St Andrews Church in Bakewell and her name is Sarah.

<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>

THE DEVIL

One bright, beautiful Sunday morning, everyone in a tiny town got up early and went to the local church. Before the services started, the townspeople were sitting in their pews and talking. Suddenly, the Devil himself appeared at the front of the church! Everyone started screaming and running for the back entrance, trampling each other in a frantic effort to get away from evil incarnate. Soon everyone was evacuated from the church except for one elderly gentleman who sat calmly in his pew, not moving, seemingly oblivious to the fact

that he was in the presence of the AntiChrist. Now this confused Satan a bit, so he walked up to the man and asked,

"Don't you know who I am?"

The man replied,

"Yep. Sure do."

Satan asked,

"Are you not afraid of me?"

"Nope. Sure ain't," said the old man.

Satan, a little perturbed at this, queried,

"Why do you not fear me!?"

The man calmly replied,

"Been married to your sister for 48 years."

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From: "R. E. Cookson" recookson@oco.net

MAN VERSUS VACUUM CLEANER

A retired guy sits around the house all day so one day his wife says, "Joe, you could something useful, like vacuum the house once a week."

The guy gives it a moment's thought and says "Sure why not. Where's the vacuum?"

Half an hour later, the guy comes into the kitchen to get some coffee. His wife says, "I didn't hear the vacuum running, I thought you were going to do the vacuuming?"

Exasperated, Joe answers, "The stupid thing is broken, it won't start. We need to buy a new one."

"Really", she says, "show me - it worked fine the last time".

So he did. Click here https://videos.files.wordpress.com/Xblfe4gf/retired-vacum-cleaner_dvd.mp4

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WEDDING

At a wedding ceremony, the pastor asked if anyone had anything to say concerning the union of the bride and groom. It was their time to stand up and talk, or forever hold their

peace. The moment of utter silence was broken by a young beautiful woman carrying a child. She started walking toward the pastor slowly.

Everything quickly turned to chaos. The bride slapped the groom. The groom's mother fainted. The groomsmen started giving each other looks and wondering how best to help save the situation.

The pastor asked the woman, "Can you tell us why you came forward? What do you have to say?"

The woman replied, "We can't hear in the back."

<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>

IRISH BLONDE

An attractive blonde from Cork, Ireland, arrived at the casino. She seemed a little intoxicated and bet twenty thousand euros in a single roll of the dice.

She said, "I hope you don't mind, but I feel much luckier when I'm completely nude."

With that, she removed all of her clothes, rolled the dice, and with an Irish brogue yelled, "Come on, baby, Mama needs new clothes!"

As the dice came to a stop, she jumped up and down and squealed. "Yes! Yes! I won, I won!" She hugged each of the dealers, picked up her winnings and her clothes and quickly departed.

The dealers stared at each other dumbfounded.

Finally, one of them asked, "What did she roll?"

The other answered, "I don't know - I thought you were watching."

MORAL OF THE STORY

Not all Irish are drunks, not all blondes are dumb, but all men are men!

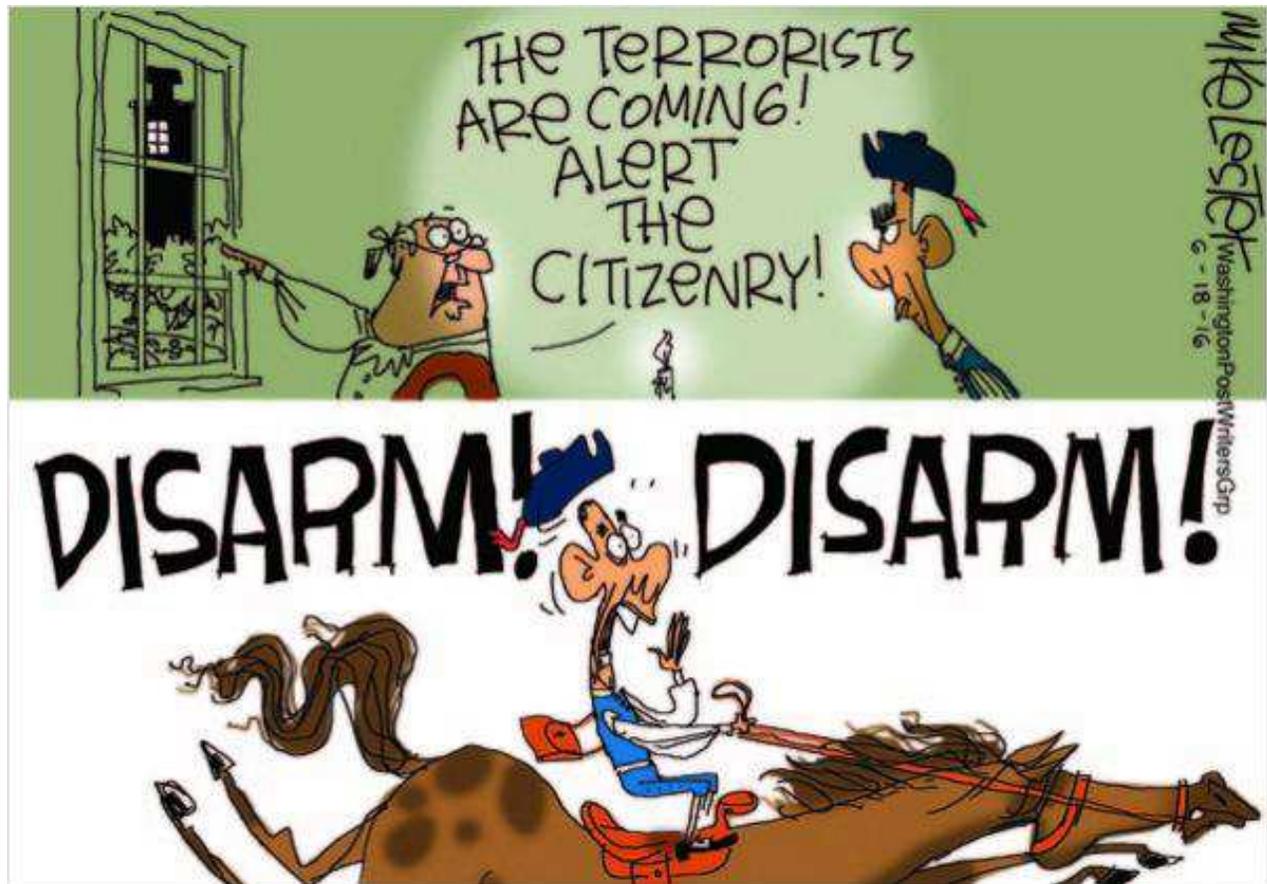
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From: "Jim Woosley" Jimwoosley@aol.com

Well, some people can learn...

Cartoons: Mike Lester for June 18, 2016 — The Patriot Post

<https://patriotpost.us/cartoons/23445>



IN HUMOR THERE IS SOMETIMES TRUTH. UT

<J>~<O>~<K>~<E>~<S>~<of>~<the>~<W>~<E>~<E>~<K>

From: "Jerry Tollett" haleja@epbf.com

A DC airport ticket agent offers some examples of 'why' our country is in trouble:

1. I had a New Hampshire Congresswoman (Carol Shea-Porter) ask for an aisle seat so that her hair wouldn't get messed up by being near the window. (On an airplane!)
2. I got a call from a Kansas Congressman's (Moore) staffer (Howard Bauleke), who wanted to go to Capetown. I started to explain the length of the flight and the passport information, and then he interrupted me with, "I'm not trying to make you look stupid, but Capetown is in Massachusetts"
Without trying to make him look stupid, I calmly explained, "Cape Cod is in Massachusetts , Capetown is in Africa "his response -- click.
3. A VERY senior Vermont Congressman (Bernie Sanders) – one Democratic presidential candidate - called, furious about a Florida package we did. I asked what was wrong with the vacation in Orlando . He said he was expecting an ocean-view room. I tried to explain that's not possible, since Orlando is in the middle of the state.

He replied, 'don't lie to me, I looked on the map and Florida is a very thin state!' (OMG)

4. I got a call from a lawmaker's wife (Landra Reid) who asked, "Is it possible to see England from Canada?"

I said, "No."

She said, "But they look so close on the map." (OMG, again!)

5. An aide for a cabinet member (Janet Napolitano) once called and asked if he could rent a car in Dallas . I pulled up the reservation and noticed he had only a 1-hour layover in Dallas . When I asked him why he wanted to rent a car, he said, "I heard Dallas was a big airport, and we will need a car to drive between gates to save time." (Aghhhh)

6. An Illinois Congresswoman (Jan Schakowsky) called last week. She needed to know how it was possible that her flight from Detroit left at 8:30 a.m., and got to Chicago at 8:33 a.m. I explained that Michigan was an hour ahead of Illinois , but she couldn't understand the concept of time zones. Finally, I told her the plane went fast, and she bought that.

7. A New York lawmaker, (Jerold Nadler) called and asked, "Do airlines put your physical description on your bag so they know whose luggage belongs to whom?" I said, 'No, why do you ask?'

He replied, "Well, when I checked in with the airline, they put a tag on my luggage that said (FAT), and I'm overweight. I think that's very rude!"

After putting him on hold for a minute, while I looked into it. (I was dying laughing). I came back and explained the city code for Fresno , Ca. is (FAT - Fresno Air Terminal), and the airline was just putting a destination tag on his luggage.

8. A Senator John Kerry aide (Lindsay Ross) called to inquire about a trip package to Hawaii . After going over all the cost info, she asked, "Would it be cheaper to fly to California and then take the train to Hawaii?"

9. I just got off the phone with a freshman Congressman, Bobby Bright from Ala. who asked, "How do I know which plane to get on?"

I asked him what exactly he meant, to which he replied, "I was told my flight number is 823, but none of these planes have that number on them."

10. Senator Dianne Feinstein called and said, "I need to fly to Pepsi-Cola, Florida . Do I have to get on one of those little computer planes?"

I asked if she meant fly to Pensacola, FL on a commuter plane.

She said, "Yeah, whatever, smarty!"

11. Mary Landrieu, La. Senator called and had a question about the documents she needed in order to fly to China . After a lengthy discussion about passports, I reminded her that she needed a visa. 'Oh, no I don't. I've been to China many times and never had to have one of those.'

I double checked and sure enough, her stay required a visa. When I told her this she said, "Look, I've been to China four times and every time they have accepted my American Express!"

12. A New Jersey Congressman (John Adler) called to make reservations, "I want to go from Chicago to Rhino, New York."

I was at a loss for words. Finally, I said, "Are you sure that's the name of the town?"

"Yes, what flights do you have?" replied the man.

After some searching, I came back with, "I'm sorry, sir, I've looked up every airport code in the country and can't find a rhino anywhere."

"The man retorted, "Oh, don't be silly! Everyone knows where it is. Check your map!"

So I scoured a map of the state of New York and finally offered, "You don't mean Buffalo, do you?"

The reply? "Whatever! I knew it was a big animal."

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From Wyman Cooke's Facebook Page



I finally gave in and bought my first Apple device. I have to say I'm impressed, even if it only has a single-core processor.

TRUE PUNNISHMENT! UT

<YOU>~<>~<JUST>~<>~<CAN'T>~<>~<MAKE>~<>~<THIS>~<>~<STUFF>~<>~<UP!>

YOU JUST CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!

From: "Keith A. Glass" salgak@comcast.net

PUBLIC COLLEGE DROPS MATH REQUIREMENT, MAY REPLACE IT WITH DIVERSITY

BLAKE NEFF, Reporter, 10:21 PM 06/14/2016

<http://dailycaller.com/2016/06/14/public-college-drops-math-requirement-may-replace-it-with-diversity/#ixzz4BeyU8Mxt>

A public university in Michigan has announced it's deleting a requirement that all students complete at least one math course before graduating. At the same time, the school is seriously considering a new requirement that would compel students to complete four courses that promote diversity.

Wayne State University (WSU) in Detroit is one of the largest schools in Michigan, with some 27,000 students. Until now, all of them had to either take one of three basic math classes to earn their degree, or else test out by performing sufficiently on a relevant SAT, CLEP, or AP test.

But going forward, students will not longer have to demonstrate any mathematical competency to graduate, unless their particular course of study requires it.

The elimination of the math requirement came even though the school "strongly encourage[s]" students to take math classes, noting that they are invaluable for students who want to be employed in STEM-related fields. According to The Detroit Free Press, the school justified the move by saying the existing math requirement only expects students to learn as much as is currently required for a high school diploma. However, about one-third of WSU students need to take remedial coursework in their first year, suggesting that high school math may be just what some students need.

The requirement's elimination is part of a broader overhaul in WSU's general education requirements. According to a statement of principles created last year to guide the overhaul, WSU says general education "provides a shared educational experience that imparts knowledge and expertise essential for all undergraduate students regardless of their major or interests." In the eyes of the school, mathematics is apparently no longer an essential expertise.

But if faculty have their way, the school will soon recognize an appreciation for diversity as an extremely essential expertise.

As was first noted by The College Fix, the committee handling WSU's general education reform has recommended a new framework that, if adopted, would place an extremely strong emphasis on diversity-related courses. Under the framework, the school would create a series of new diversity-themed courses, and all students would have to take at least one.

In addition, students will have to take three "signature" classes, two designed for freshmen and one that will serve as a "capstone" class for upperclassmen. These "signature"

classes will be designed to engage with modern-day issues such as “culture, sustainability, health, ethics, and urban development and renewal.” In recognition of the importance of diversity, all signature classes will be required to achieve a diversity-related goal such as “intercultural knowledge and competence” or “global learning.”

The framework justifies the heavy focus on diversity because “diversity is central to the nature of WSU, i.e., ‘Distinctively Wayne State.’”

Instead of a math course, the new framework suggests requiring that all WSU students simply be required to complete a “quantitative experience” class, which could include math but could also include education in how to interpret graphs or how to “use quantitative information to communicate in a purposeful way.”

<?>~<YOU JUST CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!>~<?>

BADASS WISCONSIN CONGRESSLADY CRACKING DOWN ON RICH FOLKS WHO USE TAX DEDUCTIONS TO BUY DRUGS

By Robyn Pennacchia, June 16, 2016 - 3:40pm

<http://wonkette.com/603089/badass-wisconsin-congresslady-cracking-down-on-rich-folks-who-use-tax-deductions-to-buy-drugs#ZjBZkzAU9zwMwdwC.99>



OH hooray! Nice time! We are so, so, so happy to read a nice thing after this week of awfulness! Incredibly badass Wisconsin Rep. Gwen Moore (D-Obviously) will be introducing a bill next week called the Top 1% Accountability Act, which will require all rich people claiming over \$150,000 in tax deductions to undergo a drug test to make sure they're not spending that money on drugs. They would have to submit a drug test, no more than three months old, or

take a much lower standard deduction when filing taxes.

OH I LOVE HER. I LOVE HER SO GODDAMNED MUCH. SHE IS MY HERO AND EVERYTHING I WISH I COULD BE!!! Who cares if the primaries are over? I am electing her president of my heart, right now.

This is in response, you see, to the many states that drug test those who receive cash welfare assistance, and to Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker suing the federal government for not allowing him to drug test people getting food stamps. The assumption with these laws is that they will save states tons of money by kicking off welfare all the people who spend their government assistance riches on drugs. As it turns out, there are not nearly as many of those people out there as Republicans imagine. Weird! And the cost of those programs far outweigh the benefits! Other than the smug satisfaction of getting to insinuate to poor people that you think they are probably on drugs!

It's a horrible thing to do, which is why Rep. Gwen Moore is so awesome and my new favorite person ever. I want her and Nina Turner (who once introduced a bill that would

have required men to undergo “special precautions” in order to get Viagra, which is still my favorite goddamned thing ever) to get together and be ball-busting superheroes.

Of course, Moore is not just busting balls here. She’s damn serious about this bill, and says she intends to get co-sponsors and push it through, both to highlight the sheer stupidity of drug testing welfare recipients, and to call attention to how much money our country spends on tax expenditures, noting “We think it’s important to engage in some transparency and accountability around tax deductions.”

Moore says the idea came to her when she saw Paul Ryan giving a speech about his not-at-all-helpful plans to help the poor in America. “When he stood in front of a drug treatment center and rolled out his anti-poverty initiative, pushing this narrative that poor people are drug addicts, that was the last straw,” she said.

Now, if that bullshit made our faces burn, we can only imagine how Moore felt — as someone who actually has been a welfare recipient herself. “I am a former welfare recipient” she said, “I’ve used food stamps, I’ve received Aid for Families with Dependent Children, Medicaid, Head Start for my kids, Title XX daycare [subsidies]. I’m truly grateful for the social safety net.”

She also wants to bring attention to the fact that we perceive poor people who receive government assistance as “entitled,” but not rich people who get piles of tax deductions, even though technically, they cost us more. And, quite frankly, are way the hell more “entitled.” She notes that, when it comes to drug abuse, “There are no boundaries with regard to class or race ... if these poor people who are entitled to SNAP for survival are required to be drug tested, then certainly those people who claim \$150,000 or more in tax deductions should be subjected to the same in order to receive this benefit from the government.”

And that’s true! Frankly, in my experience, I’ve known way more rich people with drug problems than poor people with them. Maybe because they can afford it? Drugs are expensive!

“I would love to see some hedge fund manager on Wall Street who might be sniffing a little cocaine here and there to stay awake realize that he can’t get his \$150,000 worth of deductions unless he submits to a drug test,” she says.

US TOO, GWEN, US TOO.

<?>~<YOU JUST CAN’T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!>~<?>

GOP AGS WARN DEMS THAT IF CLIMATE SKEPTICS CAN BE PROSECUTED FOR ‘FRAUD,’ SO CAN ALARMISTS

By Valerie Richardson - The Washington Times - Thursday, June 16, 2016

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/jun/16/gop-ags-dems-climate-alarmists-can-be-prosecuted/>

If Democratic attorneys general can pursue climate change skeptics for fraud, then also at risk of prosecution are climate alarmists whose predictions of global doom have failed to materialize.

fervor after an ISIS supporter attacked an Orlando gay night club over the weekend, Wauchula Ghost, a member of the hacking clan "Anonymous," has compromised hundreds of Twitter accounts of Islamic State supporters and flooded them with pornography.

"Daesh doesn't like porn," Ghost said in a phone interview, referring to the Islamic State in its Arabic transliteration. He declined to give his real name. "They don't like women in general. We just started using it to poke fun at them and diminish their presence online."

ISIS has used the Internet to spread its message and find recruits. FBI Director James Comey said Monday he was "highly confident" shooter Omar Mateen, 29, was radicalized "at least in some part through the Internet."

[Orlando gunman who pledged loyalty to ISIS was 'homegrown' extremist radicalized online, Obama says]

Instead of messages supporting the self-described caliphate or encouraging violence, some 160 accounts hacked by the Ghost have tweeted photos of nude women. Some users' avatars now read "I [heart] porn."

The content is a jab at the group's interpretation of Muslim religious customs that require piety and chastity. By tweeting sexual content rather than traditional battle cries against the West, the Ghost said he wants to undermine the voices of ISIS recruiters and chase them off popular social networks.

"The government really hasn't been doing enough especially on social media," he said. "You see the beheading images everywhere. Kids get online and shouldn't see these images."

But should they see porn?

[Porn has been declared a 'public health crisis' in Utah. Here's why.]

That's a harder question, one that toes the line between "hactivism" — activism by hacking — and plain, old internet trolling.

Shouting down web-based terrorist recruiting cells, that's a good thing, said Ryan Calo, professor of law at the University of Washington and co-director of the Tech Policy Lab.

Porn on Twitter, maybe not such a good thing, he said. It could be offensive to religious Muslims (or Christians or Jews), the overwhelming majority of whom are not terrorists and want nothing to do with sexually explicit images.

"A hactivist is really someone trying to advance a civil agenda by using their technological tools," Calo said. "To me, it's about targeting appropriately and making sure you're targeting the real enemy rather than Muslim people or the vulnerable."

"If sending this message could end up in the wrong hands, children or nonconsenting adults, that could be a problem," said Sandy Davidson, a professor of communication law at the University of Missouri. "And images present their own problems because once an image is seared in your mind, then you can't unsee it."

Under U.S. law, social media platforms are responsible for policing content users post. Though the government could ask sites like Twitter or Facebook to remove certain material, they cannot be held liable for content posted on their sites and can remove content for any reason whatsoever.

[Who defines pornography? These days, it's Facebook.]

So while the government might have to file paperwork and jump through legal hoops to shut down an extremist's Twitter account, Twitter itself can do so whenever it wants. Since 2015, Twitter has suspended more than 125,000 accounts for threatening or promoting terrorist acts primarily related to ISIS, actions lawmakers have applauded.

"We condemn the use of Twitter to promote terrorism and the Twitter Rules make it clear that this type of behavior, or any violent threat, is not permitted on our service," the company said in a statement.

As the Ghost was mining for accounts Sunday night, he added them to a public list titled, "Jacked accounts." Twitter then suspended them until the list was empty by midday.

He says he plans to continue hijacking ISIS accounts in the future, almost as a kind of Twitter crime fighter, harassing bad guys outside the confines of the law.

"I think we're there to serve a purpose, at least I know I am," he said. "My goal waking up in the morning [is to] see messages from Daesh, telling me they're going to kill me or cut my head off. The madder they get, the happier I get."

<?>~<YOU JUST CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!>~<?>

SO A GUY ON A HORSE JUST LASSOED A BIKE THIEF IN A WALMART PARKING LOT

[KTVL CBS 10 News](http://www.ktvb.com/story/news/local/2016/06/19/guy-on-horse-lassoes-walmart-bike-thief/854117001/), JUN 19, 2016

http://twistedSifter.com/2016/06/guy-on-horse-lassoes-walmart-bike-thief/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+TwistedSifter+%28TwistedSifter+%29

If it wasn't for the photos this story would be hard to believe. A would-be thief attempting to steal a mountain bike from a rack outside a Walmart in southern Oregon was chased down by a man on a horse and lassoed until police arrived to arrest the individual.

The incident took place in a Walmart parking lot in Eagle Point, a small town about 12 miles northeast of Medford.

After witnesses noticed a man trying to steal a bike, Robert Borba sprang into action. Borba was in the lot with his horse in a trailer. According to [KTVL](http://www.ktvb.com):

The man chased after the thief on horse, who was fleeing, and lassoed the suspect, holding him down until local police arrived.



Photograph via [KTVL News](#)

<YOU>~<>~<JUST>~<>~<CAN'T>~<>~<MAKE>~<>~<THIS>~<>~<STUFF>~<>~<UP!>

YOU JUST CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!

From: "Martin L King Jr" kingjr_martin@yahoo.com

MLK: This Muslim cleric believes that immodestly dressed women cause global warming... I guess that's because they're so HOT! Whoooo! Makes as much sense as a lot of other climate change theories, and a lot more fun to research.



MUSLIM CLERIC:
IMMODEST
WOMEN ARE
CAUSING
CLIMATE
CHANGE

Thomas Murray |
June 13, 2016
3:40pm ET

<http://www.mrctv.org/blog/radical-new-reason-why-rivers-are-running-dry-iran>

Seyyed Youssef
Tabataba-nejad, a

senior Islamic cleric in Isfahan, Iran, said during his weekly sermon last Friday that women dressing inappropriately is causing climate change.

In his sermon, Tabatabai-nejad urged Iran's "moral police" to crack down on "improper veiling" and to do everything they can to keep Iran's population as moral as possible. (Yes, Iran has an undercover police force that is purely dedicated to making sure that people act and dress according to their faith.)

But Tabatabai-nejad is not concerned with long-term issues such as the souls of the women who are not wearing their scarves in the car and taking long romantic walks with their boyfriends in public; he has more immediate concerns.

In his sermon, Tabatabai-nejad announced that his "office had received photos of women next to the dry Zayandeh-run River (a major river that runs through Isfahan), [dressed] as if they were in Europe. It is these sorts of acts that cause the river to dry up."

You read that right. The environment is not messed up because of greenhouse gases or cow farts. The rivers are drying up because women are dressing immodestly. Someone call up the scientists and let them know that all our environmental problems are really easy to fix -- all of the women in the world just need to start wearing burkas and keep their hair out of sight.

This statement has, surprisingly, been largely accepted by those in Iran; as if a natural cause for rivers drying up is just out of the question.

The National Council of Resistance of Iran, an Iranian parliament-in-exile dedicated to bringing about the separation of theological and political law in Iran, has condemned Tabatabai-nejad's statement as a "reflection of the typical mindset of the theocratic regime ruling Iran which is no different than the Culture of Isis."

There has been no official statement from anyone in Iran about this radical stance on how women wearing shorts causes climate change, but this is sadly not the first time someone's taken this position.

Back in 2010, Hajjat ol-islam Kazem Sediqi, the acting Friday prayer leader in Tehran at the time, claimed that adultery was the cause of an earthquake that was supposed to hit Tehran that year and level the city. The earthquake never did get there.

It must have found a more promiscuous city to shake down instead.

<?>~<YOU JUST CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP!>~<?>

THIS POOR LIBERAL WAS TRAUMATIZED BY FIRING A RIFLE

Ben Barrows, June 15, 2016

<http://www.mrctv.org/blog/liberal-traumatized-firing-rifle>

In an alleged attempt to better understand gun owners, New York Daily News reporter Gersh Kuntzman decided to fire an AR-15 the day after the Orlando shooting.

His experiment did not go as well as he hoped.



As recounted in his report in the NY Daily News, Kuntzman claimed to have had a traumatizing experience firing the .223 caliber rifle.

Kuntzman even claimed he was suffering a mild case of PTSD:

“The recoil bruised my shoulder. The brass shell casings disoriented me as they flew past my face. The

smell of sulfur and destruction made me sick. The explosions — loud like a bomb — gave me a temporary case of PTSD. For at least an hour after firing the gun just a few times, I was anxious and irritable.”

It seems far-fetched to experience this much trauma from a rifle only slightly more powerful than a .22, and it appears that Kuntzman was probably exaggerating the effects of firing the AR-15. The recoil of the gun should not have bruised his shoulder and the smell really should not have been that pungent.

He also claims later in the article that the rifle could be switched to ‘full-auto’ mode, a preposterous considering the AR-15 is a semi-automatic rifle and the gun store he visited would not even be allowed to sell a ‘fully-auto’ weapon.

All of these “factors” apparently led to his traumatizing experience.

If it’s so traumatizing, why would Kuntzman do such a thing?

Probably because it plays into the liberal media’s rhetoric that no normal person should actually own, let alone shoot a gun.

Just another ridiculous piece of reporting from a reporter that couldn’t wait to politicize a horrific tragedy.

POOR LITTLE BUTTERCUP. IF SHOOTING AN AR-15 CAUSED HIM SO MANY PROBLEMS, THEN WHAT WOULD SHOOTING A MAN’S RIFLE DO TO HIM? LIKE TENNESSEE’S FAVORITE SON’S BARRETT 50 CAL. BAAAAHAHA! ;^) UT

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From: “Tim Bolgeo” tbolgeo@comcast.net

URANIUM EXTRACTION FROM SEAWATER TAKES A MAJOR STEP FORWARD

Earth’s oceans hold four billion tons of the element used to power nuclear plants

By Jennifer Hackett on July 1, 2016

http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/uranium-extraction-from-seawater-takes-a-major-step-forward/?WT.mc_id=SA_TECH_20160614

The earth's oceans hold enough uranium to power all the world's major cities for thousands of years—if we can extract it. A project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy is making notable advances in this quest: scientists at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory have developed a material that can effectively pull uranium out of seawater. The material builds on work by researchers in Japan and consists of braided polyethylene fibers coated with the chemical amidoxime. In seawater, amidoxime attracts and binds uranium dioxide to the surface of the braids, which can be on the order of 15 centimeters in diameter and run multiple meters in length depending on where they are deployed. Later, an acidic treatment recovers the uranium in the form of uranyl ions, a product that requires processing and enrichment before becoming fuel. The procedure was described in a special report this spring in Industrial & Engineering Chemistry Research.

The process is still inefficient and expensive, but finding alternatives to uranium ore mining is a necessary step in planning for the future of nuclear energy, says Stephen Kung of the DOE's Office of Nuclear Energy, who was not involved in the project. Terrestrial sources of uranium are expected to last for only another 100 to 200 more years. “We need to take the longer view on this resource,” Kung says.

BY THE NUMBERS

3.3 Micrograms Per Liter

Concentration of uranium in seawater

4 Billion Tons

Total uranium available in all Earth's seawater

6 Grams

Weight of uranium extracted per kilogram of adsorbent material

8 Weeks

Time required to extract 6 grams

27,000 Kilograms

Amount of uranium fuel needed to run a 1-gigawatt nuclear power plant for one year

I PRINTED THIS STUPID ARTICLE FOR A REASON. OH WOE IS US BECAUSE WE HAVE TO MINE URANIUM AGAIN. GIVE ME A BREAK. BUT, THERE IS EVEN AND EASIER WAY TO GET NUCLEAR FUEL TO POWER OUR NUCLEAR PLANTS. JUST REPROCESS ALL OF THE SPENT FUEL RODS WE HAVE IN OUR SPENT FUEL POOLS. AND THEIR WILL BE ENOUGH FUEL TO RUN OUR PLANTS FOR PROBABLY 1,000 YEARS. UT

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TOMORROW'S PROSTHETIC HAND

Recent breakthroughs in technology could mean a fully functional artificial hand may be on the horizon

By Jessica Schmerler, Ian Chant on July 1, 2016

http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/tomorrow-s-prosthetic-hand/?WT.mc_id=SA_TECH_20160614



Credit: EMANUEL TODOROV University of Washington AND ZHE XU Yale University; FROM “DESIGN OF A HIGHLY BIOMIMETIC ANTHROPOMORPHIC ROBOTIC HAND TOWARDS ARTIFICIAL LIMB REGENERATION,” PRESENTED AT IEEE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ROBOTICS AND AUTOMATION, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, MAY 16–21, 2016

TOUCHING TEXTURES

Modern prostheses can provide amputees with a wide variety of motor functions, but they cannot give patients back their sense of touch. Until now, that is. In a collaborative effort, researchers at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne and the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa, Italy, developed a bionic fingertip that allowed an amputee to distinguish between smooth and rough textures with 96 percent accuracy. The fingertip is composed of an electrical sensor coated in a polymer, which translates surface coarseness into current pulses relayed to a nerve in the arm. The setup may even alleviate “phantom limb” pain, a common ordeal

among amputees. Phantom hands are often perceived as being constantly clenched and painful, but the amputee in this experiment said he felt as though his phantom hand was feeling the surface, rather than remaining clenched. —Jessica Schmerler

A REALISTIC REPLACEMENT

Advances in 3-D printing have allowed scientists to build complex biomimetic hands, with plastic bones and ligaments that mirror every point of articulation in a natural human hand (see image above). As laboratory-grown human tissues are becoming more robust and viable, researchers hope that one day such biomimetic hands will serve as scaffolds over which the organic tissue of a real hand can be grown. University of Washington researcher Emanuel Todorov, who developed the hand pictured here with Zhe Xu of Yale University, says that using 3-D-printed plastic parts minimizes the possibility of rejection—a common problem with hand transplants—while cutting costs to a fraction of those associated with similar articulated prostheses. Because such models would look and act just like human hands, they also stand to have an easier learning curve for users. Not only will they operate like normal hands, 3-D printing also means each one could be customized to its user. —Ian Chant

FREING THE FINGERS

Earlier this year an amputee was able to move individual fingers on his prosthetic arm with a 64 percent success rate, a Johns Hopkins University team reported in the Journal of Neural Engineering. The accomplishment is a major improvement over past experiments, which had only succeeded in moving combinations of fingers. The patient's brain signals were decoded by an electrocorticographic (ECoG) implant that can cover a large area of the brain, taking in and translating information from many groups of neurons and providing

more stable readings than have been achieved through other methods. Even better, the signals controlling the prosthesis are intuitive, letting the patient operate the prosthetic hand without long training sessions. —I.C.

A BETTER CONNECTION

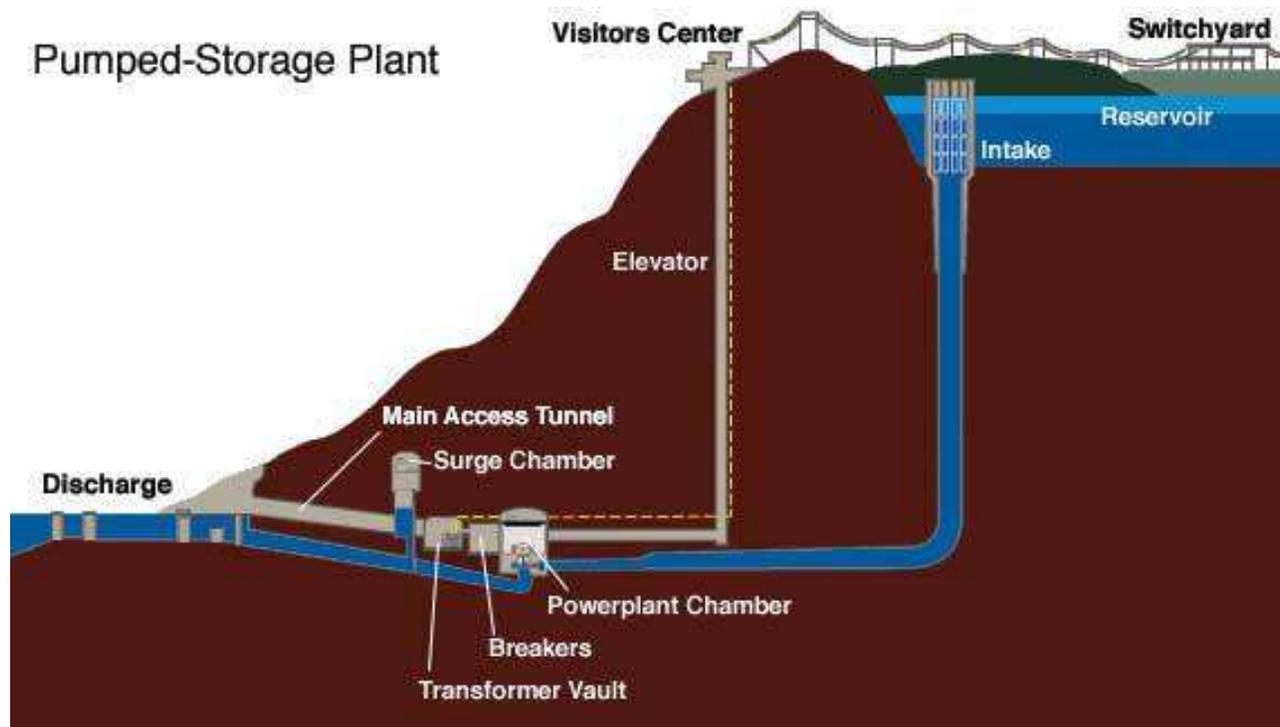
Today's prosthesis users have to rely on visual cues to know whether they are touching or gripping something with their artificial hands. Now an improved “nerve cuff” allows for the sensation of tactile pressure to be communicated directly to the median, ulnar and radial nerves in the arm at the site of amputation. In a recent study, researchers at Case Western Reserve University and the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center challenged blindfolded users to determine whether a wood block had been placed in their prosthetic hand and to locate and remove a magnetic block from a metal table. The subjects were able to tell when they were holding a block nearly 100 percent of the time. They were also more dexterous, locating the block faster, dropping it less often and making more natural corrections than in tests without the improved nerve-cuff feedback. The final piece of good news: subjects reported that with the better connection, they felt more confident and the prosthesis felt more like a part of their own body. —I.C.

<S><C><I><E><N><C><E>

The Swiss have upgraded a hydroelectric dam to produce as much energy as a nuclear power plant

WRITTEN BY Michael J. Coren, June 15, 2016

<http://qz.com/706832/new-turbines-have-upgraded-a-hydroelectric-dam-in-the-swiss-alps-to-a-nuke-sized-battery/>



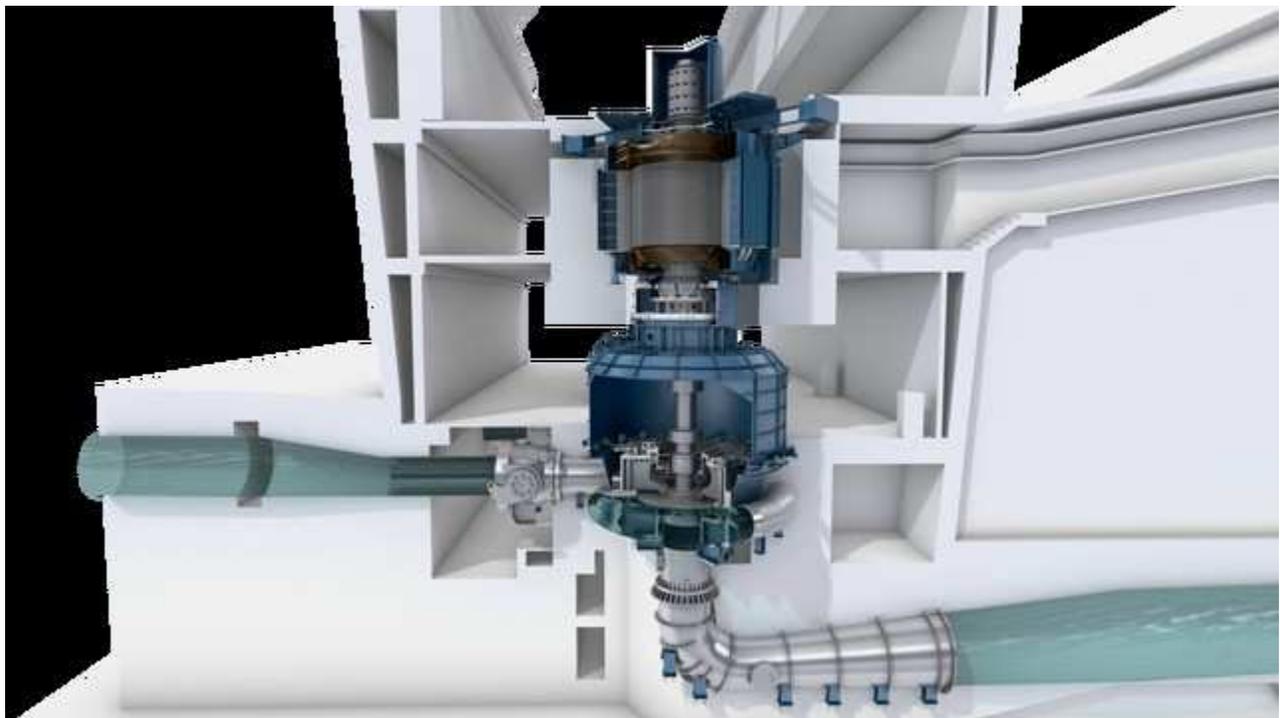
How pumped water storage systems work.(National Hydropower Association)

We need batteries that can power millions of homes, deliver excellent efficiency, and cost little to operate. It turns out we've had the technology since 1890. We just need to build a lot more of them.

They're called pumped water storage, and the technology is the world's largest energy storage system, representing 98% of installed storage capacity worldwide. First deployed in the 1890s in the Swiss and Austrian Alps, pumped water storage is essentially two large reservoirs of water at different elevations. Water is pumped uphill when electricity is cheap and plentiful, and runs downhill, spinning turbines and generating electricity, when needed.

Compared to chemical batteries, flywheels, compressed air, and more esoteric technologies, pumped water storage is larger, infinitely rechargeable and highly efficient (80% or more in most cases). It's also poised to become the go-to solution for many electrical grids that are embracing renewable energy at an unprecedented rate: 147 gigawatts of renewable power capacity was added in 2015, the most ever built in a single year.

Last week, GE announced it was retrofitting a hydroelectric plant in Switzerland with variable-speed turbines to give Europe's grid far better storage capacity for its renewable sources. The Linthal plant is among the most extreme of the pumped storage makeovers happening around the world. It's perched 2,490 meters (8,100 feet) above sea level between two mountain lakes separated by a cliff twice the height of the Eiffel Tower. At full capacity of 23 billion gallons, the plant can generate about 1,450 megawatts of electricity, the equivalent of a nuclear plant. GE swapped out its conventional turbines for variable-speed models that will store and generate far more power.



GE's variable-speed hydroelectric turbines allow operators to absorb spikes in demand and stabilize the grid.

GE says the technology in plants like Linthal is the future. Of the 270 or so pumped water storage sites around the world in 2013, only about 17 employed variable speed turbines, reports the National Hydropower Association (pdf). The market for such storage is set to “explode.” Energy consultancy IHS predicts power water storage will see annual increase of 6 gigawatts (GW) next year to over 40 GW per year by 2022 (compared to a total installed base of just 0.34 GW in 2012-2013). Greater grid connectivity and other battery technologies could alleviate some of this need, report German researchers, but that demand would translate into dozens of new storage facilities.

While variable-speed turbines aren’t cheap to build (or retrofit), the efficiency gains outweigh the costs because they offer a key feature that turns pumped storage into a much better battery: precise control over the amount of electricity consumed and generated.

Until recently, plant operators needed to store or harvest energy in “blocks,” or set amounts of energy, determined by the capacity of the pumps and turbines. If grid operators needed to store 14 megawatts (MW) of excess capacity, but the water pumps operated in blocks of 10 MW each, then 4 MW would be wasted. Variable-speed turbines let grid operators finely tune the amount of energy drawn or returned to the grid.

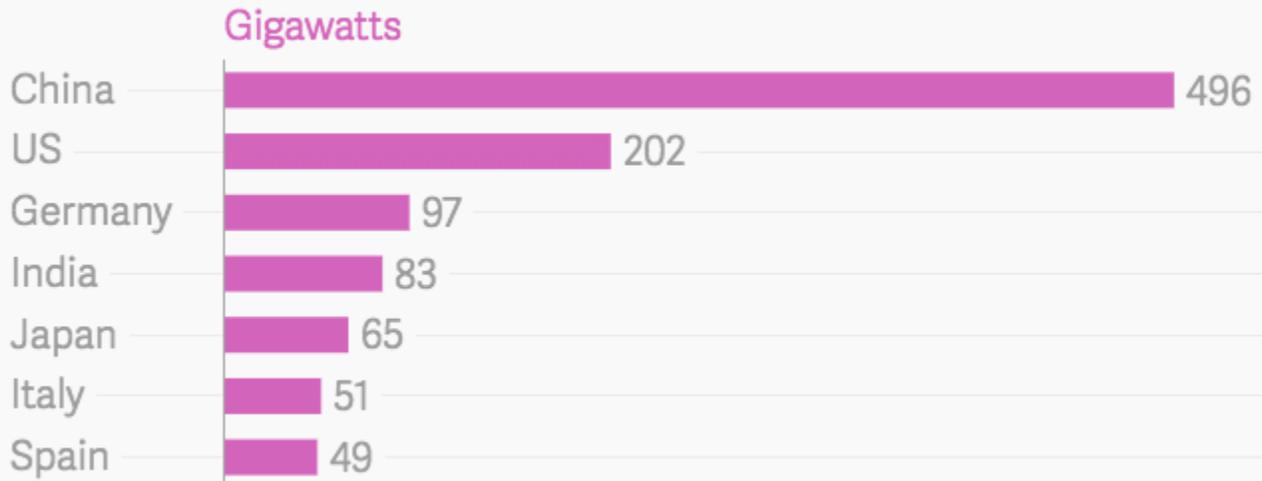


A generator at the Linthal pumped storage power plan assemble rotors for one the pump’s new turbines.(GE Reports/Tomas Kellner)

This precision is crucial as variable energy sources such as wind, solar, and others begin to dominate electrical grids around the world. Countries ramping up their renewable energy

product must choose between running more “peaker” plants (usually powered by fossil fuels such as natural gas) to take up the slack—or store more energy to smooth out grids’ peaks and valleys.

Global leaders in total renewable power capacity



△ T L △ S | Data: REN21 | Includes hydro

Pumped water appears to be the more economical option where the topography permits. GE and Hitachi say they are equipping pumped water storage sites around the world with variable speed turbines (GE says it has 3,000 MW of such projects underway). New ones, such as an artificial atoll in the North Sea, are under consideration. Norway is building two undersea cables from UK and Germany to store Europe’s surplus energy in its high mountain lakes. The cables are scheduled to start operating by 2020.

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NASA UNVEILS PLANS FOR ELECTRIC-POWERED PLANE

By KENNETH CHANG JUNE 17, 2016

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/18/science/nasa-electric-plane-x57.html?_r=0



An artist’s concept of NASA’s X-57 Maxwell aircraft showing the plane’s specially designed wings and 14 electric motors. Credit NASA Langley/Advanced Concepts Lab, AMA, Inc.

A new experimental airplane being built by NASA could help push electric-powered aviation from a technical curiosity and pipe dream into something that

might become commercially viable for small aircraft.

At a conference on Friday of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics in Washington, Charles F. Bolden Jr., the NASA administrator, announced plans for an all-electric airplane designated as X-57, part of the agency's efforts to make aviation more efficient and less of a polluter.

"The X-57 will take the first giant step in opening a new era of aviation," Mr. Bolden declared.

The steps taken by NASA will not translate into all-electric cross-country jetliners. But the agency hopes the technology can be incorporated into smaller, general aviation and commuter aircraft some years from now.

The X-57 will look more like a Cessna, unlike some of NASA's earlier sleek, futuristic X-planes. Its cruising speed might hit 175 miles per hour. Its wings, however, will be unique — far skinnier than usual and embedded with 14 motors.

"The problem with traditional aircraft design is you have to size the wings so that you have safe takeoff and landing speeds, and so the wing tends to end up bigger than you need for cruise flight," said Sean Clarke, co-principal investigator for the project at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center in Edwards, Calif.

For the X-57, the NASA researchers are designing narrower wings that are efficient during cruise flight, powered by two 60-kilowatt electric motors at the wingtips that spin five-foot-wide propellers.

For takeoff and landing, 12 smaller 9-kilowatt motors powering two-foot-wide propellers will kick in to blow extra air over the skinny wings to generate the necessary lift. In flight, the smaller propellers are folded away.

NASA has already purchased the Italian-designed Tecnam P2006T twin-engine four-seat aircraft that it will transform into the X-57. In the first step, NASA will replace the gasoline-powered motors with electric ones, aiming for takeoff in about a year. Swapping out the wing will take another one to two years, Mr. Clarke estimated.

The X-plane designations are handed out by the United States Air Force for experimental, cutting edge aircraft starting with the X-1 that broke the sound barrier in 1947. NASA's last X-plane effort, more than a decade ago, was the X-43A, a pilotless black dart that accelerated to almost 7,000 m.p.h., which set the record for a jet-powered aircraft.

The NASA researchers have nicknamed the new plane "Maxwell," after James Clerk Maxwell, a 19th-century Scottish physicist who came up with the basic equations underlying electromagnetism.

The X-57 is far from the first electric airplane, and a solar-powered electric airplane called Solar Impulse is currently making a series of flights that will take it around the world. But Solar Impulse cruises at 30 to 40 m.p.h., of which Mr. Clarke said, "I don't think anyone would classify as high speed."

At 175 m.p.h., the X-57 would be as fast as the original P2006T and other similar general aviation planes. “That’s a speed that could enable much greater market share for a technology like this,” Mr. Clarke said.

Operational costs could be cut by as much as 40 percent, and electric motors are much quieter.

The design does not overcome the shortcomings of electric propulsion. Its 800 pounds of batteries will replace the rear two passenger seats, and the seat next to the pilot will be replaced with instrumentation, leaving space for only the pilot and no passengers. It can stay aloft for only about one hour.

Mr. Clarke said the technology could be scaled upward for commuter or regional airliners, and NASA is investigating using fuel cells rather than batteries to provide the electricity. But limits in the speed of propeller-driven aircraft means they are unlikely for cross-country airline flights. “I think all-electric would be a stretch for jetliners,” he said.

But NASA has four other X-plane projects in the pipeline, part of a 10-year aviation research program proposed by the Obama administration in February. “This will be NASA’s moonshot for aviation,” Mr. Bolden said.

That includes a supersonic airplane that would not generate supersonic booms. “Talking about going around the world in six hours or going from Dubai in New York in an hour,” Mr. Bolden said. “That’s absolutely incredible.”

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- * Fish Eye views complete a 180 degree picture
- * Wide Angle shots will let you capture an entire landscape
- * Macro pictures capture the most minute details of a subject

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FIRST COLD-PRESSED COW'S MILK ON SALE IN AUSTRALIA

[Stu Roberts](#) June 21, 2016

<http://www.gizmag.com/made-by-cow-cold-press-milk/43937/>



The cold pressed milk is reported creamier and more vitamin-rich than conventionally processed milk.

Before we drink cow's milk, it is routinely pasteurized and homogenized to make it safe and consistent. Australian outfit Made by Cow says that this eliminates much of its goodness and flavor, so has created a new cold press method that makes it safe to drink much closer to its fresh state.

When milk is fresh from a cow, it is typically far richer than what we purchase in stores. If left to settle, it develops a layer of cream on top and contains vitamins like A, B1, B2, B12, and potassium. The homogenization process breaks down the cream to create a more liquefied consistency throughout, while pasteurization heats the milk to eliminate harmful bacteria, but can also reduce the nutrient content of the final product (although there is [some debate about this](#)).

Made by Cow (MBC) says its alternative cold-pressure approach is a world first, with the milk going from cow to bottle within a matter of hours. The company explains that it is then put under intense "isostatic cold water pressure." Here, cold water is used to compress both the bottle, which is plastic so as to flex, and the milk inside.

The exact "pressure and time recipe" is subject to a patent application, so details are scant. The firm has revealed that the bottle and milk are compressed by around 15 percent for several minutes, using large pumps to generate pressure equally from all sides.

MBC reports that "bacteria can't withstand the pressure we subject them to" and so are eliminated, while the cold temperature of the water reportedly ensures that the process is gentler on the milk's nutritional profile.



MBC claims that the resulting produce is creamier and more vitamin-rich than conventionally processed milk and that it will actually last slightly longer, too, though specifics are not yet available.

The firm is currently running tests and tells Gizmag that early results appear to confirm that its cold-pressed milk has a vitamin profile closer to raw milk than does pasteurized milk. Data will be published online when testing has been completed.

The Food Authority of New South Wales has approved Made by Cow's cold pressure method as being as safe or safer than heat pasteurization. The milk first went into Australian stores earlier this month.

The video below provides an explanation of the cold-pressing process.

Source: [Made by Cow](#)

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From: "Christina Cowan" cowan1028@earthlink.net

ANCIENT VOLCANOS ON MARS BURNED VERY, VERY HOT

Curiosity has discovered a mineral that indicates high-temperature volcanism occurred on the Red Planet.

By Jordan Rice, Published: Monday, June 13, 2016



Southward-looking view of Gale Crater, the landing and investigation site for NASA's Mars Science Laboratory (Curiosity Rover) NASA/JPL-Caltech

Mars' past may have seen a lot of very high-temperature volcanism. Similar to the Mount Helen's eruption of 1980, Mars' volcanoes would have an abundance of high-temperature and high-silica magma that erupted and then formed newly discovered minerals found in Gale crater.

In a new study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Richard Morris and his team discover a silica mineral that could have only formed as a result of ancient high temperature volcanism on Mars.

It is thought that volcanism on Mars is not as frequent as on Earth, but when there are eruptions they are very violent. The last one is believed to have taken place 20 million years ago. As there are no tectonic plates, the “hotspots” of volcanic activity remain fixed on the Martian surface, as evident by the Tharsis bulge. This volcanic activity is thought to come from melting hot mantle plumes under the Martian crust.

Utilizing the X-ray diffraction instrument on NASA’s Curiosity rover, Morris and his team found traces of the mineral tridymite in a drill site in Gale crater. Tridymite is normally only associated with silica-rich volcanism that can have explosive and high-temperature eruptions similar to the volcanism seen in the Cascades on Earth, says Morris.

“This mineral forms only at temperatures greater than about 900 degrees Centigrade,” Morris says. “So it was a real shock to us that what we may have here is a marker for a different kind of volcanism on Mars.”

Most silica-rich volcanism is due to Earth’s plate tectonics diving into water in the crust. Because of this, the basalt forms these silica-rich and high-temperature magmas that then erupt from the volcanoes, says Morris. As there are no observable plate tectonics that exist on Mars, Morris and his team do not know what truly caused these minerals to form.

Morris and his team have combed through lots of terrestrial literature to see if tridymite could form at low temperatures as what might actually be seen on Mars; sadly nothing was found to validate their hypothesis.

“Our present idea, and this is simply because we found no low temperature formation process, was that their was high temperature, silicic volcanism occurred at some time on Mars and then was carried into the lake,” says Morris.

Morris and his team are conducting many tests to determine the origin on this tridymite found on Mars. As they are not sure where or when this could have occurred, Curiosity is heading up to Mt. Sharp to search for more evidence of this material; meanwhile in the laboratory at NASA’s Johnson Space Center, the team is trying to make the tridymite by geological processes at lower temperatures.

“Now if it can be shown that you can make it at lower temperatures in a sediment then that turns the ball game around. We looked quite hard for evidence of that, but its not turned up if that can be done yet,” says Morris. “This was really an exciting discovery and we will see how all the forks down the road take it. Stay tuned.”

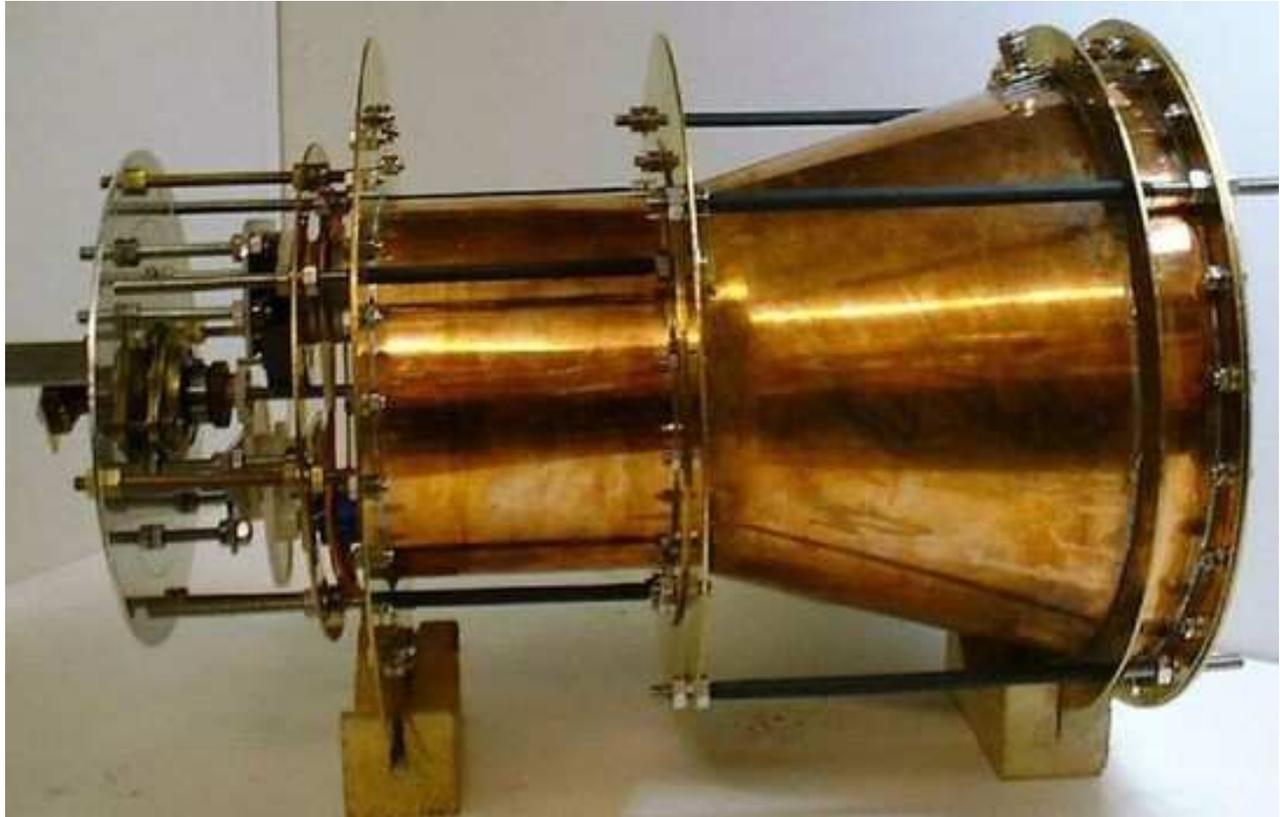
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From: “Keith A. Glass” saigak@comcast.net

FINNISH SCIENTIST PROVIDES ANOTHER EXPLANATION FOR THE ‘IMPOSSIBLE’ EM DRIVE

June 16, 2016 6:20 AM MST

http://www.examiner.com/article/finnish-scientist-provides-another-explanation-for-the-impossible-em-drive?cid=db_articles



EM Drive - NASA (public domain)

Ever since the EM drive entered the news about a year or so ago, it has sparked considerable controversy. The device is alleged to work by using microwaves that produce, in some fashion as yet unknown to science, thrust. Many scientists suggest that the EM drive is impossible as it violates known physics. However, a number of tests conducted in Great Britain, Germany, China, and at NASA's Eagleworks at the Johnson Spaceflight Center have resulted in thrust that cannot, as yet, be explained by experimental error. Wednesday, the International Business Times reported that a Finnish scientist has published an article in a peer-reviewed science journal with a possible explanation as to how the drive works.

“A new peer-reviewed paper on the EmDrive from Finland states that the controversial electromagnetic space propulsion technology does work due to microwaves fed into the device converting into photons that leak out of the closed cavity, producing an exhaust.

“The research, entitled ‘On the exhaust of electromagnetic drive’, is published in the journal AIP Advances 6 and is the brainchild of Dr Arto Annala, a physics professor at the University of Helsinki; Dr Erkki Kolehmainen, an organic chemistry professor at the University of Jyväskylä; and Patrick Grahn, a multiphysicist at engineering software firm Comsol.”

The explanation is similar to one offered by Mike McCulloch at Plymouth University in the UK, who postulated that the EM drive exerts thrust due to an effect predicted by general relativity called Unruh radiation.

The idea of a space drive that does not use propellant has profound implications for spaceflight. If the EM drive actually works and if it can be scaled up, it would enable voyages throughout the solar system and perhaps to the nearest stars that hitherto would take an impossibly long time. A spacecraft with an EM drive would not have to take with it any propellant, like a rocket, but instead, would need a power source, such as a nuclear reactor. As long as the power is turned on, an EM drive equipped spacecraft would continue to accelerate. Trips to Mars would take weeks instead of many months. The moons of the outer planets would be within reach.

But, in the meantime, experimentation and study will continue until the efficacy of the EM drive is proven or not.

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VIDEO: ASTEROID 2016 HO3 - EARTH'S CONSTANT COMPANION

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbbAnVU4rmY&feature=youtu.be>

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WORLD'S LARGEST PLANE GETS READY FOR ITS DEBUT: ENORMOUS STRATOLAUNCH WILL SEND ASTRONAUTS INTO ORBIT USING A MINI SHUTTLE

- * Stratolaunch Systems, funded by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen invited reporters to get their first look at the plane
- * It will have a wingspan of 117 metres and will launch satellites and spacecraft into precise orbits from high altitude
- * It will climb to 30,000 feet and launch a rocket at high altitude, avoiding the huge fuel costs of launching from Earth

By REUTERS and RYAN O'HARE FOR MAILONLINE, PUBLISHED: 23:01 EST, 19 June 2016
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3649882/Paul-Allens-space-company-nears-debut-worlds-biggest-plane.html#ixzz4CDt7M28C>

The largest plane ever to be built is creeping closer to completion, as the private space launch firm behind the craft - bankrolled by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen - invited reporters to get their first look at the 'Stratolaunch'.

With a gargantuan wingspan of 385 feet (117 m) and six engines, the plane is taking a new approach in the private space race, by launching satellites and spacecraft into orbit from high altitude.

The craft will be larger than Howard Hughes' 1947 H-4 Hercules, known as the 'Spruce Goose,' and the enormous Antonov An-225, a Soviet-era cargo plane originally built to transport the Buran space shuttle that is currently the world's largest aircraft.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

The plane will climb to 30,000 feet and launch a rocket at high altitude, avoiding the huge fuel costs of launching from Earth.



+11 The world's biggest plane is set to take off early next year in its first ever test flight. The aircraft, named the Stratolaunch Carrier, is currently under construction at Mojave Air and Spaceport in California, and will eventually have a wingspan of 385 feet (117 metres)

This will then go into orbit as normal and deliver a satellite.

Initially, the system is intended to deliver satellites weighing up to about 13,500lbs (6,124 kg) into orbits between 112 miles and 1,243 miles (180 km and 2000 km) above Earth.

Instead of a satellite, the Stratolaunch airplane could launch a Dream Chaser spaceship. This could act as a mini-shuttle to reach low Earth orbit destinations and return astronauts or payloads to. runway within 24 hours

Stratolaunch Systems is part of Allen's privately owned Vulcan Aerospace, with the plane's launch coinciding with a surge of new businesses planning to sell Internet access, Earth imagery, climate data and other services from networks of hundreds of satellites in low-altitude orbits around Earth.

But the vision is different from what Elon Musk's SpaceX, Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin, Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic and other companies have for building commercial highways to space.

Musk's goal is to fly people to Mars. Bezos is developing low-cost, reusable rockets with the goal of moving energy-intensive, heavy industry off Earth.

Branson is focused on space tourism and a small satellite launcher.

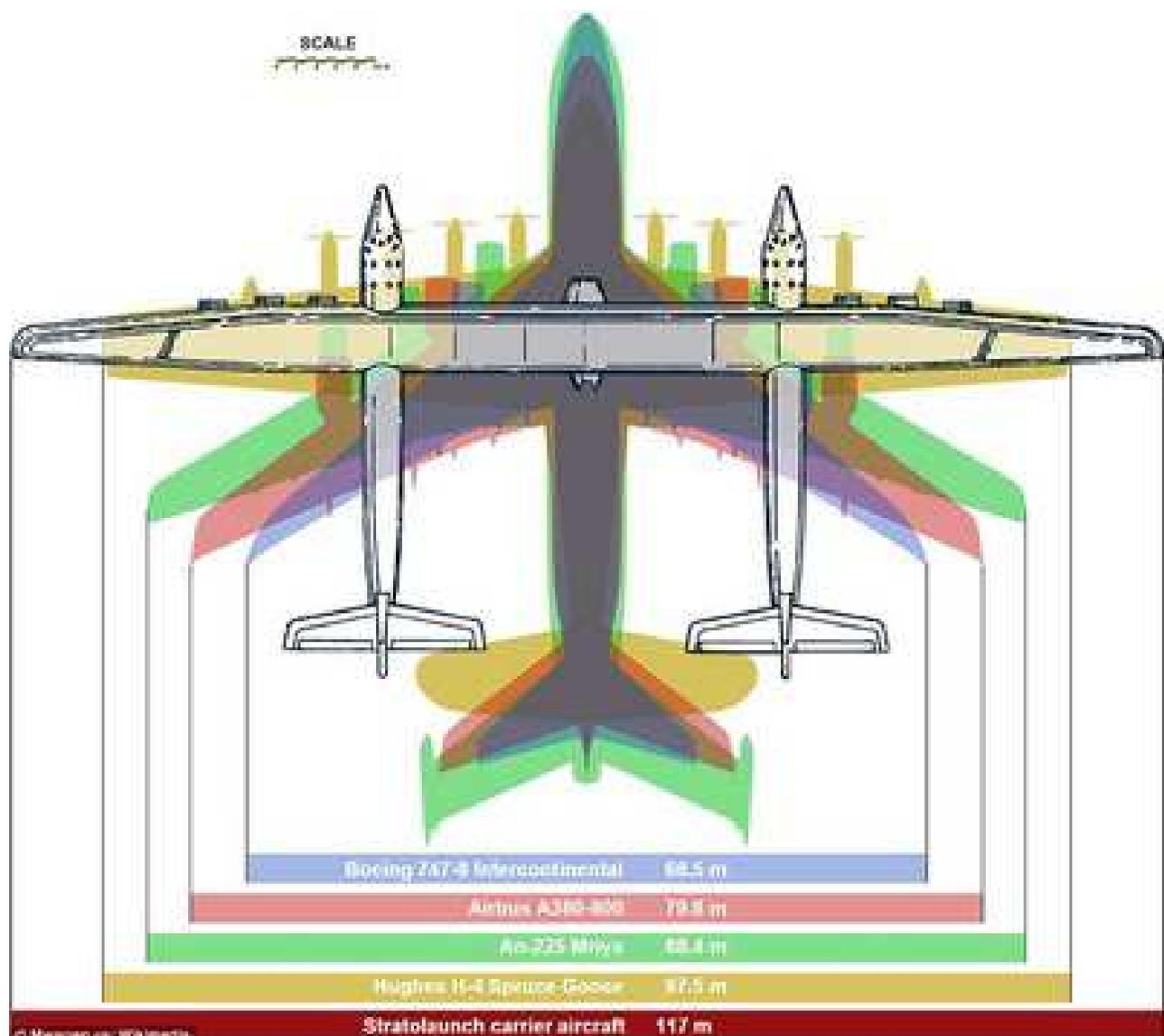
The advantage of the approach will be the ability to position the plane so satellites can be directly delivered into very precise orbits and do so quickly, without launch range

scheduling issues and weather-related delays, Chuck Beames, who oversees Allen's space ventures, said.

Instead of a satellite, the Stratolaunch airplane could launch a Dream Chaser spaceship. This could act as a mini-shuttle to reach low Earth orbit destinations and return astronauts or payloads to. runway within 24 hours

The Stratolaunch plane looks nothing like its behemoth predecessor aircraft.

Rather than transporting heavy cargo inside a main body section, Stratolaunch is a twin-fuselage craft that incorporates engines, landing gear, avionics and other parts from a pair of Boeing 747 jets coupled with a frame, wings and skin handmade of lightweight composites.



+11 The Stratolaunch carrier aircraft's 385 feet (117 metres) wingspan compares to 320 feet for H-4 Hercules and 225 feet for Boeing 747-8

Designed and built by Northrop Grumman Corp's Scaled Composites, the plane is similar in form and function to Scaled's aircraft built to ferry spaceships into the air and release them for independent rocket rides beyond the atmosphere, a service Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic intends to offer to paying passengers.

Stratolaunch Systems - part of Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen's privately owned Vulcan Aerospace - invited reporters to get their first look at 'Stratolaunch', what will be the world's biggest plane (pictured is part of the wing and one of two fuselages). Once construction has complete, the enormous craft will launch satellites into orbit from high altitudes

Stratolaunch plans a similar service for satellites, particularly the low-Earth orbiting multi-hundred member constellations under development by companies including SpaceX and Google's Terra Bella to provide internet access, Earth imagery and other data. But Stratolaunch will offer quick and precise satellite positioning, a service that will set it apart from competitors.

These satellite networks, based on low-cost spacecraft, are the fastest-growing segment of the global satellite industry which reported more than \$208 billion in revenue 2015, according to a Satellite Industry Association report.

Walking across the Stratolaunch plane's wings offers perspective on the vehicle's dimensions.

THE STRATOLAUNCH CARRIER AIRCRAFT: KEY FACTS

Wingspan: 385 feet (117 metres)

Engines: Six 747-class engines

Fuselage length: 238 feet (72 metres)

Weight: 1,200,000 lb (544,311 kg)

Maximum speed: 460 knots, 530 mph (850 km/h)

Maiden launch: Flight testing will begin in 2016. The first launch of the space launch vehicle is likely to take place in 2018.

Satellite delivery: Initially, the system is intended to deliver satellites weighing up to about 13,500lbs (6,124 kg) into orbits between 112 miles and 1,243 miles (180 km and 2000 km) above Earth.

Launch sites: Several sites are under consideration, including Kennedy Space Center, Wallops Island and Vandenberg AFB.

'You could fit a football field up here,' said Beames.

Assembly of the plane is 76 percent complete, with the engines, landing gear and one tail section still to be installed. The plane is expected to be finished before the end of the year. Commercial services are expected to begin before 2020.

When the plane was announced in 2011, Musk's Space Exploration Technologies, or SpaceX, was hired to provide a version of its Falcon rocket to catapult medium-class payloads into orbit after they were dropped by the Stratolaunch carrier aircraft.

When that arrangement fell through, Stratolaunch looked to Orbital ATK for a booster rocket but those plans were tabled as well due to technical issues.

Now, the company is mulling multiple partnerships with several rocket companies to provide launch services for small and medium-sized satellites. Human spaceflight for business and research is not in the immediate business plan, Beames said.

The plane is designed to carry a rocket and payload with a combined weight of up to 550,000 pounds (250,000 kg), on par with what a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket can launch from the ground.

Allen played an early role in stimulating what has come to be called the 'new space' industry, partnering with Scaled's founder Burt Rutan to pay for development of SpaceShipOne, the first and so far only privately funded spaceship to fly people beyond the atmosphere.

'Just like computing devices are rapidly changing what they can do and our way of life, access to space is changing the way we live,' said Beames. Stratolaunch Carrier has a 385 ft wingspan and six engines



+11 Each of the twin fuselages of the Stratolaunch Carrier aircraft is 238 feet (72 metres) long and, when complete, will be supported by 12 main landing gear wheels and two nose gear wheels

In news report last year, Scaled Composites president Kevin Mickey said the company had built 'roughly 200,000lbs of composite structure' for the vehicle.



+11 Engineer Burt Rutan, founder of Scaled Composites (left) speaks with Paul Allen, co-founder of Microsoft during a news conference

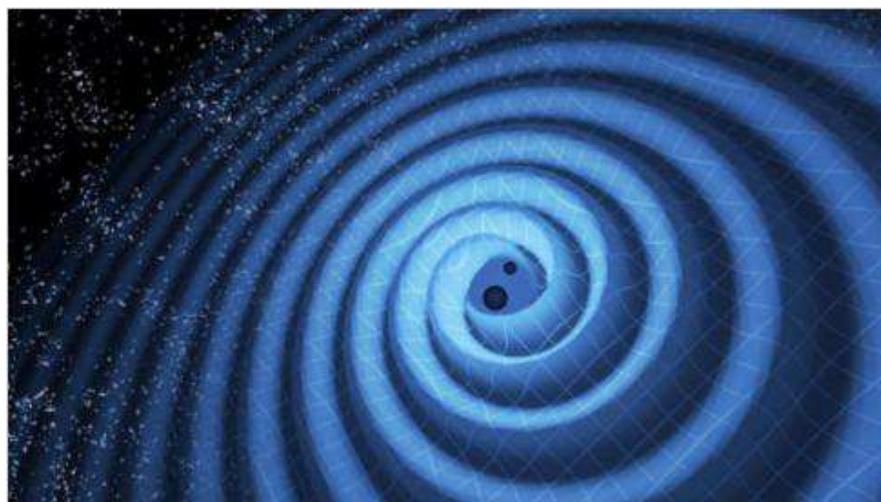
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From: "Jim Woosley" Jimwoosley@aol.com

GRAVITATIONAL WAVE DETECTOR FINDS DOUBLE COLLIDING BLACK HOLES — AGAIN

By Calla Cofield, Space.com Staff Writer, Published June 16, 2016

<http://www.foxnews.com/science/2016/06/16/gravitational-wave-detector-finds-double-colliding-black-holes-again.html>



An artists illustration of two black holes circling around each other and colliding, 1.4 billion light years from Earth. The merger created ripples in spacetime called gravitational waves. LIGO detected those waves in Dec (LIGO)

Distortions in the fabric of space-time, which were predicted by Albert Einstein a century ago,

have been directly detected for the second time.

Approximately 1.4 billion light-years from Earth, two black holes spiraled around each other and collided, creating ripples in the fabric of space-time. These ripples, known as gravitational waves, arrived at Earth in December 2015, and were detected by the Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory (LIGO).

The LIGO collaboration announced the finding on Wednesday during a news conference at the 228th meeting of the American Astronomical Society (AAS) in San Diego. The gravitational wave signal — officially known as GW151226 — was detected by LIGO on Dec. 25, 2015, at 11: 38 p.m. EDT (0338 a.m. GMT on Dec. 26).

In the U.S., many of the LIGO scientists were still been celebrating Christmas Day when the news arrived, and it "destroyed a few family dinners," said Vicky Kalogera, an astrophysicist at Northwestern University and a member of the LIGO collaboration, in an interview with Space.com.

LIGO made the first-ever direct detection of gravitational waves in September 2015, and team members announced that finding in February. That first gravitational wave signal was also created by two colliding black holes.

"The second discovery means the first discovery was not a one-off, 'we got lucky,' kind of thing," David Reitze, current executive director of the LIGO Laboratory, told Space.com. "If I could encapsulate what the second discovery means ... it's that LIGO is for real."

LIGO scientists waited until now to announce the second detection because they had to make sure that it was real, and that it was caused by a black hole collision, team members said.

WARPED SPACE

Einstein showed that space is not a fixed stage on which cosmic events play out, but rather a flexible fabric, like a 3D rubber sheet. Space can be warped by gravity, so the mass of the Earth, for example, creates a curve in space. (Einstein also showed that time is part of this universal fabric, and he combined space and time into the single universal feature called space-time).

Black holes are the densest objects in the universe, and create intense curves in space-time. When two black holes move around each other very quickly, those curves in space become ripples, and move outward.

The black holes that collided 1.4 billion years ago weighed about 14.2 and 7.5 times the mass of the sun, according to a paper detailing the new finding, published in the journal *Physical Review Letters* this week. (The gravitational wave signal detected by LIGO in September was created by two colliding black holes with masses of about 29 and 36 times that of the sun.)

Kalogera said the masses of the black holes provide clues about how they formed. Lighter black holes — those around 10 times the mass of the sun — very likely formed from two massive stars that lived close to each other, each perhaps siphoning material away from the other in a sort of cannibalistic relationship.

The fate of the two stars most likely followed a pattern seen all over the universe: Eventually the stars ran out of fuel, and their internal engines stopped burning. With nothing to keep them inflated, the stars collapsed. Following such a collapse, most massive stars will explode into a supernova, but at their core, the rapid inward rush of material drives up the internal pressure to the point that it creates a black hole. The gravitational pull of the new object is so intense, even light cannot escape.

The two black holes remain partners even after death, slowly spiraling around each other, eventually colliding. Einstein also showed that mass and energy are two sides of the same coin, and during this black hole merger, a quantity of mass "roughly equivalent to the mass of the sun was converted into gravitational waves," according to a statement from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which operates LIGO in collaboration with the California Institute of Technology.

The signal from the newly discovered black holes was slightly fainter than the signal detected in September. The faintness of the signal partly determines how well LIGO can narrow down the location of the event in the sky — the new signal came from somewhere in a region that measures 1,400 square degrees (the full moon is about one-half a degree on the sky). The September signal, which was "louder," came from a region measuring 600 square degrees.

Scientists hope to be able to narrow down the location of future events with the addition of more gravitational wave detectors, including the Virgo facility, located in Italy, which is scheduled to come online in January. The Virgo collaboration consists of 19 European research groups.

A MORE SENSITIVE DETECTOR

LIGO's first detection of gravitational waves back in September came immediately after a significant upgrade to the instruments, which increased LIGO's overall sensitivity. The observatory's detection of two double-black-hole collisions in its first four months of operation after the upgrade suggests that the observatory will be seeing more of these events in the future, Reitze said.

Black holes, true to their name, do not radiate or reflect light. However, in some cases, rapidly moving matter around a black hole will generate light and reveal the monster's presence to astronomers.

But as two black holes orbit around each other, any nearby matter is expected to be flung outward, like a cosmic salad spinner. According to scientists with the LIGO collaboration, that means these types of black hole pairs (those that are about 10 to 100 times the mass of the sun) are not expected to be visible to telescopes and observatories that see light or other particles.

"So far, gravitational wave detectors are the only way to see these kinds of systems," Reitze said. "So that's pretty exciting. I think we've opened up a window on black hole astrophysics that heretofore has not been opened."

(However, Kalogera added that the astrophysics community is open to the possibility that observations of these black hole collisions will reveal surprises, including, perhaps, the discovery that they do create light).

LIGO consists of two facilities, one in Hanford, Washington, and the other in Livingston, Louisiana.

Each detector is an L-shaped structure with arms 2.5 miles (4 kilometers) long. A laser beam shines down each arm from the L's crux, and mirrors at the ends reflect the light back. If a gravitational wave passes through the detector, it warps space-time, lengthening one arm relative to the other very slightly — a change that the detector can pick up.

LIGO has been described by Reitze and other LIGO scientists as "the most precise measuring device ever built," and this sensitivity essentially requires that there be two detectors — a signal must be picked up by both detectors to ensure that it is not a false alarm.

Currently, LIGO is undergoing additional upgrades that will make it as much as 20 percent more sensitive than it was last fall (when the two detections were made), Reitze said. The improvements will allow LIGO to search for signals in a volume of space 1.5 to 2 times larger than before, according to the statement from MIT.

Original article on Space.com.

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ABSOLUTELY & TOTALLY POLITICALLY INCORRECT & AS FAR TO THE CENTER AS YOU CAN GO!

From: "Frank Brayman" afranklin3@gmail.com

FACT CHECKING THREE DEMOCRATIC CLAIMS ON ASSAULT RIFLES AND GUNS

Glenn Kessler, The Washington Post, June 17, 2016

<http://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/fact-checking-three-democratic-claims-on-assault-rifles-and-guns/ar-AAhchuN?li=BBnbcA1&ocid=DELLDHP>



© AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite, File Sen. Chris Murphy,

“What we know is that in States that have imposed those reasonable limitations, there are less gun crimes. There are less homicides.”
—Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), speaking on the Senate floor, June 15

Readers have asked for fact checks of some of the gun rhetoric used by Democrats in the wake of the mass shooting in Orlando. In one cases, we have already delved into this material,

but other claims are new. So, let's take a look, starting with Murphy's statement.

The Facts

Murphy's staff said he was referring to a chart that appeared in the National Journal in 2015. As it turns out, we had carefully checked this chart when President Obama made a similar but more carefully phrased claim about "gun deaths." Note that Murphy referred to "homicides" and "gun crimes."

President Obama earned Two Pinocchios. Readers can check the full fact check, but in summary, we noted that most gun deaths — more than 60 percent in 2013 — are actually suicides.

The data used in the National Journal chart calculates the number of gun-related deaths per 100,000 people by including all gun deaths, including homicides, suicides, accidental gun deaths and legal intervention involving firearms. We removed suicides from the totals and reran the numbers — and in some cases, it made a huge difference. Half of the 10 states with the lowest gun-death rates turn out to be states with less-restrictive gun laws.

Moreover, the counting of gun laws is certainly open to interpretation, so that also affects the outcome. It's not enough to count laws to figure out the reasons why gun deaths are lower in one state than another. One would need to specifically determine whether certain laws had an effect, over time, on the gun-death rate in a state.

So, in this instance, Murphy's claim is worthy of Three Pinocchios because he specifically referred to homicides, rather gun deaths.

Three Pinocchios

(About our rating scale)

"AR-15-style weapons weren't legal in the United States until 2004 after being banned for 10 years. It is not coincidental that there was a massive increase in mass shootings in this country after 2004."

—Murphy, June 15

This is another problematic claim. Murphy's staff could not point to specific data to back it up.

There is significant contrary data that shows the 10-year assault weapons ban had little, if any, effect.

A 2004 study for the Justice Department found that the ban's impact on gun violence was mixed, at best; if the ban were renewed, the "likely effects on gun violence are likely to be small at best and perhaps too small for reliable measurement." The report said that assault weapons were "rarely used" in gun crimes.

James Alan Fox, a Northeastern University professor, collected data back to 1982 showing that assault weapons account for 24.6 percent of public mass shootings.

"Assault weapons are not as commonplace in mass shootings as some gun-control advocates believe," Fox wrote in a 2012 article in the journal *Homicide Studies*. Instead,

“semiautomatic handguns [47.9 percent] are far more prevalent in random massacres than firearms that would typically be classified as assault weapons.”

Did the assault weapons ban make a difference in mass shootings? Not significantly, according to Fox’s data. From 1976 to 1994, there were about 18 mass shootings per year. During the ban — 1995 to 2004— there were about 19 incidents per year. After the ban, through 2011, the average went up to nearly 21.

A 2016 study published in Applied Economics by Benjamin M. Blau of Utah State University and colleagues also looked at whether state and federal laws on assault rifle affected whether the weapon was used in public shootings between 1982 and 2014.

“Our study seems to indicate that both the Federal assault rifle ban and individual State assault rifle bans do not affect the likelihood that an assault rifle was used in a mass shooting,” Blau said. “Said differently, these types of bans do not appear to deter the ‘use’ of an assault rifle during a mass shooting. In the data that we used, determining whether assault rifle bans (negatively) influenced the likelihood of the occurrence of a mass shooting was not conclusive.”

Now, as our colleague Christopher Ingraham has pointed out, assault-style rifles have been used in seven of the eight high-profile public mass shootings since July of last year. That certainly raises the profile of the weapon, but the data so far does not show a link between the use of the weapons and the lifting of the ban, as Murphy asserts.

“Here’s our bottom line: The statistics cited and stories told on Wednesday all show that it is undeniable that guns kill thousands of Americans every year,” said Murphy spokesman Chris Harris. “And that when you step back and look at the totality of the data, easier access to firearms by way of fewer regulations leads to an increase in gun deaths – both homicides and suicides. This is true in the U.S. when comparing state-to-state, and in comparing the U.S. to other nations.”

The Pinocchio Test

Murphy says it is “not coincidental” that mass shootings have increased since the ban was lifted. But the data shows that the ban was not particularly effective in the first place — and that mass shootings have not increased significantly since then. The data set is relatively small, and maybe something has changed in the past year. But for now this claim is worthy of Three Pinocchios.

Three Pinocchios

(About our rating scale)

“America is absolutely awash with easily obtainable firearms. You can go down to a gun show at the local convention center and come away with a fully automatic assault rifle, without a background check, and most likely without having to show an identification card. So what are you waiting for?”

—Sen. Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), quoting an “al Qaeda spokesman” in a statement on the Senate floor, June 15, 2016

There was indeed an al Qaeda spokesman, Adam Gadahn, who used this exact language in 2011. The American-born Gadahn was later killed in a drone strike in 2015.

But even terrorists get their facts wrong, which is why Senate leaders should not uncritically quote them. As Reid put it, “This terrorist was talking about the gun show loophole. He was specifically pointing to a flaw in our nation’s gun laws that allows convicted terrorists to slip through – and it’s a big, wide hole to slip through.”

Actually, you can’t buy a “fully automatic assault rifle” at a gun show. The al-Qaeda spokesman—and by extension Reid—are mixing up semiautomatic weapons and automatic weapons.

Semiautomatic, as defined by the 1968 Gun Control Act, means one pull of the trigger equates to one bullet leaving the barrel. Fully automatic rifles are available in the United States, but they require about six months of paperwork from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. They are also significantly more expensive than their single-fire counterparts – and are banned in many states. Moreover, a 1986 law banned new ones, so any automatic weapon you purchased now would be an old one.

Still, one could purchase a semiautomatic weapon and then retrofit it with something called an “auto sear” that mimics an automatic weapon, though the weapon still fits the definition of a semiautomatic. This modification requires permission from ATF.

Correction: An astute reader points out that that this product, the Slide Fire stock, is not an auto sear. “Bump fire” stocks such as the Slide Fire stock simulate automatic fire by allowing the shooter to automatically pull the trigger each time the gun recoils. It does not require ATF permission since the weapon is still not considered automatic. Meanwhile, an auto sear must be registered prior to May 19, 1986 and can only be transferred with permission of the ATF because once installed, the rifle is considered an automatic weapon.]

As for the so-called “gun show loophole,” this refers to private sales within state lines. Any licensed gun dealer at a gun show must run a background check. Anyone at a gun show selling to someone from out of state must run a background check. A number of states, including California and New York, require background checks for all gun transactions; other states only require it for handgun purchases. Some gun shows require background checks as a matter of policy, no matter what the state law says. So, again, Gadahn – and by extensive Reid – is speaking sloppily.

A Reid spokesman declined to provide an on-the-record comment.

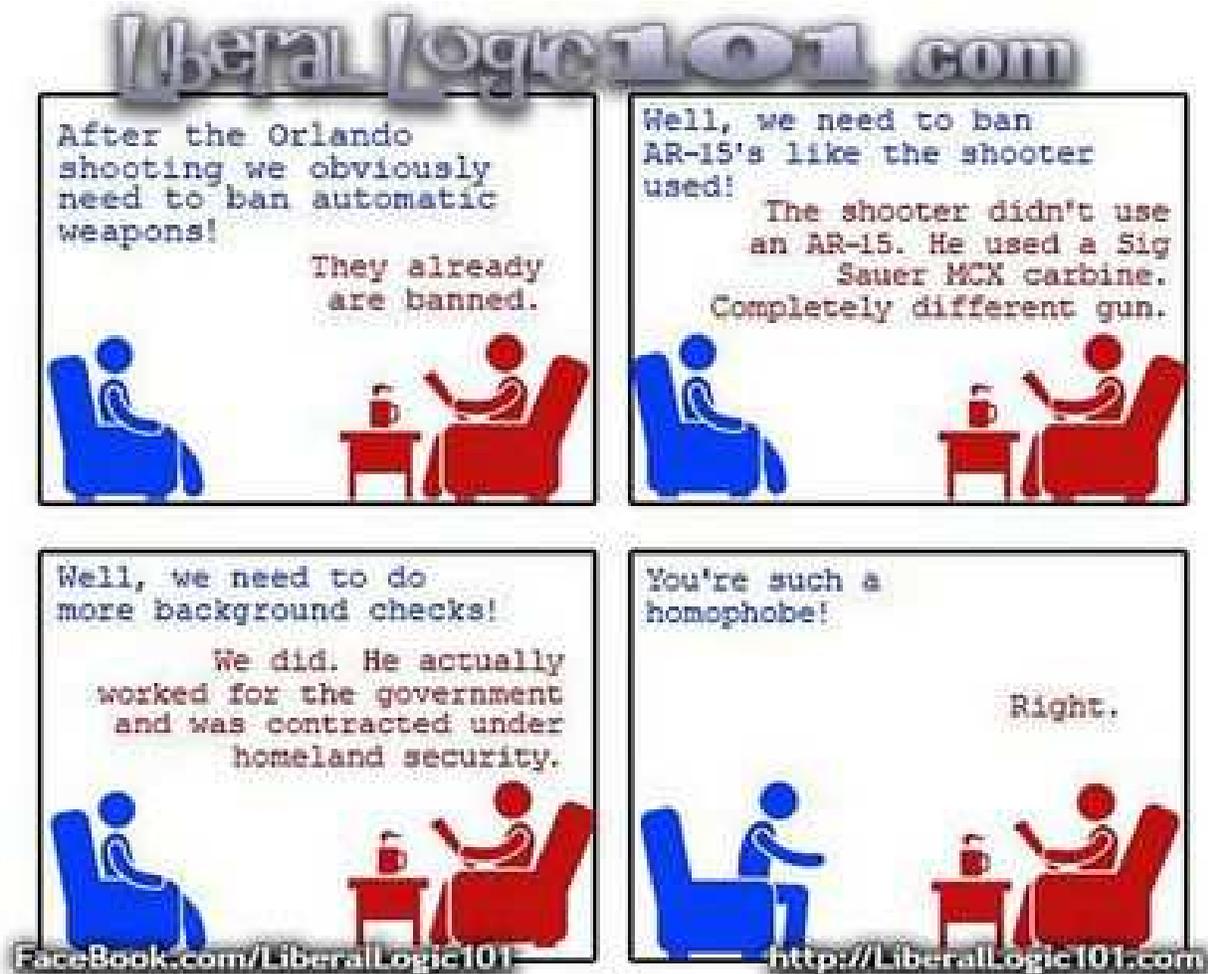
The Pinocchio Test

It may not make sense to award Pinocchios to a dead al-Qaeda operative. In this case, Reid should have more clearly stated that Gadahn was not correct, even if he believes that his quote makes a noteworthy point. Reid quoted the “fully automatic” line twice without informing his listeners that this was not actually possible. Moreover, Reid made these comments in a prepared statement that was publicly released as a news release– which could still be updated with a correction.

Two Pinocchios

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From Ed Smith's Facebook Page



(We don't mind if you download and share this image, just leave the attribution.)

<http://thefederalistpapers.integratedmarket.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/arguing-with-a-liberal-on-gun-control.jpg>

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From: "Jim Hollis" jhollis@northsidesales.com

QUESTION TO PONDER



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ABSOLUTELY & TOTALLY POLITICALLY INCORRECT & AS FAR TO THE LEFT AS YOU CAN GO!

From: "Keith A. Glass" salgak@comcast.net

WHY IT'S TIME TO REPEAL THE SECOND AMENDMENT

"[It] needs to be repealed because it is outdated, a threat to liberty and a suicide pact," says constitutional law professor

By David S. Cohen, Rolling Stone Magazine, June 13, 2016

<http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/why-its-time-to-repeal-the-second-amendment-right-bear-arms-20160613>

I teach the Constitution for a living. I revere the document when it is used to further social justice and make our country a more inclusive one. I admire the Founders for establishing a representative democracy that has survived for over two centuries.

SIDEBAR

But sometimes we just have to acknowledge that the Founders and the Constitution are wrong. This is one of those times. We need to say loud and clear: The Second Amendment must be repealed.

As much as we have a culture of reverence for the founding generation, it's important to understand that they got it wrong — and got it wrong often. Unfortunately, in many instances, they enshrined those faults in the Constitution. For instance, most people don't know it now, but under the original document, Mitt Romney would be serving as President Obama's vice president right now because he was the runner-up in the last presidential election. That part of the Constitution was fixed by the Twelfth Amendment, which set up the system we currently have of the president and vice president running for office together.

Much more profoundly, the Framers and the Constitution were wildly wrong on race. They enshrined slavery into the Constitution in multiple ways, including taking the extreme step of prohibiting the Constitution from being amended to stop the slave trade in the country's first 20 years. They also blatantly wrote racism into the Constitution by counting slaves as only 3/5 of a person for purposes of Congressional representation. It took a bloody civil war to fix these constitutional flaws (and then another 150 years, and counting, to try to fix the societal consequences of them).

There are others flaws that have been fixed (such as about voting and Presidential succession), and still other flaws that have not yet been fixed (such as about equal rights for women and land-based representation in the Senate), but the point is the same — there is absolutely nothing permanently sacrosanct about the Founders and the Constitution. They were deeply flawed people, it was and is a flawed document, and when we think about how to make our country a more perfect union, we must operate with those principles in mind.

In the face of yet another mass shooting, now is the time to acknowledge a profound but obvious truth – the Second Amendment is wrong for this country and needs to be jettisoned. We can do that through a Constitutional amendment. It's been done before (when the Twenty-First Amendment repealed prohibition in the Eighteenth), and it must be done now.

The Second Amendment needs to be repealed because it is outdated, a threat to liberty and a suicide pact. When the Second Amendment was adopted in 1791, there were no weapons remotely like the AR-15 assault rifle and many of the advances of modern weaponry were long from being invented or popularized.

Sure, the Founders knew that the world evolved and that technology changed, but the weapons of today that are easily accessible are vastly different than anything that existed in 1791. When the Second Amendment was written, the Founders didn't have to weigh the risks of one man killing 49 and injuring 53 all by himself. Now we do, and the risk-benefit analysis of 1791 is flatly irrelevant to the risk-benefit analysis of today.

Gun-rights advocates like to make this all about liberty, insisting that their freedom to bear arms is of utmost importance and that restricting their freedom would be a violation of basic rights.

But liberty is not a one way street. It also includes the liberty to enjoy a night out with friends, loving who you want to love, dancing how you want to dance, in a club that has historically provided a refuge from the hate and fear that surrounds you. It also includes the liberty to go to and send your kids to kindergarten and first grade so that they can begin to be infused with a love of learning. It includes the liberty to go to a movie, to your

religious house of worship, to college, to work, to an abortion clinic, go to a hair salon, to a community center, to the supermarket, to go anywhere and feel that you are free to do to so without having to weigh the risk of being gunned down by someone wielding a weapon that can easily kill you and countless others.

The liberty of some to own guns cannot take precedence over the liberty of everyone to live their lives free from the risk of being easily murdered. It has for too long, and we must now say no more.

Finally, if we take the gun-rights lobby at their word, the Second Amendment is a suicide pact. As they say over and over, the only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun. In other words, please the gun manufacturers by arming even the vast majority of Americans who do not own a gun.

Just think of what would have happened in the Orlando night-club Saturday night if there had been many others armed. In a crowded, dark, loud dance club, after the shooter began firing, imagine if others took out their guns and started firing back. Yes, maybe they would have killed the shooter, but how would anyone else have known what exactly was going on? How would it not have devolved into mass confusion and fear followed by a large-scale shootout without anyone knowing who was the good guy with a gun, who was the bad guy with a gun, and who was just caught in the middle? The death toll could have been much higher if more people were armed.

The gun-rights lobby's mantra that more people need guns will lead to an obvious result — more people will be killed. We'd be walking down a road in which blood baths are a common occurrence, all because the Second Amendment allows them to be.

At this point, bickering about the niceties of textual interpretation, whether the history of the amendment supports this view or that, and how legislators can solve this problem within the confines of the constitution is useless drivel that will lead to more of the same. We need a mass movement of those who are fed up with the long-dead Founders' view of the world ruling current day politics. A mass movement of those who will stand up and say that our founding document was wrong and needs to be changed. A mass movement of those who will thumb their nose at the NRA, an organization that is nothing more than the political wing of the country's gun manufacturers, and say enough is enough.

The Second Amendment must be repealed, and it is the essence of American democracy to say so.

If you would like to unsubscribe From: THE REVENGE OF HUMP DAY, please send an email message to Tim Bolgeo tbolgeo@comcast.net and say, "QUIT SENDING ME THIS STUPID RAG!"
