



Tom's Tidbits

Please, just stop talking.

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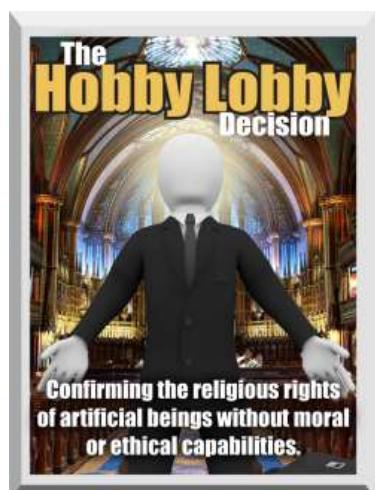
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Hobby Lobby. 'Nuff Said.



Tom's Tidbits

Please, just stop talking.



Greetings!

It was just over a year ago, in April of 2013, that ISIS officially announced its existence. Just over a year! We've spent the last three months of this year watching them sweep through Iraq, destroying the sham borders drawn after WWI and crushing any gains the US made in our ill-informed misadventure. Now, as the world debates how to prevent a brutal 7th-century theocracy from taking root in the Middle East, we desperately need voices of experience and wisdom to guide us.

Instead, we have noise from the same people who got us into this mess.

America was swept into a war of aggression by a flood of lies and half-truths from a very few ideological cultists. Against the better judgment of rational people in government and the intelligence community, and against the voices of millions in America and around the world, vested interests pushed our country over the fine line from political meddling to military criminality. The losses in blood, treasure, and prestige continue to mount.

But who's raising their voices in what passes for public debate on Iraq? At least George "Yellowcake" Bush is remaining blessedly silent. But Don "Saddam-has-links-to-911" Rumsfeld, Charles "Saddam-has-weapons-of-mass-destruction" Krauthammer, and Paul "We'll-be-welcomed-as-liberators" Wolfowitz are all crawling out from under their rocks. Worst of all, Dick "We-have-found-the-weapons-of-mass-destruction" Cheney, the torture fetishist whose company made billions off the Iraq debacle, has the stones to accuse President Obama of treason for not being able to maintain the lipstick on the pig he created.

I'm not against hearing from these people for partisan reasons; Obama and the Dems have made enough missteps to criticize on their own. I want them to be quiet on purely pragmatic grounds. Let's assume that (despite all evidence) the voices for war had every good intention in Iraq. They were wrong. Blatantly, inescapably, provably wrong. [When even Megyn Kelly thinks you're wrong](#), it's hard to blame partisanship. People of good will can disagree, but once you've *proved* yourself malicious and incompetent at every level... it's time to stop talking and let the adults handle things.

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

The Architects Of Iraq Now Blame Obama For Their Failure, But Here's What They Said A Decade Ago

"I can't tell you if the use of force in Iraq today would last five days, or five weeks, or five months, but it certainly isn't going to last any longer than that." — Donald Rumsfeld, Nov. 2002

"There's been none of the record in Iraq of ethnic militias fighting one another ... along with the requirement for large policing forces to separate those militias." — Paul Wolfowitz, Mar. 2003

"George Bush is not fighting this like Vietnam ... it's not gonna happen ... this is going to be a two-month war, not a ten year war." — Bill Kristol, Mar. 2003

"My belief is we will, in fact, be greeted as liberators." — Dick Cheney, Mar. 2003

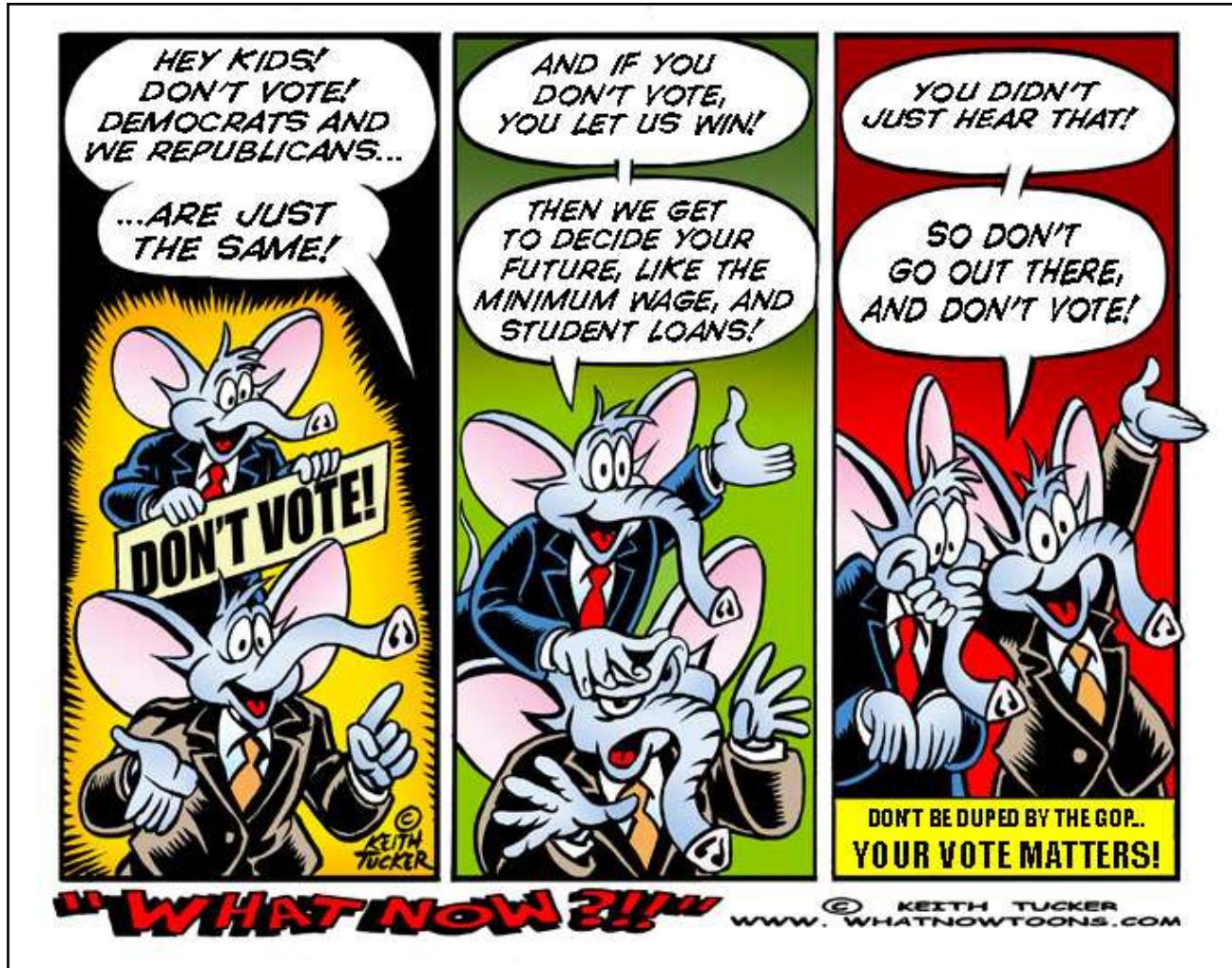
"Iraqi democracy will succeed, and that success will send forth the news, from Damascus to Tehran, that freedom can be the future of every nation." — George W. Bush, Nov. 2003



The Center for Public Integrity has put together an [exhaustive report on the lies that led to war](#). Search by individual liar, what they lied about, how often, and when, and then find out what they actually knew while they were lying. Hours of fun!

What NOW?!! Toons

Our monthly check in with Keith Tucker



Welcome to the Future

48 glimpses of things to come



The future is coming, and there's not much we can do to stop it. Every day we're inundated with new technologies, new ideas, and new possibilities. Some are thrilling, some are fun, and some are downright scary, but they're all things that we and our children will be living with. As we've trolled the net looking for interesting things to share with you we've run across some mind-blowing articles that didn't really mean much on their own, but we've collected them all in one place and they're pretty cool. Strap on your jet pack and get ready... this month, we're taking you on a whirlwind tour of your future...

3D Printed Body Parts

3D printing has come a long way in the past few years. These printers are able to make houses, foods, and even body parts! Tara breaks down some of the recent mindblowing developments in 3D printing, including how we're starting to print human organs!

Solar Powered Roads

Solar Roadways is a project to develop solar panels that are strong enough to be walked on, biked on, driven on and parked on. What's more, they contain heating elements designed to melt snow and, if that wasn't enough, they're embedded with LEDs to display warnings and traffic messages.

Hope for paraplegic patients: Implantable microelectrode stimulates spinal cord with electric impulses

People with severe injuries to their spinal cord currently have little or no prospect of recovery and remain confined to their wheelchairs. Now, all that could change with a new treatment that stimulates the spinal cord using electric impulses. The hope is that the technique will help paraplegic patients learn to walk again.

The Ethical Robot

UConn professor emerita Susan Anderson and her research partner, husband Michael Anderson of the University of Hartford, a UConn alumnus, are teaching machines how to behave ethically.

More Video Craziness With da Vinci Surgical Robots



It's worth mentioning, I think, that had a human not been in the loop here, the robot could almost certainly gotten that wishbone out much, much faster. In fact, I personally challenge robots everywhere to perform the fastest flawless game of Operation ever and post it on YouTube. Aaaaand, GO!

Brain-inspired Microchips Simulate One Million Neurons In Real Time

By modeling a circuit board on the human brain, Stanford bioengineers have developed microchips that are 9,000 times faster than a typical PC. Called Neurogrid, these energy-efficient circuits could eventually power autonomous robots and advanced prosthetic limbs. Bioengineers are smart to take inspiration from the human brain. It's a highly efficient information processor capable of crunching 100 million instructions per second (MIPS). Astoundingly, it only uses about 20 watts to power its 100 billion neurons. Today, our best supercomputers require a million watts to simulate a million neurons in real time (measured in teraflops). A standard desktop computer requires about 40,000 times more power to run and operates about 9,000 times slower.

Tricking the uncertainty principle: New measurement technique goes beyond the limits imposed by quantum physics

Today, we can measure the position of an object with unprecedented accuracy, but the uncertainty principle places fundamental limits on our ability to measure. Noise that results from the quantum nature of the fields used to make measurements imposes what is called the 'standard quantum limit.' This background noise keeps us from knowing an object's exact location, but a recent study provides a solution for rerouting some of that noise away from the measurement.

New technique lets scientists monitor small worm's entire nervous system

Researchers have created an imaging system that reveals neural activity throughout the brains of living animals. This technique, the first that can generate 3-D movies of entire brains at the millisecond timescale, could help scientists discover how neuronal networks process sensory information and generate behavior.

Engineer invents a way to beam power to medical chips deep inside the body

Researchers have invented a way to wirelessly beam power to programmable devices deep inside the body. These medical chips could be as small as a grain of rice. They would sit alongside nerves, muscles and other tissues. The chips could be programmed for a wide variety of medical tasks. The wireless power recharging would enable them to be implanted once and repowered as needed. This is a platform technology to enable a new therapeutic category -- 'electroceutical' devices.

Mini-satellites send high-definition views of Earth



Imagine being able to monitor deforestation tree by tree - and act accordingly. Or, as a farmer, remotely monitoring the

health and yield of crops on a daily basis over huge swathes of land. Perhaps as an aid agency, effortlessly estimating the flow of human traffic across borders over the course of a week. And for business retail analysts, estimating the footfall of a retail chain by

counting the sheer number of vehicles in its car parking lots across a region. These are just some of the countless possibilities conceivable when our world is observed from on-high every day or week, rather than the years it can currently take to completely update our planet's imagery on services such as Google Earth.

New manufacturing methods for 'soft' machines, robots

Researchers have developed a technique that might be used to produce 'soft machines' made of elastic materials and liquid metals for potential applications in robotics, medical devices and consumer electronics. Such an elastic technology could make possible robots that have sensory skin and stretchable garments that people might wear to interact with computers or for therapeutic purposes.

Should the Higgs boson have caused our universe to collapse? Findings puzzle cosmologists

British cosmologists are puzzled: they predict that the universe should not have lasted for more than a second. This startling conclusion is the result of combining the latest observations of the sky with the recent discovery of the Higgs boson

How Companies Learn Your Secrets

Andrew Pole had just started working as a statistician for Target in 2002, when two colleagues from the marketing department stopped by his desk to ask an odd question: "If we wanted to figure out if a customer is pregnant, even if she didn't want us to know, can you do that?"

Robots Programmed to Behave 'Morally'?



Can a robot love? Can it think? How about kill? These questions have been endlessly explored in sci-fi novels, but lately it's been a topic of international diplomacy. The United Nations probed present-day robot ethics last month at the four-day Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons meeting in Geneva. The meeting brought together experts and government officials to talk about the opportunities and dangers of killer robots. No international agreement was reached, but the

discussion made clear that autonomous robot technology moves much faster than the policies governing it. Meanwhile, here in B.C., robotics experts are investigating the ethical implications inherent to firsthand interactions between humans and robots.

[Robots on TV: AI goes back to baby basics](#)

A robot toddler could have much to teach artificial intelligence (AI) researchers and psychologists alike, by providing a simplified non-human model for early child development. Sensorimotor theories of cognition argue that body posture and position affect perception. In one experiment, toddlers were presented with an object that was always in the same place – to their left, for example. If their attention was then drawn to that location when the object was absent and a keyword was spoken, the toddlers later associated the keyword with the object, and did so wherever it was presented to them – whether to their right or left.

[Weave a cell phone into your shirt? Engineers envision an electronic switch just three atoms thick](#)

Researchers believe they've discovered a crystal that can form a monolayer three atoms thick. Computer simulations show that this crystal, molybdenum ditelluride, can act like a switch: its crystal lattice can be mechanically pulled and pushed, back and forth, between two different atomic structures -- one that conducts electricity well, the other that does not. The team hopes experimental scientists will make this semiconductor crystal and use it to fashion flexible electronics.

[Monkey controls limb movements of 'avatar' using its mind](#)

In the movie Avatar, humans operate the bodies of a human-hybrid species, called Na'vi, with their minds. Now, researchers from Harvard Medical School in Boston, MA, have carried out a similar technique in monkeys - using neural devices that allowed an alert monkey to control the mind of one that was temporarily paralyzed. The research team, including Ziv Williams of the Department of Neurosurgery at Harvard Medical School, says the findings provide proof of concept that such strategies could be used in the rehabilitation of patients who are paralyzed.

[FDA panel debates technique that would create embryos with three genetic parents](#)

The provocative notion of genetically modified babies met the very real world of federal regulation Tuesday, as a government advisory committee began debating a new technique that combines DNA from three people to create embryos free of certain inherited diseases. The two-day meeting of the Food and Drug Administration panel is focused on a procedure that scientists think could help women who carry DNA mutations for conditions such as blindness and epilepsy. The process would let them have children without passing on those defects. The debate over whether the technique — nicknamed “three-parent IVF” — should be allowed to proceed to human tests underscores how quickly the science of reproductive medicine is evolving. Scientists argue that this technology, like cloning and embryonic stem cell research, has huge potential to help people. But it is also highly sensitive, touching ethical and political nerves.

[The Extreme Science of Flyboarding](#)



Flyboarding is captivating in its tricks and its physics, with hundreds of horsepower shooting out of your feet, but can it become a viable competitive sport? Doc North reports on the science and gives it a try for himself.

[Google: Yes, we “Read” your Gmail](#)

While Google Inc. (GOOG) insists its actions are perfectly legal, what the world's top internet firm is doing with your email may come as a shocking surprise for some. Google in a court filing this week wrote: “All users of email must necessarily expect that their emails will be subject to automated processing. Just as a sender of a letter to a business colleague cannot be surprised that the recipient's assistant opens the letter, people who use web-based email today cannot be surprised if their emails are processed by the recipient's [email provider] in the course of delivery. Indeed, ‘a person has no legitimate expectation of privacy in information he voluntarily turns over to third parties.’”

Meet the woman who did everything in her power to hide her pregnancy from big data

Janet Vertesi, assistant professor of sociology at Princeton University, had an idea: would it be possible to hide her pregnancy from big data? Thinking about technology—the way we use it and the way it uses us—is her professional life's work. Pregnant women, she knew, are a marketing gold mine; a pregnant woman's marketing data is worth 15 times as much as the average person's. Could Vertesi, a self-declared "conscientious objector" of Google ever since 2012, when they announced to users that they'd be able to read every email and chat, navigate all the human and consumer interactions having a baby would require and keep big data from ever finding out?

Corn-eating worm evolves to feed on GMO corn designed to kill it

A voracious crop-destroying pest has evolved to feed upon the very GMO product that was designed to eliminate it. Wired.com reported that the triumph over corn rootworms was one of biotech's great success stories, saving billions of dollars in crops each year. So-called Bt corn — named for the *Bacillus thuringiensis* gene, which killed rootworms, corn borers and other pests — currently makes up more than three quarters of the total corn grown in the U.S., a lack of crop diversity that could spell disaster if the resistant cornworms spread.

How to erase a memory -- and restore it: Researchers reactivate memories in rats

Researchers have erased and reactivated memories in rats, profoundly altering the animals' reaction to past events. The study is the first to show the ability to selectively remove a memory and predictably reactivate it by stimulating nerves in the brain at frequencies that are known to weaken and strengthen the connections between nerve cells, called synapses.

Building heart tissue that beats: Engineered tissue closely mimics natural heart muscle

When a heart gets damaged, such as during a major heart attack, there's no easy fix. But scientists working on a way to repair the vital organ have now engineered tissue that closely mimics natural heart muscle that beats, not only in a lab dish but also when implanted into animals.

In 100 Years, What Will The Internet Look Like?

We can't predict the future with 100 percent accuracy, whether it's 10 years or 100 years from now. But we can look at where today's technology is heading for a glimpse at what the Internet may be like in the future. Cars will work like laptops on wheels; you'll be emailing tangible objects, using DNA to authenticate digital documents and searching the Web with your brain, among other things. At the pace of technology moves, it's likely you'll see some of these innovations come to life.

Robots Are Stealing Your Job

Robots are awesome, but beware: They're after your jobs! Here's a look at the work robots are doing today, that once required a human touch.

Amazing video shows bio-engineered 'bulletproof' human skin reinforced with spider silk

Human skin can stop a bullet - with a little help from genetically modified goats. The skin is mixed with goat 'milk' from goats 'tweaked' to produce the same protein found in spider silk. Woven spider silk is four times stronger than Kevlar, the material used in bulletproof vests. The 'silk' is layered with bio-engineered human skin grown in laboratory, and can withstand a direct impact from a bullet - although not one fired at full speed, yet.

World's only robot rock band takes the stage at international android exhibition

Other bands may cover their arms in tattoos, spikes and 1980s haircuts, but they will still not be able to beat these guys when it comes to being metal. German metal band Compressorhead are made up of three 5ft tall robots, and brought down the house when they took the stage at the Robot Ball exhibition at ARTPLAY Center for Design in Moscow this weekend.

New Computer Programming Language Imitates The Human Brain

For nearly 70 years, computer scientists have depended upon the Von Neumann architecture. The computer that you're working on right now still uses this paradigm — an electronic digital system driven by processors and consisting of various processing units, including an arithmetic logic unit, a control unit,

memory, and input/output mechanisms. These separate units store and process information sequentially, and they use programming languages designed specifically for those architectures. But the human brain, which most certainly must be a *kind* of computer, works a lot differently. It's a massively parallel, massively redundant "computer" capable of generating approximately 10^{16} processes per second. It's doubtful that it's as serialized as the Von Neumann model. Nor is it driven by a proprietary programming language (though, as many cognitive scientists would argue, it's likely driven by biologically encoded algorithms). Instead, the brain's neurons and synapses store and process information in a highly distributed, parallel way.

[IBM's "neurosynaptic" chips are the closest thing to a synthetic brain yet](#)

While the comparison between the computer and the human brain is one that has been made for over half a century, the way each one processes information could not be more different. Now, IBM researchers have designed a revolutionary chip that, for the first time, *actually* mimics the functioning of a human brain. Are we finally on the verge of true artificial intelligence?

[Your T-shirt's ringing: Printable tiny flexible cell phones for clothes?](#)

A new version of 'spaser' technology being investigated could mean that mobile phones become so small, efficient, and flexible they could be printed on clothing. A spaser is effectively a nanoscale laser or nanolaser. It emits a beam of light through the vibration of free electrons, rather than the space-consuming electromagnetic wave emission process of a traditional laser.

[Hearing quality restored with bionic ear technology used for gene therapy: Re-growing auditory nerves](#)

Researchers have for the first time used electrical pulses delivered from a cochlear implant to deliver gene therapy, thereby successfully regrowing auditory nerves. The research also heralds a possible new way of treating a range of neurological disorders, including Parkinson's disease, and psychiatric conditions such as depression through this novel way of delivering gene therapy.

[Bionic bodies](#)

Advances in bionic technology are changing lives, and wearable robots are making it possible for paralysed people to walk. Phil Torres takes us to Colorado to meet one woman who is standing tall despite a devastating disability. Amanda Boxel was injured in a skiing accident 21 years ago that left her paralysed from the waist down. Now, with the help of Ekso Bionics, she can stand and walk again using a battery-powered exoskeleton that was originally designed for the military. Kosta Grammatis takes us to Maryland to meet a young man who surprised the world by inventing a test that predicts cancer. Sixteen-year-old Jack Andraka invented a cancer screening test which uses strips to test blood for high levels of mesothelin, a protein overproduced in people with pancreatic, ovarian, and lung cancers. This test can catch cancers in their earliest stages where chance for survival is 100 percent.



[Electrode Experiment Allows Paralyzed Man To Stand](#)

A young man paralyzed by an injury to his spinal cord has regained the ability to stand for short periods, take steps with help and move his legs and feet at will, with the help of an electrical stimulator implanted in his lower back. The device is experimental and not available to other patients, and because it has been studied in only one person it is not known whether it would work as well in other people with different types of [spinal injury](#).

[Robot Surgeon Enters Through Belly Button](#)

Tiny medical robots capable of operating inside an astronaut's body could someday provide emergency surgery in space without the mess. A fist-sized robot is scheduled for its first zero-gravity test in the next several months, one small step toward enabling robotic medical attention for humans stuck on deep-space missions lasting for months. The compact robot is the product of Virtual Incision and researchers from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, according to New Scientist. It's designed to slip inside a person's body through a small belly button incision — not unlike the dreaded robotic "bug" from "The Matrix" — and inflate the patient's abdominal cavity with an inert gas to create room to work. Two arms tipped with multiple tools can perforate gastric ulcers, cauterize and suture wounds, or perform emergency appendectomies.

Living organ regenerated for first time: Thymus rebuilt in mice

Scientists have succeeded in regenerating a living organ for the first time. Researchers rebuilt the thymus -- an organ in the body located next to the heart that produces important immune cells. The advance could pave the way for new therapies for people with damaged immune systems and genetic conditions that affect thymus development. The team reactivated a natural mechanism that shuts down with age to rejuvenate the thymus in very old mice. After treatment, the regenerated organ had a similar structure to that found in a young mouse.

Stick-on electronic health monitoring patches



Wearing a fitness tracker on your wrist or clipped to your belt is so 2013. Engineers have demonstrated thin, soft stick-on

patches that stretch and move with the skin and incorporate off-the-shelf electronics for sophisticated wireless health monitoring. The patches stick to the skin like a temporary tattoo and incorporate a unique microfluidic construction with wires folded like origami to allow the patch to bend and flex.

Don't Worry, Doctor Robonaut Is Here to Help

Robots are notoriously horrible at being generalists. The most efficient and effective robots have been purpose-built to do one specific task very, very well. This is why we have Roombas and not Rosies, and it's why robotic telemedicine platforms look (and let's be honest here) kind of scary, all things considered. But, at least part of the reason that humans (as a species) are so successful is that we **are** generalists. And our fantasy is to be able to create robots that are generalists too, able to bring that trademark robot intelligence and speed and precision to bear on whatever task we might require. This is certainly not the easiest route to take, but under some very specific circumstances, it might be the best one, which is why NASA's Robonaut is learning to be a doctor.

Gunshot victims to be suspended between life and death

Doctors will try to save the lives of 10 patients with knife or gunshot wounds by placing them in

suspended animation, buying time to fix their injuries. NEITHER dead or alive, knife-wound or gunshot victims will be cooled down and placed in suspended animation later this month, as a groundbreaking emergency technique is tested out for the first time. Surgeons are now on call at the UPMC Presbyterian Hospital in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to perform the operation, which will buy doctors time to fix injuries that would otherwise be lethal. "We are suspending life, but we don't like to call it suspended animation because it sounds like science fiction," says Samuel Tisherman, a surgeon at the hospital, who is leading the trial. "So we call it emergency preservation and resuscitation."

In the future, everything will learn

This year, IBM researchers are exploring the idea that everything will learn – driven by a new era of cognitive systems where machines will learn, reason and engage with us in a more natural and personalized way. These innovations are beginning to emerge enabled by cloud computing, big data analytics and learning technologies all coming together.

Immortality for Humans by 2045

The man behind the 2045 Initiative, described as a nonprofit organization, is a Russian named Dmitry Itskov. The ambitious timeline he's laid out involves creating different avatars. First a robotic copy that's controlled remotely through a brain interface. Then one in which a human brain can be transplanted at the end of life. The next could house an artificial human brain, and finally we'd have holographic avatars containing our intelligence much like the movie "Surrogates." Gizmag's Dario Borghino wisely warned that "one must be careful not to believe that improbable technological advances automatically become more likely simply by looking further away in the future." And in the grand scheme of things, 2045 is not that far away.

The Future Of Drones: Technology Vs. Privacy

Will the skies of the future be filled with buzzing drones? Small commercial drones available to anyone are already up. They're monitoring farmers' fields, wildlife and our border and are used by photographers to capture spectacular vistas. Some say drones will replace ground delivery of many of our packages. One enthusiast predicts one in five persons will own one. But the fact that many of these unmanned flying vehicles has a camera raises privacy issues that Senate Intelligence Committee Chair Dianne Feinstein says may soon need to be addressed through regulation. Morley Safer explores the new world of commercial

drones and talks to Feinstein and others about it for a 60 Minutes story to be broadcast Sunday, March 16 at 7 p.m. ET/PT.

[Electric 'thinking cap' controls learning speed](#)

Caffeine-fueled cram sessions are routine occurrences on any college campus. But what if there was a better, safer way to learn new or difficult material more quickly? What if "thinking caps" were real? Scientists have now shown that it is possible to selectively manipulate our ability to learn through the application of a mild electrical current to the brain, and that this effect can be enhanced or depressed depending on the direction of the current.

[Firefighting Robot Prepares To Walk Through Flames](#)



The ultimate Navy Seal may end up being a humanoid robot that can carry heavy equipment, interact with officers and

head straight into a face-melting fire without hesitation. The U.S. Naval Research Laboratory's Shipboard Autonomous Firefighting Robot, SAFFiR for short, has been in the works for several years as a safety tool for Navy ships. Recently the advanced bot was brought out for a collaborative demonstration with researchers from Virginia Tech and the University of Pennsylvania, according to the lab.

[Superhero Vision Coming in Graphene Contact Lenses?](#)

It sounds like something from a spy thriller movie: putting on contact lenses that give you infrared vision without the need for a bulky contraption that covers your face. But now, thanks to research at the University of Michigan, such a contact lens is a real possibility. The Michigan researchers turned to the optical capabilities of graphene to create their infrared contact lens. IBM last year demonstrated some of the photoconductivity mechanisms of graphene that make it an attractive infrared detector.

[New materials developed that are as light as aerogel, yet 10,000 times stronger](#)

Imagine materials strong enough to use in building airplanes or motor cars, yet are literally lighter than air. Soon, that may not be so hard to do because a team of researchers from MIT and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) have developed new ultra-lightweight materials that are as light as aerogel, but 10,000 times stiffer, and may one day revolutionize aerospace and automotive designs.

[This is what robot strippers look like](#)

The robot apocalypse may just start in a strip club. At the CeBIT expo in Hanover, German software developer Tobit put together a booth that features two pole dancing robots, egged on by a fellow robot DJ with a megaphone for a head. The two ladybots move and twist in time to the music, though the actual performance is surprisingly tame. This isn't the first time Tobit has brought the robots to the show, but this year featured updated models. "We changed them a little bit to make them more interesting," a Tobit representative told RuptlyTV. According to the BBC, you can pick up a bot of your own for \$39,500.

[Record-breaking inflatable wind turbine floats 1000 feet above Alaska](#)



Conventional wind turbines, which

are based on land and are mounted on top of tall masts, are probably the most recognizable form of wind energy harvesting devices, and wind farms are already a viable method of producing clean renewable energy. But tower-mounted wind turbines do have a few limitations, as winds nearer to the ground can sometimes be inconsistent, with slow or gusty wind conditions affecting the power output from them. And while ground-based wind turbines remain a practical system for generating clean electricity, the future of low cost wind power for remote areas might be found in high altitude wind turbines (HAWTs), which are deployed high above the Earth, where they can take advantage of stronger and more consistent winds.

FREE Sellwood Concerts Are Back In Full Swing

Here's a taste of what you've been missing



We look forward all year to the FREE concerts in Sellwood Park. Every Monday night for five weeks, the park is filled with the sound of music, the laughter of families, and the lazy haze of summer. These concerts are part of a larger program put on by Portland Parks and Recreation, who promise there will be some free activity in a Portland park every night through the summer. Concerts, swimming, picnics, movies, and more are available to delight you and your family. But, of course, we're partial to our own Sellwood shows and we'd like for you to join us. To help tempt you into coming, we'll share some pictures and videos from the first two shows of the season, "The Quick and Easy Boys" from July 7 and "Pilon D'Azucar" from July 14th's Salsa Night show. We hope you enjoy this taste of what you've been missing, and that you'll be there for the remaining three shows of the season...

July 21- Love Gigantic - *Nimble, Anthemic Folk Rock*

July 28- Robert Moore & The Wildcats - *Original Jazz & Blues*

Aug 4- The Wanderlust Orchestra - *Vaudevillian, Bohemian Cabaret*



Click here for a 47-second video taste of Pilon D'Azucar's performance



Getting into the groove of The Quick and Easy Boys



"The Quick and Easy Boys" jamming out



Dog heaven in the shadow of the Sellwood Bridge



View down the dock on the Willamette River



Sellwood Park has its own swimming area on the Willamette River



The Quick and Easy Boys after the show



The sunsets would make the evening special even if nothing else was going on



Plan some time for your kids to enjoy the free arts and crafts booth



The growing “vendors row” is an opportunity to meet the neighborhood businesses who help make these concerts possible.



Stop by and see us at the palatial Tom Dwyer pavilion. Your kids can enter our “Car of the Future” coloring contest to win extravagant prizes!



If you don't bring food, don't worry. You'll find everything for dinner at the many food vendors.



After the music, sun, and food, you'll find plenty of people-watching to keep you occupied



The fun doesn't necessarily end when the show's over. Many people stay after the crowds have left to enjoy the evening on their own.

When Will YOU Switch To Synthetic Oil?

Synthetic oil is better for you, your vehicle, and the planet



(July, 2011)- Not so long ago, few people had heard of synthetic oil and even fewer wanted to buy it. Things have changed... crude oil prices are rising, people are keeping their cars longer, and more people are worried about the environment. Now we have a steady stream of people at the shop asking about this important product, but many more still aren't aware of the advantages of synthetic oil. If you're one of the people who hasn't made the jump yet, there are three main reasons to switch to synthetic oil. Synthetics are:

- **Better for you**
- **Better for your vehicle**
- **Better for the planet**

Let's look at each of these points a little more closely...

Better for you

Synthetic oils are better for you because they **save you valuable time and money!** The superior protection of synthetics mean you only need to get your vehicle's oil changed half as often, so you'll spend less of your valuable time chasing oil changes. We recommend that clients using synthetic oils have their Minor Interval Service with oil change about every 6 months or 6000 miles. This interval coincides well with the need for tire rotation and periodic inspection. The superior properties of the synthetic oils could (in a pinch) actually be pushed as far as 12 months or 10,000 miles, though we would not recommend it. The superior protection also reduces expensive mechanical failures, keeping you on the road more reliably.

Better for your vehicle

When synthetic oils were in their infancy in the 40's and 50's, the challenge was to make them as good as conventional oil. Since then, **synthetic technology has far surpassed the capabilities of regular crude.** Now, synthetics have fewer impurities, leave fewer deposits, are better for extreme driving conditions (especially temperature), offer better mileage, lower oil consumption, lower octane requirements, and more. For example, "Film Strength" is how strong the film of oil is between any moving parts. While petroleum oils have film strength of around 500 psi, synthetics average about 3000 psi, over 6 times stronger!

In modern engines with tight tolerances and high operating temperatures this extra strength is critical to extending the life of your engine. In New York taxi tests, taxis that were run 60,000 miles on synthetic oil without oil changes (but using a special filter) showed less wear than taxis using conventional oil changed every 3000 miles.

Better for the planet

Crude oil has thousands of natural impurities that can't be entirely removed in the refining process. The corrosive acids, paraffin and other waxes, heavy metals, asphalt, naphthenes and benzenes, as well as countless compounds of sulfur, chlorine, and nitrogen in crude oil mean more toxics emitted into the air with crude than with synthetics. These chemicals also pass through your catalytic converter, reducing its life and efficiency.

The actual size of the oil molecules also has an effect on emissions. Crude oil has variable size molecules, while synthetic oil's molecules are mostly the same size. In crude oil the smaller molecules are stripped away to form gunk in the engine and goo in the emissions.

Since synthetic oil is made from crude oil as a feedstock, it isn't a complete replacement for conventional oil. **The extended life of synthetic oils does reduce our dependence on crude oil.** This is good for two reasons: Environmentally, every drop of oil we don't use is a drop we don't use. This leaves carbon sequestered in the ground and not free in the atmosphere to influence global climate change. Politically, every drop of oil we don't import helps reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Conclusion

So why hasn't everyone already switched to synthetic oil? Some people (even professional mechanics) aren't aware that modern synthetic oils have solved the problems of their early ancestors, but the biggest reason is probably the fact that the oil itself is about twice expensive as conventional oil. This seems like a logical stumbling block, but the higher price for the synthetic oil has to be weighed against the advantages of your time savings, fewer oil changes, better mechanical performance, longer vehicle life, better mileage, lower emissions, and the environmental advantages. We think that the advantages far outweigh any perceived cost drawbacks, and recommend that you consider synthetics on your next Minor Interval Service. Like many quality products; they may cost more upfront but the long-term return makes them by far the best value.

Drew's Kitchen

Mushroom Chicken Sauté



Ingredients:

- 1 tsp olive oil, divided
- 1 tbsp butter or margarine, divided
- 2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- Salt and pepper
- 8 oz mushroom pieces (about 3 cups; choose from button, crimini, oyster, and shiitake)
- 2 green onions with tops, sliced
- 1/3 cup dry white wine

Preparation:

- Heat half the olive oil and half the butter in 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat.
- Season chicken with salt and pepper and add to skillet.
- Cover and sauté, turning once, until juices run clear, 10-15 minutes; remove and keep hot.
- Add the remaining oil and butter to skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms. Cook and toss 5-7 minutes, until golden.
- Add green onions and wine; cook 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
- Spoon mushroom-wine mixture over chicken and serve.

Shop Talk

Summer Freebies Abound



Do you have an older vehicle we HAVEN'T seen?

You know we don't take on NEW clients with older vehicles, but you may not know that for our EXISTING clients with older-than-1998 vehicles we HAVEN'T seen, we can consider supporting those as well. While many vehicles may be too poorly maintained for us to take on, we'd be happy to inspect your vehicle and care for it if possible.

If you act before August 31 we'll perform our Comprehensive Inspection (normally \$150) on your older vehicle for just \$75! And, if you spend a minimum of \$300, it's FREE!

If ANY of your vehicles are approaching our 1998 age limit, DON'T WORRY... we don't "age out" vehicles, and we'll gladly continue servicing yours. While we don't take on NEW clients with older vehicles, our policy has always been to service existing clients' older vehicles as long as it makes economic sense for them.

Referral Reward Program Update

Our Referral Reward program is continuing, and we're coming up on our second quarterly winner next month. **To date, 61 people have combined to donate over \$2260 to deserving organizations!** You can join the fun and help a group you care about by just referring a new client to our shop. For every new client who comes in and tells us you sent them, we'll donate 20% (up to \$50) of the qualifying purchases from their first invoice to the non-profit group of your choice. There's more... each quarter we'll choose one group to get an additional \$200, and at the end of the year pick one group for a final \$500 award to their cause! Naturally there are a few restrictions, but you can read all those at our [Referral Reward Webpage](#).



Here are the groups our clients have chosen to support our shop most recently. Click the link for more information on any of these groups...

[Ride Connection](#)
[ACLU Oregon](#)
[XRAY-FM](#)

[Nature Conservancy](#)
[Portland Waldorf School](#)
[Equine Outreach](#)

[Sisters of the Road Café](#)
[Planned Parenthood](#)
[The Clear Fund \(Givewell\)](#)

Your reviews and referrals matter

We are constantly grateful for the supportive and loyal clients we have developed over the years. Your comments and appreciation keep us on the right road to providing the superior automotive service you deserve. Your reviews and referrals are not only the highest compliments we can receive, but they're the lifeblood of our new business. If you like what you've found at Tom Dwyer Automotive Services, please tell a friend or take a minute to write a review on [Yelp](#), [Angieslist](#), [Google](#), or the review site of your choice. Thank you!



Postcard Contest

How's the summer going for you? Have you gotten out to see new parts of the world, experience new things, or think new thoughts? Do you have a postcard from your adventure you'd like to share? Send it in, and you'll be entered in our summer Postcard Contest. We'll choose the best one (in our best editorial judgment) and give the winner \$50. Be impressive, though, because you'll be up against some stiff competition... that's the winner from our 2010 contest at right! Send your postcards to:



Tom Dwyer Automotive Services
530 SE Tenino, Portland, 97202

Contest closes September 15, 2014, and the best postcard wins \$50!

Free Carwash Season is in full swing

Have you come by for YOUR free carwash during FREE CARWASH SEASON yet? To make up for our dusty parking lot we offer coupons for free Washman car washes from May 15 through September 15. These are only for services over \$100, but that's a pretty low mark to hit with auto repair! Come on by and pick up your ticket to a shiny summer ride!



Latest Automotive Recalls

Automobiles are just like any other product; occasional flaws in manufacture or design can cause problems once they leave the factory. When an issue is identified the manufacturers and government work hard to bring the vehicles back in for refit or repair, but not all recalls make the front pages. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration maintains a constantly updated list of recalls from every manufacturer. The last month's recalls are below, but clicking the button at right will take you to the full list at the NHTSA website.



[July 2: 1,910,102 Graco car seats, including SnugRide models](#), Recalled for the buckle which may become stuck in a latched position.

[July 1: 438,109 Chrysler vehicles from 2008-2010, including Dodge Caravan and Chrysler Town and Country models](#), Recalled for the ignition switches that may move out of the run position, turning off the engine or causing the air bags to not deploy in the event of a crash.

[July 1: 35,000 Hyundai Elantra Touring vehicles from 2010-2012](#), Recalled for a support bracket that may become displaced during a side air bag deployment.

[July 1: 4,414 Tiffin recreational vehicles from 2008-2011](#), Recalled for a potential short in a circuit board for LED lights, increasing the risk of a fire.

[July 1: 103 Suzuki DL650A V-Strom motorcycles from 2014](#), Recalled for the drive chain which may not have been riveted, causing it to come off.

[June 30: 464,712 Chevrolet Camaro vehicles from 2010-2014](#), Recalled for the switches that may move out of the run position, turning off the engine or causing the air bags to not deploy in the event of a crash.

[June 27: 29,019 Chevrolet Cruze vehicles from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for the driver's front air bag inflator, which may have been manufactured with an incorrect part.

[June 27: 1,360 BMW motorcycles from 2012-2014, including C 600 Sport and C 650 GT models](#), Recalled for a potential engine stall.

[June 27: 196 Nissan LEAF vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for a problem with the motor control circuit board which may cause the vehicle to suddenly shut down.

[June 26: 4,629 Ford F-150 vehicles from 2014 with Electronic Power Assist Steering \(EPAS\)](#), Recalled for an incorrectly installed EPAS gear motor position sensor magnet which may cause a total loss of steering control while driving.

[June 26: 950 BMW R1200 RT motorcycles from 2014](#), Recalled for the piston rod in the rear shock absorber which may break without warning, causing loss of stability.

[June 26: 13 Seagrave Fire Apparatus emergency vehicles from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for the seat belt latch plate, which may become partially engaged with the buckle.

[June 24: 58,669 Ford vehicles from 2005-2007](#), In a limited regional recall for air bag inflators that may rupture upon deployment of the air bag.

June 24: 34,600 [Mazda vehicles from 2003-2008](#), In a limited regional recall for air bag inflators that may rupture upon deployment of the air bag.

June 24: [BMW vehicles from 2001-2006](#), In a limited regional recall for air bag inflators that may rupture upon deployment of the air bag.

June 24: [Toyota vehicles from 2003-2005](#), In a limited regional recall for air bag inflators that may rupture upon deployment of the air bag.

June 24: [Honda vehicles from 2001-2011](#), In a limited regional recall for air bag inflators that may rupture upon deployment of the air bag.

June 24: [Honda vehicles from 2003-2005](#), In a limited regional recall for air bag inflators that may rupture upon deployment of the air bag.

June 24: [Chrysler vehicles](#), In a limited regional recall for air bag inflators that may rupture upon deployment of the air bag.

June 24: [Nissan vehicles](#), In a limited regional recall for air bag inflators that may rupture upon deployment of the air bag.

June 20: 21,567 [Chevrolet Sonic vehicles from 2012](#), Recalled for the transmission turbine shaft which may fracture.

June 20: 14,765 [Buick LaCrosse vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for a wiring splice that may corrode and break, which could result in not notifying drivers to safety issues such as rollaway.

June 19: 57,512 [GM vehicles from 2014-2015, including Chevrolet Silverado and Tahoe models](#), Recalled for inoperative radios that may not alert drivers to safety issues such as rollaway.

June 19: 61 [GM vehicles from 2013, including Buick Encore and Chevrolet Spark models](#), Recalled for improper welding that may cause the passenger side front air bag to not deploy.

June 18: 33,000 [Mazda Tribute vehicles from 2008-2011](#), Recalled for potential loss of power steering assist, increasing the risk of a crash.

June 18: 31,250 [GM vehicles from 2012, including Chevrolet Camaro and Buick Verano models](#), Recalled for the driver side frontal air bag which may not deploy.

June 18: 3,107 [Kia Cadenza vehicles from 2014 equipped with 19" non-chrome aluminum wheels](#), Recalled for potential fracturing of the wheels.

June 18: 33 [Chevrolet Corvette vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for the Sensing and Diagnostic Module which may short circuit, resulting in the deactivation of the air bags and seat belt pretensioners.

June 17: 10,462 [Lexus GS 350 vehicles from 2013](#), Recalled for a failed switch which may cause the vehicle to brake on its own.

June 17: 209 [Harley-Davidson Chrome Hand Control Lever Kits for Sportster XL motorcycles from 2014](#), Recalled for potentially causing the front wheel to lock up.

June 13: 844,277 [Toyota vehicles from 2002-2004, including Sequoia and Corolla models](#), Recalled for air bag inflators that may rupture upon deployment.

June 13: 4,000 [Double Camel Vail Sport ST LH 99 tubeless tires](#), Recalled for possibly missing the load range designation, which could cause the owners to unknowingly overload and lead to a blowout.

June 13: 1,038 [Honda Fit vehicles from 2013 with a manual transmission](#), Recalled for the driveshaft which may fracture and separate from the vehicle.

June 9: 183,425 [Ford Taurus vehicles from 2010-2014](#), Recalled for the license plate lamp assembly which may corrode as a result of water intrusion, increasing the risk of a fire.

June 9: 17,726 [Dodge Ram ProMaster from 2014](#), Recalled for water intrusion that may cause circuit corrosion, disabling numerous things such as air bags and turn signals.

June 9: 6,120 [Chrysler vehicles from 2014, including Dodge Durango and Jeep Grand Cherokee models](#), Recalled for the adaptive cruise control that may cause unintended continued acceleration.

June 9: 4,141 [Fiat 500e Battery Electric Vehicles from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for a potential short circuit which could cause the service fuse to blow.

June 9: 101 [Keystone Dutchmen Infinity fifth wheel trailers from 2014](#), Recalled for the interior steps which may fracture.

June 5: 740,878 [Ford vehicles from 2008-2011, including Mercury Mariner and Ford Escape models](#), Recalled for a potential loss of power steering assist, increasing the risk of a crash.

June 5: 179,027 [Ford Explorer vehicles from 2011-2013](#), Recalled for a potential loss of power steering assist, increasing the risk of a crash.

June 4: 50,000 [Toyota Highlander vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for improper software that may cause the front passenger seat belt force limiter to malfunction.

June 3: 334 [Nissan vehicles from 2014, including Nissan Pathfinder and Infiniti QX60 models](#), Recalled for lug nuts that may fall off, which may result in tire separation.

June 3: HME Ferrara Intruder Ember Cab and Chassis emergency vehicle from 2013, Recalled for the latch plate of the seat belt which may become partially engaged with the buckle.

June 2: 370,000 [Toyota Sienna vehicles from 2004-2011](#), Recalled for the carrier cable which may corrode, causing the spare tire to separate from the vehicle.

June 2: 82,579 [Ford all weather floor mats sold for vehicles from 2006-2011, including Ford Fusion and Lincoln MKZ models](#), Recalled for potential interference with the accelerator pedal.

June 2: 14,529 [UCI-FRAM Group ignition switches for GM vehicles](#), Recalled for the switches that may move out of the run position, turning off the engine or causing the air bags to not deploy in the event of a crash.

June 2: 231 [Toyota Highlander vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for seats that may have been manufactured incorrectly, causing the seats to come out of their tracks.

Health Notes

The straight dope on some scary additives



Everything You Need to Know About 10 Common, Scary Sounding Food Additives

By Larry Schwartz on AlterNet, June 27, 2014

Michael Pollan, the best-selling author and one of the leaders of the modern food revolution, is a big one for Food Rules. In fact, he wrote a book by that name. In today's complicated, processed food world, it's helpful to have tips to navigate, like Pollan's Rule #19: "If it came from a plant, eat it; if it was made in a plant, don't". Or rule # 36: "Don't eat breakfast cereals that change the color of the milk".

What these rules imply is that when foods are unnatural, or do unnatural things, they may not be the best thing to put into our bodies, bodies being temples and all that. When we pick up a package of food in the supermarket, we might look at the ingredients and be horrified at all the exotic, multi-syllabic chemicals that are listed, often ten, twenty or more horrible sounding ingredients that we didn't have in mind when we felt like mac 'n cheese that night.

While Pollan's seminal advice, "Eat real food, not too much, mostly plants" is undoubtedly wise, we cannot always be as mindful as we want to be. Our busy lives may preclude time to cook one evening, or our children may be whining for that snack their friends get to eat. In moments of weakness, stress, or just plain desire, we open up the freezer and pull out the TV dinner, chemical listings be damned. Perhaps if we knew what the chemicals are in these foods, why they are there, what they might do to us, we could either be a little more discerning or less concerned about our occasional indiscretions. In that spirit, here is a list of ten common chemical items in our supermarket cornucopia of processed foods, and advice on whether to avoid it or go for it.

1. Artificial dyes

Almost all processed foods today contain some sort of artificial coloring to make the food more attractive looking (admittedly, a subjective judgment, since I, for one, find almost no pink food, for instance, very attractive...but I dare you to find a child who does not vehemently disagree...). Some of you might remember the controversy decades ago when the food coloring Red Dye #2 was found to cause cancer in lab animals when consumed in large quantities. That particular dye was subsequently banned, but other dyes, with literally colorful names like FD&C Blue #1, FD&C Green #3, Orange B, and FD&C Yellow #6 still abound in our foods. Aside from the aforementioned Red#2, what do these dyes do to us? Well, in England, a 2007 study in the esteemed medical journal "The Lancet" found some links between these dyes and hyperactivity in children. As a result, The European Foods Standards Agency asked food companies to

voluntarily remove the dyes from processed food. In America, the Food and Drug Administration has declined to follow suit on the ESFA action, and still considers the dyes safe. There were also studies in the 1950s that linked a particular dye, Yellow #5, with asthma symptoms, but subsequent studies did not bear that link out.

Examples of common processed foods containing artificial dyes: sports drinks, Mac 'n Cheese, Jello, ice cream

What to do: If you have a hyperactive child, best to think twice before giving him Fruit Loops for breakfast. Otherwise, you are probably OK with dyes.

2. High Fructose Corn Syrup

High Fructose Corn Syrup is a sweetener derived from corn, sweeter than cane sugar, and cheaper. That

latter combination accounts for its presence in a seemingly infinite number of processed products and beverages. The United States has been suffering through a veritable epidemic of obesity for decades, and many experts (and non-experts) have fingered HFCS as the culprit. They point out that the obesity problem began at about the same time as high fructose corn syrup became widespread as a substitute for cane sugar. There have also been some studies that link HFCS to type 2 diabetes. The claim is that the body metabolizes HFCS differently than cane sugar, resulting in increased risk for type 2 and obesity. Marion Nestle, a professor of nutrition and public health at New York University, on the website WebMD, disagrees, however. "It's just sugar. Biochemically, there's no difference...The body can't tell them apart." Meanwhile, the American Medical Association has found little evidence that HFCS is any better or worse than cane sugar, and that you should essentially limit both.

Examples of common processed foods containing high fructose corn syrup: almost anything that is sweetened, including breakfast cereals, sodas, crackers, condiments like ketchup

What to do: Don't lose any sleep over high fructose corn syrup, but, like all sweets, a little goes a long way.

3. Aspartame(brand name NutraSweet or Equal)

Almost any processed "diet" food or beverage contains an artificial sweetener, and that sweetener is usually aspartame. Once upon a time, that sweetener was usually saccharin, but lab studies (since refuted) linked large amounts of saccharin to bladder cancer, and it was subsequently removed from many food items. Aspartame has gone through similar close inspection, and some studies have linked it to cancer (including leukemia, lymphoma, brain tumors), seizures, headaches, even lowered IQ. Some people may have difficulty metabolizing aspartame, according to the website phys.org, a leading science and research news organization. However, a large-scale study (500,000 people) by the National Cancer Institute found no link between aspartame and cancer. A survey by the National Institutes of Health of over 2000 cancer patients also found no link. The FDA has deemed aspartame safe numerous times.

Examples of common processed foods containing aspartame: most diet sodas and beverages, sugarless gums, sugarless yogurt

What to do: Pop open a Diet Coke if you want. It's definitely not good for you, but it probably isn't the

aspartame that is hurting you. (Just remember, that stuff cleans off car batteries...).

4. MSG (AKA monosodium glutamate, hydrolyzed soy protein, autolyzed yeast)

Humans are able to discern four flavors: sweet, sour, bitter, salty. In recent years, foodies have added the "flavor" umami" to that list. Umami is that savory sensation you can detect when eating meats, tomatoes, soybeans, and mushrooms, for instance. MSG is a chemical that enhances that umami flavor. Chinese restaurants are famous (or infamous) for adding MSG to their dishes. In the 1960s, customers began complaining that Chinese food was making them ill, with headaches, flushing, and chest pains being some of the symptoms. MSG was suspected as the agent of their symptoms. Over the past 40 years, many studies have been made on MSG, and there have been no definitive links between it and any specific symptoms. What links may have been discerned have been exceedingly rare. While some people may indeed be sensitive to it, the majority is apparently not.

Examples of common processed foods containing MSG: potato chips, salad dressings, dry roasted nuts, cold cuts

What to do: Bring on the egg rolls, unless you feel are one of those rare souls who are allergic to MSG.

5. Sodium Benzoate

Sodium Benzoate is a preservative found in lots of food and beverage products. Most processed foods have some sort of preservative(s), as they are likely to be sitting on a shelf for a significant amount of time. As with food dyes, "The Lancet" listed sodium benzoate among the chemicals linked to hyperactivity in kids. Additionally, it was found that in items containing both sodium benzoate and Vitamin C, the two ingredients reacted together to form benzene, a known carcinogen. The FDA, in 2006 and 2007, had the manufacturers of over 200 beverages reformulate those drinks, which were then deemed safe by the FDA. FDA testing was limited, however, and benzene exposure may still be a problem in some cases.

Examples of common processed foods containing Sodium Benzoate: soft drinks, salad dressing, pickles, condiments

What to do: A no-no for hyperactive children. Probably not a great idea for their adult parents either. In any case, look for sodium benzoate and

vitamin C together. If it is there, don't eat it or drink it. Probably OK for the car battery though...

6. Sodium Nitrite

Everything is good with bacon on it, right? Think twice about that. Bacon and most cured meats and sausages contain sodium nitrite, which gives preserved meat a reddish color, preserves it, and inhibits the formation of harmful bacteria on the food. The chemical was used extensively in food processing before the 1930s, and was suspected as the cause of gastric cancer, which was the leading cause of cancer deaths at that time. When meats containing sodium nitrite are overcooked or charred, they form a compound called nitrosamine, which is a known carcinogenic. Since the 1930s, refrigeration plus moderating the amount of the sodium nitrite used has cut down the mortality rate of gastric cancer significantly. Studies on a direct link between sodium nitrite and cancer have proven inconclusive, and the jury is still out.

Examples of common processed foods containing Sodium Nitrite: cured meats, smoked fish, jerky, hot dogs

What to do: A BLT once in a while won't kill you. Maybe cut down on the sausage pizza. Ditch the bacon ice cream. Don't overcook your meats (don't undercook them either!). As with most things, moderation is a wise course.

7. Trans Fat (AKA partially hydrogenated vegetable oil)

Once upon a time, the jingle went "Everything's better with Blue Bonnet on it," (Blue Bonnet being the leading margarine product). Those were the days. Butter bad, margarine good. How times have changed. Many studies have now borne out that margarine (and any of the multitude of products containing trans fat) is much worse for you than momma nature's real stuff, butter. Trans fats have been linked to heart disease and type 2 diabetes. They lower your good cholesterol (HDL) and raise your bad cholesterol (LDL). The American Heart Association tells us we should get no more than 1% of our calories from trans fat.

Examples of common processed foods containing trans fat: margarine, shortening, non-dairy creamer, microwave popcorn

What to do: When you see "partially hydrogenated vegetable oil" among the ingredients listed on your

food package, know that that product is definitely not your friend. Don't be chowing down on that stuff.

8. BHA/BHT

The preservatives BHA and BHT are both used in of crackers and cereals as a means to keep foods with fats and oils from going rancid. They are derived from petroleum. The World Health Organization has listed BHA as a possible carcinogen, and the FDA, while approving it, has left the door open for further studies as to its safety.

Examples of common processed foods containing BHA/BHT: breakfast cereals, bread, crackers

What to do: Petroleum-derived ingredients don't qualify as real food... Avoid them if you can.

9. Carrageenan

You see carrageenan a lot in ice cream (and dressings and sauces), and you probably ask, what does carrageenan do to enhance my chocolate chip experience? Carrageenan is a thickener. Manufacturers use it to make their ice cream (or dressing or sauce) creamier in texture. It is made from seaweed. Some complaints have been made that carrageenan causes stomach and digestive problems, but studies have not shown any link (degraded carrageenan has been shown to cause this in lab animals, but degraded carrageenan is not used in food products). The FDA has approved it as safe.

Examples of common processed foods containing carrageenan: ice cream, yogurt, sour cream

What to do: Don't lose any sleep over carrageenan (some very preliminary studies have even shown that it may be helpful to digestion).

10. Calcium Propionate

Calcium propionate is used primarily in bread and baked goods as a preservative. There is a reason supermarket breads aren't moldy after a few days (I guess it puts the wonder in Wonder Bread). Some people have pointed at calcium propionate as a trigger for migraine headaches, but no medical studies have shown any link.

Examples of common processed foods containing Calcium Propionate: bread, condensed milk, cheese

What to do: Good to go. Calcium propionate won't hurt you (won't help you either, unless you count avoiding moldy bread on the plus side).

Sellwood Bridge Update

A Bird's Eye View Of The Progress



Despite the record-breaking heat, the Sellwood Bridge work is continuing without a hitch. Minimal delays, on schedule, no news-making failures, collapses, or injuries... it's exactly the way you'd hope a public-works project should proceed, but it makes for some very boring monthly updates. If prose fails, though, there's always PICTURES!

Multnomah County maintains the definitive website on everything related to the Sellwood Bridge Replacement project at www.sellwoodbridge.org.

Construction and closure alerts, archived information, and other resources are all available 24/7 for your convenience.

This month they have an excellent photo series of aerial shots of the construction area, taken once-a-month since May 2012. If you haven't been keeping up with our Bridge Update column, then this is the best way to see the project from beginning to now.

The next BIG event will be the installation of the big concrete arches currently being fabricated in Vancouver. No word on when that will happen, but we'll keep you posted!

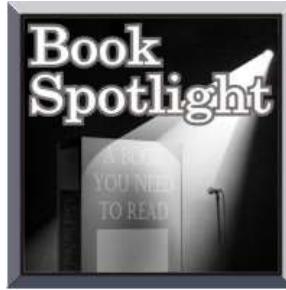
If you're looking for something that's not on the SellwoodBridge.org website, you can contact Mike Pullen (mike.j.pullen@multco.us, or phone at 503-209-4111) or visit sellwoodbridge.org.



Most recent aerial shot, June 18, 2014

Book Spotlight

“So Rich, So Poor” by Peter Edelman

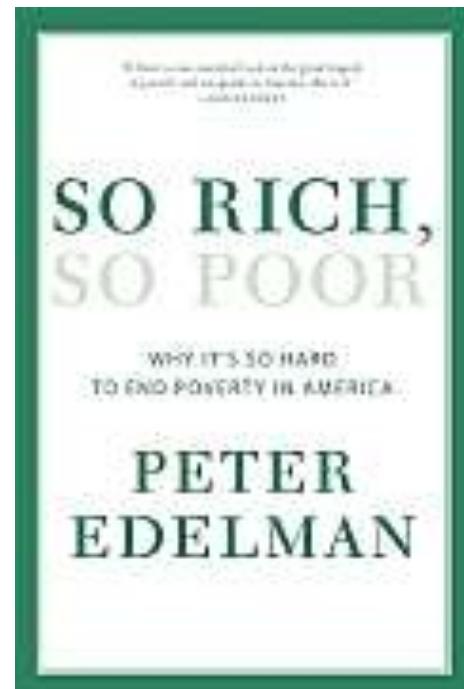


[So Rich, So Poor: Why It's So Hard to End Poverty in America](#)

by Peter Edelman

Income disparities in our wealthy nation are now wider than at any point since the Great Depression. The structure of today's economy has stultified wage growth for half of America's workers—with even worse results at the bottom and for people of color—while bestowing billions on those at the top.

In this “accessible and inspiring analysis” (Angela Glover Blackwell), lifelong poverty advocate Peter Edelman assesses how the United States can have such an outsized number of unemployed and working poor despite important policy gains. He delves into what is happening to the people behind the statistics and takes a particular look at young people of color for whom the possibility of productive lives is too often lost on the way to adulthood. In a timely new introduction, Edelman discusses the significance of Obama's reelection—including the rediscovery of the word “poverty”—as well as the continuing attack on the poor from the right.



“Engaging and informative” (William Julius Wilson), “powerful and eloquent” (Wade Henderson), “a national treasure composed by a wise man” (George McGovern), and “a great source for summaries of our country's antipoverty program” (*Publishers Weekly*), *So Rich, So Poor* is crucial reading for anyone who wants to understand the most critical American dilemma of the twenty-first century.

About the Author

Peter Edelman is a professor at Georgetown University Law Center. A top adviser to Senator Robert F. Kennedy from 1964 to 1968, he went on to fill various roles in President Bill Clinton's administration, from which he famously resigned in protest after Clinton signed the 1996 welfare reform legislation. He lives in Washington, D.C.

Humorousness

The lighter side of global annihilation



There's nothing funny about global warming or climate change, but that may be part of the problem. The time has long since passed when doubt of the science could be considered legitimate, but media continues to bring on science deniers in a search for balance that is neither accurate nor productive. Why? Maybe because we're not laughing hard enough at their flamboyant idiocy. Satire sometimes succeeds where facts and logic can't by tearing the clothes off the Emperor, by pulling aside the curtain to reveal the little man flicking the levers. From Will Ferrel and John Oliver to The Onion, comedy is taking on climate change, and it's actually funny! We'll see if it's effective. This month we bring you the Guardian's pick of 11 comedians' thoughts on climate change, followed by as many (funny) climate change memes as you can stomach. Enjoy them until the Apocalypse comes, in one form or another!

[**Click here for The
Guardian's 11
funniest climate
change videos**](#)

(The first Onion video, discussing the court ruling that Climate Change be taught alongside the Biblical Apocalypse to "teach the controversy" is particularly good)

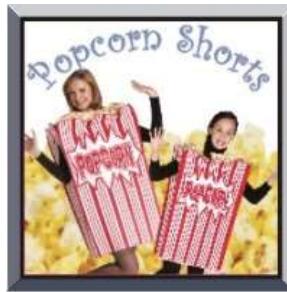


[**Click here for a selection of the best Climate Change net memes**](#)



Popcorn Shorts

Cool stuff that's too small for a big article



Just like it says, Popcorn Shorts is about the kind of things we think are really interesting, but don't really need a large article to explain them. From the sublime to the ridiculous, check in here for crunchy bits of info you'll love to munch. By the way, much (but not all) of our delicious Popcorn comes from articles we've posted on [our Facebook page](#). If you're on Facebook, please stop by and "Like" us and we'll keep a fairly-constant-but-not-frequent-enough-to-be-annoying stream of these coming to your virtual door!



Power (and knowledge) to the pedalers!



Portland is a leader in livable communities, and one of the main anchors of livability is clean, convenient transportation. We've poured lots of money into bike lanes and mass transit, but is it working? For some Portlanders it is, and a [new project from MIT can give you a clue to whether you're one of the lucky ones](#). Click a point and the map will instantly tell you which parts of the city are quickest to reach by walking (green), biking (yellow), public transit (blue), or driving (red). It's a completely new, eye-opening way to look at our city, and it may make you get off the couch and join your friends on their daily bike commutes!

When you've gotta go, you've gotta go... to Japan



The Japanese fascination with high-tech extends to something pretty low-tech in most American homes... the toilet. Japanese engineers have created toilets that measure body fat, glow in the dark, play music, and relieve odors, and all these features and more were on display at the "Toilet- Human Waste and Earth's Future" conference in Tokyo. The National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Tokyo's OMSI) put on the show. Click here for a [photo essay that lets you follow little Japanese schoolchildren in their poop hats](#) down the ultimate throne, or [click here to get some of the more pungent details](#).

How much solar power is enough?



Just for fun, how much space would it take to supply the world's 678 quadrillion Btu total energy demand of with solar panels? [The picture at left shows the space necessary to supply the world, the EU, and Germany](#). The largest red square (world supply) is about the area of Spain, which is big, but look at it a couple other ways... If we built solar farms at the same rate we're destroying worldwide forest, we'd be done in 3 years. It's half the size of farmland in China, 1/18th the size of the Sahara, or 10 times the number of worldwide golf courses. This page puts the potential for solar energy in perspective, and also offers good news for renewables like wind and hydroelectric as well.

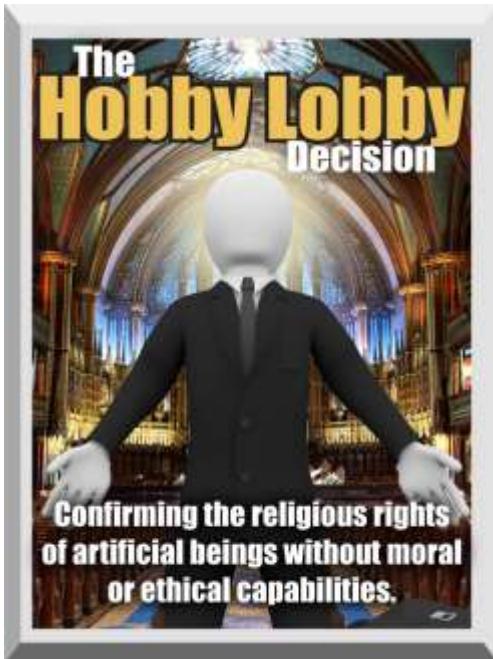
Getting to know the Caliphate



It may be a little more serious than you're used to from PopCorn Shorts, but this is a timely link worth checking out. As we mentioned in Tom's Tidbits this month it's been just over a year since ISIS announced its existence, but they've already swept through Iraq and Syria and are establishing a "Caliphate" in the region. Sounds scary, but is it? Maybe. The only way to know for sure is to know what's actually involved with a Caliphate, and how likely ISIS is to achieve it. [McClatchy News has a great primer](#) with definitions, maps, and analysis. Did you know that part of the "Caliphate" declaration is intended to target Al Queda's funding sources? Read this article, and that will just be the start of what you know.

News To Make You Furious

Hobby Lobby. 'Nuff Said.



"News To Make You Furious" isn't designed to raise your blood pressure just for the sake of it. We try not to bring you a list of outrages for the sake of outrage; we try to find things you may not have been aware of, or things that you can take action on immediately. Unfortunately, although the recent Supreme Court Hobby Lobby decision is something everyone's aware of and there's not a damn thing any of us can do about it, it was the only subject that made sense for this month's Furious. We were not alone in being appalled by the case that elevated the long-overlooked religious rights of corporations over the gratuitous healthcare of humans. There are so many ways this decision was abusive, but it boils down to this... humans' healthcare, which could be both carrot and stick, is now in the hands of unaccountable and ultimately powerful legal constructs with no ethical restrictions and profit as their only standard of good. For people who respect democratic values enough to not force religious values on others it's yet another iron-clad argument for Single Payer health care, among other

things. For all of us, it may be more than a reason to be Furious... it may be a reason to be scared.

[The Hobby Lobby Decision: A Summary & Explanation](#)

Libby Anne, Patheos

There is a lot of ruckus about Hobby Lobby today, and I've already seen multiple sources providing inaccurate summaries about what happened. So in an effort to summarize in one place what the decision did and did not do, I decided to do the rare act (for me) of posting a Facebook note. I'll try to provide a lot of background info so those who haven't been following the case are brought up to speed. If you want to read the decision yourself, it is here. The Hobby Lobby case is really two cases heard together: Burwell v. Hobby Lobby and Conestoga Wood v. Burwell. Burwell is the Secretary of the Dep't of Health and Human Services (HHS). When you sue the government for an alleged violation of your constitutional rights, you typically name a specific official who heads the government agency or department that is doing the violation.

[Ruth Bader Ginsburg Was Right, and We Already Have Proof](#)

Zoe Carpenter, The Nation

Among the many questions raised by the Supreme Court's ruling in Burwell v. Hobby Lobby is how sweeping its legacy will be. Supporters of the decision have insisted that the ruling is "narrow," as it explicitly addresses "closely held" corporations objecting to four specific types of birth control—including IUDs and Plan B—because the business' owners consider them (inaccurately) to cause abortion. Besides, the Court argued, the government can just fill any coverage gaps itself, and it's only women whom corporations are now permitted to discriminate against.

"Our decision in these cases is concerned solely with the contraceptive mandate," claimed Justice Samuel Alito, writing for the majority. "Our decision should not be understood to hold that an insurance-coverage mandate must necessarily fall if it conflicts with an employers' religious beliefs."

[Where Will the Slippery Slope of 'Hobby Lobby' End?](#)

Katha Pollitt, The Nation

Facts are stubborn things, as John Adams famously said. Unless, that is, you're talking about religion. Then facts don't seem to matter at all: right you are if you think you are. The Hobby Lobby case was billed as a test of religious freedom versus the power of the state: Did the Religious



Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) mean that David Green, the evangelical Christian CEO of a chain of crafts stores, could be exempt from providing coverage for the full range of contraceptives for his employees under the Affordable Care Act? Green balked at including Plan B, Ella (another form of emergency contraception) and two kinds of IUD, because, he claimed, they caused "abortion" by preventing the implantation of a fertilized egg.

[Legal Experts, Advocates React to Supreme Court's Hobby Lobby Ruling](#)

Wall Street Journal Law Blog

[Politicians React To The Supreme Court's Hobby Lobby Decision](#)

Alex Lazar, Huffington Post

[How the Nation's Biggest Closely Held Corporation Reacted to Hobby Lobby](#)

Kia Makarechi, Vanity Fair

[ANALYSIS: Judge Napolitano, Sekulow React to Successful Challenge to ObamaCare](#)

FOX News Insider

[Post-Hobby Lobby, Religious Orgs Want Exemption From LGBT Hiring Order](#)

Dylan Scott, Talking Points Memo

The day after the Supreme Court's Hobby Lobby ruling, a group of religious leaders sent a letter to President Barack Obama asking that he exempt them from a forthcoming executive order that would prohibit federal contractors from discriminating against LGBT people.

The letter, first reported by The Atlantic, was sent on Tuesday by 14 representatives, including the president of Gordon College, an Erie County, Pa., executive and the national faith vote director for Obama for America 2012, of the faith community.

"Without a robust religious exemption," they wrote, "this expansion of hiring rights will come at an unreasonable cost to the common good, national unity and religious freedom."

[SC Restaurant Owner Refuses To Serve Blacks, Cites Religious Beliefs](#)

Manny Schewitz, Forward Progressives

In South Carolina, a BBQ restaurant owner claimed that he was within his rights to refuse service to blacks based on his religious beliefs. In the case brought before the Supreme Court, Maurice Bessinger stated that his religion required him to keep black people from eating in his restaurant, although he was perfectly OK with taking their money, so long as they ordered their food to-go. The attorney representing the petitioners suing Piggie Park also addressed in court the "First Amendment religious privilege claim that petitioner asserted that his religion required him" to deny service to black customers. "I'm just a fair man. I want to be known as a hard-working, Christian man that loves God and wants to further (God's) work throughout the world as I have been doing throughout the last 25 years."

[Could Supreme Court contraceptive ruling affect coverage of vaccines and blood transfusions?](#)

Steve Contorno, PolitiFact.com

First birth control, next blood transfusions? That's an argument many progressives and abortion-rights groups are making in the wake of the Supreme Court decision in Burwell vs. Hobby Lobby. In a narrow 5-4 decision Monday, the high court said that closely held corporations with strong religious convictions don't have to offer insurance that covers four kinds of contraceptives mandated by the Affordable Care Act. While the opinion, written by Justice Samuel Alito, was narrowly tailored to only apply to the cases before the court, others warned of a slippery slope. "Today it's birth control," said NARAL Pro-Choice America president Ilyse Hogue in a statement. "Tomorrow it could be any personal medical decision, from starting a family to getting life-saving vaccinations or blood transfusions." Indeed, even the justices bickered over the scope of the decision.

[Here Are the 82 Companies That Think Birth Control Is Murder](#)

Erin Gloria Ryan, Jezebel

Yesterday, a five conservative Catholic dude majority (yes — Scalia, Roberts, Alito, Thomas, and Kennedy are all Catholic) on the Supreme Court sided with Hobby Lobby in a case that sought to establish whether certain corporations could be said to hold "religious beliefs" and whether being compelled to providing an insurance plan that furnished contraception to female employees who needed it would constitute a violation of those corporate beliefs. But the decision was much bigger than just Hobby Lobby and Conestoga Wood Products. Here are the 82 other companies that believe — contrary to scientific evidence — that certain forms of birth control are the same as abortion and that abortion is the same as murder.

The Daily Beast's Abby Haglage did some impressive legwork in assembling this list of 82 other companies — some for profit, others nonprofit — that have mounted challenges to Obamacare's so-called "contraception mandate" and that now stand to apply to be exempt from providing certain non-abortion reproductive health care options to their female employees. Because God has apparently Taken A Stand when it comes to IUDs, and he only told dudes and the Pope about it, since IUD's weren't invented until the Bible was more than 2,000 years old.

[Does a Christian White-Supremacist Business Have the "Religious Freedom" to Discriminate?](#)

Chauncey DeVega, AlterNet

The slide towards American theocracy was nudged one more step forward by the Supreme Court decision in support of the "freedom" of corporations with "religious" beliefs to restrict the rights of their employees. In essence, religious "beliefs" trump the obligations, rights, and responsibilities that come with being members of the polity and a broader political community. The NY Times details the logic of the theocrats as: "The 5-to-4 decision, which applied to two companies owned by Christian families, opened the door to challenges from other corporations to many laws that may be said to violate their religious liberty. Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr., writing for the court's five more conservative justices, said a federal religious-freedom law applied to for-profit corporations controlled by religious families. He added that the requirement that the companies provide contraception coverage imposed a substantial burden on the

companies' religious liberty. He said the government could provide the coverage in other ways."

[It Begins: Lawyers For Gitmo Detainees Invoke Hobby Lobby Ruling In Court Filing](#)

Samuel Warde, Liberals Unite

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg warned that "The court, I fear, has ventured into a minefield" in her blistering dissent to the Supreme Court's 5-4 ruling in the Hobby Lobby case. A mere three days later, lawyers representing two Guantanamo Bay detainees have filed motions asking a federal court to block officials from preventing them from taking part in communal prayers during the holy month of Ramadan. The lawyers are arguing that the detainees' rights are protected under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in light of the recent ruling in Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc. Al Jazeera English reports: "The motions were filed this week with the Washington D.C. district court on behalf of Emad Hassan of Yemen and Ahmed Rabbani of Pakistan. U.K.-based human rights group Reprieve said both men asked for the intervention after military officials at the prison 'prevented them from praying communally during Ramadan.'"

[Fact Checker: Democrats on Hobby Lobby: 'Misspeaks,' 'opinion' and overheated rhetoric](#)

Glenn Kessler, Washington Post

"Really, we should be afraid of this court. The five guys who start determining what contraceptives are legal. Let's not even go there." — House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), at her weekly news conference, on July 10

In the wake of the Supreme Court's 5-to-4 ruling that, as a closely held company, Hobby Lobby was not required to pay for all of the birth-control procedures mandated by the Affordable Care Act, Democrats have rushed to condemn the court. But in some cases the rhetoric has gotten way ahead of the facts. Here's a round-up of some of the more noteworthy claims. In some cases, lawmakers concede that they make a mistake; in others, they argue that they are offering what amounts to opinion, even though the assertion was stated as fact...

[If Christian Corporations Have Religious Rights, What About Muslim Prisoners?](#)

Zoe Carpenter, The Nation

If corporations have religious rights that warrant protection under the law, why don't men imprisoned at Guantánamo Bay? A federal judge has given the US government until Tuesday evening to answer that question, which was posed by lawyers representing two Guantánamo detainees, Emad Hassan and Ahmed Rabbani, who have been held without charge or trial. Authorities at the prison have barred the two men from communal prayers during the holy month of Ramadan because they are on hunger strike. Two courts ruled previously that Hassan and Rabbani are not people, at least "within the scope" of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which prevents the government from substantially burdening a person's freedom to exercise religion.

In last week's Hobby Lobby v. Burwell decision, the conservative majority of the Supreme Court ruled that the chain of craft stores, along with other closely held corporations, are within the scope of the RFRA. Three days later, lawyers representing the detainees filed new lawsuits

calling on a DC circuit court to restore the detainees' right to communal prayers in light of the High Court's interpretation.

[Analysis: Hobby Lobby beat the contraception mandate. Here's why the nuns may not](#)

David Gibson, Religion News Service

When the Supreme Court on Monday (June 30) issued a split decision narrowly backing the right of for-profit corporations to deny contraception coverage to their employees for religious reasons, many assumed that faith-based nonprofits would have it easy when their own cases eventually reach the high court. "The death knell is sounding for the HHS mandate," said Lori Windham, an attorney at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, which is representing the Little Sisters of the Poor, an order of nuns, as well as other religious groups that object to the Health and Human Services Department policy requiring birth control coverage. Windham noted that in two rulings by lower courts on Monday, several of Becket's faith-based clients received last-minute relief to shield them from complying with the mandate, which takes effect today (July 1). "The ruling in Hobby Lobby and then these two rulings in quick succession show that the HHS mandate is on its last legs when it comes to religious nonprofits," Windham said. Yet many analysts say that in fact what worked for Hobby Lobby — the national craft store giant owned by the Green family, who are evangelical Christians — may not necessarily work for the Little Sisters, who operate nursing homes for the poor around the country.

[Analysis: Hobby Lobby and claims for religious exemptions from anti-discrimination laws?](#)

Kevin Russell, SCOTUS Blog

The Court's decision in Hobby Lobby takes pains to emphasize that it is resolving only the dispute before it, but the principles it has adopted will have an obvious impact in other kinds of religious freedom claims in other contexts. One area discussed briefly by both the majority and dissent is discrimination in employment and public accommodations.

There are numerous state or federal laws that prohibit business from discriminating against employees (and potential employees) or their customers on various grounds, including race, sex, religion, disability, familial status, and, more recently, sexual orientation. Some business owners object to those laws on religious grounds. If the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) requires giving Hobby Lobby a religious exemption from the contraceptive mandate of the Affordable Care Act, does it also provide other businesses with a defense against civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination?

[8 Other Laws That Could Be Ignored Now That Christians Get To Pick And Choose](#)

Ryan Grimm, Huffington Post

The owners of a chain of stores called Hobby Lobby don't like Obamacare. In particular, they really don't like the part that requires insurance companies to cover contraceptives. Normally, people who don't like a law petition the government to change that law. That's how a nation of laws works.

But these men are Christians. The Supreme Court ruled Monday that Christian business owners are

special. Their deeply held religious belief that some particular form of contraception is immoral carries more weight than the force of law, five conservative Christian justices ruled. The court -- in a fairly bald admission that its ruling is incoherent -- added that no general amnesty from other laws should be assumed to be the result of its ruling and that its reasoning was strictly limited to women's contraception. Such a limitation raises legitimate questions about the rather perverted and obsessive minds of the five men who made the ruling, but it also carries little legal weight. Precedent is precedent, whether the precedent-setters say so or not.

[A Ruling That Both Sides Can Run With](#)

Jeremy Peters and Michael Shear, New York Times

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court's ruling on Monday that the government cannot force certain employers to pay for birth control was more than a rebuke to President Obama. It was vindication of the conservative movement's efforts to chip away at laws it finds objectionable by raising questions of freedom of expression.

The decision — like several recent rulings from the justices and lower courts involving prayer at town meetings and protests outside abortion clinics — carved out a significant, albeit narrow, legal exception in the context of a broader cultural fight that social conservatives have been unable to win outright.

[The Bait-And-Switch Behind Today's Hobby Lobby Decision](#)

Ian Millhiser, Think Progress

For many years, the Supreme Court struck a careful balance between protecting religious liberty and maintaining the rule of law in a pluralistic society. Religious people enjoy a robust right to practice their own faith and to act according to the dictates of their own conscience, but they could not wield religious liberty claims as a sword to cut away the legal rights of others. This was especially true in the business context. As the Supreme Court held in *United States v. Lee*, "[w]hen followers of a particular sect enter into commercial activity as a matter of choice, the limits they accept on their own conduct as a matter of conscience and faith are not to be superimposed on the statutory schemes which are binding on others in that activity."

With Monday's decision in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*, however, this careful

balance has been upended. Employers who object to birth control on religious grounds may now refuse to comply with federal rules requiring them to include contraceptive care in their health plans. The rights of the employer now trump the rights of the employee.

[The New Law of Religion- Hobby Lobby rewrites religious-freedom law in ways that ignore everything that came before.](#)

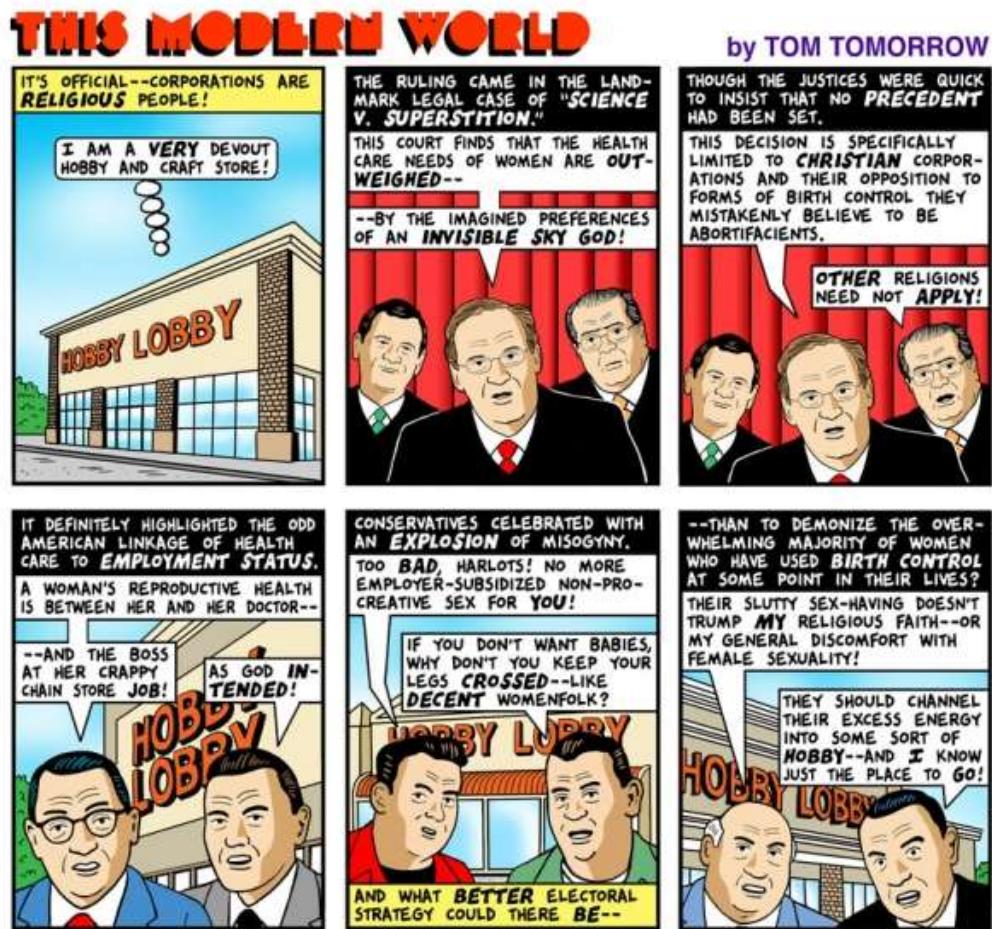
Micah Schwartzman, Richard Schragger, and Nelson Tebbe, Slate.com

Monday's decision in *Hobby Lobby* was unprecedented. Much of the commentary has focused on the Supreme Court's decision to extend rights of religious free exercise to for-profit corporations. *Hobby Lobby* is for religion what *Citizens United* was for free speech—the corporatization of our basic liberties. But *Hobby Lobby* is also unprecedented in another, equally important way. For the first time, the court has interpreted a federal statute, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (or RFRA), as affording more protection for religion than has ever been provided under the First Amendment. While some have read *Hobby Lobby* as a narrow statutory ruling, it is much more than that. The court has eviscerated decades of case law and, having done that, invites a new generation of challenges to federal laws, including those designed to protect civil rights.

[Hobby Lobby is one of the most dangerous Supreme Court decisions ever, and here's why](#)

Aaron James Spencer, Essayworks

Burwell v. Hobby Lobby is one of the most dangerous



Supreme Court decisions ever, and we are already seeing why. The ruling misinterprets religious freedom in the United States, restricts the rights of women everywhere, raises religious belief above medical and scientific fact in lawmaking, and is easily expandable to accommodate the religious objections of a host of corporation owners. On the final day of the October 2013 term, the Supreme Court

handed down the decision in the Hobby Lobby case, exempting closely held, for-profit corporations from any law to which they have a religious objection, provided there is a less restrictive way for the government to achieve the law's aim.