

December 31, 2013

A week ago in Time Magazine, [Camille Paglia](#) defended men in a debate titled, "Are Men Obsolete?"

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Is it any wonder that so many high-achieving young women, despite all the happy talk about their academic success, find themselves in the early stages of their careers in chronic uncertainty or anxiety about their prospects for an emotionally fulfilled private life? When an educated culture routinely denigrates masculinity and manhood, then women will be perpetually stuck with boys, who have no incentive to mature or to honor their commitments. And without strong men as models to either embrace or (for dissident lesbians) to resist, women will never attain a centered and profound sense of themselves as women.

From my long observation, which predates the sexual revolution, this remains a serious problem afflicting Anglo-American society, with its Puritan residue. In [France](#), [Italy](#), [Spain](#), Latin America and Brazil, in contrast, many ambitious professional women seem to have found a formula for asserting power and authority in the workplace while still projecting sexual allure and even glamour. ...

That led to a [WSJ Weekend Interview](#) with Ms. Paglia.

'What you're seeing is how a civilization commits suicide,' says Camille Paglia. This self-described "notorious Amazon feminist" isn't telling anyone to Lean In or asking Why Women Still Can't Have It All. No, her indictment may be as surprising as it is wide-ranging: The military is out of fashion, Americans undervalue manual labor, schools neuter male students, opinion makers deny the biological differences between men and women, and sexiness is dead. And that's just 20 minutes of our three-hour conversation.

When Ms. Paglia, now 66, burst onto the national stage in 1990 with the publishing of "Sexual Personae," she immediately established herself as a feminist who was the scourge of the movement's establishment, a heretic to its orthodoxy. Pick up the 700-page tome, subtitled "Art and Decadence From Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson," and it's easy to see why. "If civilization had been left in female hands," she wrote, "we would still be living in grass huts."

The fact that the acclaimed book—the first of six; her latest, "Glittering Images," is a survey of Western art—was rejected by seven publishers and five agents before being printed by Yale University Press only added to Ms. Paglia's sense of herself as a provocateur in a class with [Rush Limbaugh](#) and [Howard Stern](#). But unlike those radio jocks, Ms. Paglia has scholarly chops: Her dissertation adviser at Yale was Harold Bloom, and she is as likely to discuss Freud, Oscar Wilde or early Native American art as to talk about Miley Cyrus.

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Writing in Bloomberg, [Richard Vedder](#) calls for an end to the athletics "arms race." *With the college football bowls under way, all most of us will care about are the winners. But as a nation purporting to care about the costs of higher education, we should pay far more attention to the many losers.*

Thanks to a newly available database, we can grasp the ugly truth: Universities are increasing their spending on intercollegiate sports exponentially, far faster than they are investing resources in teaching and research, and at rates that force higher institutional subsidies, usually paid by students.

The trove of information comes from the [Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics](#), a group dominated by past and present university presidents and committed to "restoring the balance" of costs and benefits to college sports.

Consider this eye-popping figure: Among the more than 100 top athletic powers (the football bowl subdivision), which enroll more than 3 million students, inflation-adjusted academic spending per student rose a modest 8 percent from 2005 to 2011. Meanwhile, "athletic spending per athlete" rose by more than 38 percent. (This is based on the 90 schools for which data were available.) At the same time, university subsidies -- "institutional funding for athletics per athlete" -- expanded on average by an extraordinary 51 percent, despite rising television and ticket revenue. Commercial receipts covered only 74 cents of each extra dollar of costs incurred in this athletics arms race. ...

Neatorama tells us about a forbidden island in the Bay of Bengal.

Late on the night of August 2, 1981, a Hong Kong freighter navigating the choppy waters of the Bay of Bengal ran aground on a submerged coral reef. The ship, called the Primrose, was hopelessly stuck. But there was no danger of it sinking, so after radioing for assistance, the captain and crew settled in for a few days' wait until help arrived.

The following morning, as it became light, the sailors saw an island a few hundred yards beyond the reef. It was uninhabited, as far as anyone could tell: There were no buildings, roads, or other signs of civilization there -just a pristine, sandy beach and behind it, dense jungle. The beach must have seemed like an ideal spot to wait for a rescue, but the captain ordered the crew to remain aboard the Primrose. It was monsoon season, and he may have concerned about lowering the men into the rough sea in tiny lifeboats. Or perhaps he'd figured out just which tiny island lay beyond the reef: It was North Sentinel -the deadliest of the 200 islands in the Andaman Island chain.

A few days later, a lookout aboard the Primrose spotted a group of dark-skinned men emerging from the jungle, making their way toward the ship. Was it the rescue party? It seemed possible ...until the men came a little closer and the lookout could see that every one of them was naked.

Naked ...and armed, but not with guns. Each man carried either a spear, a bow and arrows, or some other primitive weapon. The captain made another radio distress call, this one much more urgent: "Wild men! Estimate more than 50, carrying various homemade weapons, are making two or three wooden boats. Worrying they will board us at sunset."

After a tense standoff lasting a few more days, the crew of the Primrose were evacuated by helicopter to safety. They were lucky to get away: It was their misfortune to have run aground just offshore of one of the strangest islands on Earth, and probably the very last of its kind. Anthropologists believe the men who appeared on the beach that morning in 1981 are members of a hunter-gatherer tribe that has lived on the island for 65,000 years. That's 35,000 years before the last ice age, 55,000 years before the great woolly mammoths disappeared from North America, and 62,000 years before the ancient Egyptians built the pyramids at Giza. These people are believed to be the direct descendants of the first humans out of Africa.

The outside world has known about North Sentinel Island for centuries, but the islanders have been almost completely cut off from the rest of the world all that time, and they fiercely maintain their isolation to this day. ...

The year closes with great news about another "arms race." This is the one between bacteria and antibiotics. Researchers at [Hebrew University in Jerusalem](#) have discovered one of the ways bacteria have resisted medical efforts against them. We're not aware of similar research results from studies at Muslim University of Cairo, or Baghdad, or Tehran, or Riyadh, or Tripoli, or Rabat, or Ankara, or Damascus, or Amman, or Tunis, or Algiers, or

The mechanism by which some bacteria are able to survive antibacterial treatment has been revealed for the first time by Hebrew University of Jerusalem researchers. Their work could pave the way for new ways to control such bacteria. In addition to the known phenomenon by which some bacteria achieve resistance to antibiotics through mutation, there are other types of bacteria, known as "persistent bacteria," which are not resistant to the antibiotics but simply continue to exist in a dormant or inactive state while exposed to antibacterial treatment. These bacteria later "awaken" when that treatment is over, resuming their detrimental tasks, presenting a dilemma as to how to deal with them. .

Until now, it had been known that there is a connection between these kind of bacteria and the naturally occurring toxin HipA in the bacteria, but scientists did not know the cellular target of this toxin and how its activity triggers dormancy of the bacteria.

Now, the Hebrew University researchers, led by Prof. Gadi Glaser of the Faculty of Medicine and Prof. Nathalie Balaban of the Racah Institute of Physics, have been able to demonstrate how this comes about. ...



Time

It's a Man's World, and It Always Will Be

The modern economy is a male epic, in which women have found a productive role — but women were not its author

by Camille Paglia

If men are obsolete, then women will soon be extinct — unless we rush down that ominous *Brave New World* path where women clone themselves by parthenogenesis, as famously do Komodo dragons, hammerhead [sharks](#) and pit vipers.

A peevish, grudging rancor against men has been one of the most unpalatable and unjust features of second- and third-wave feminism. Men's faults, failings and foibles have been seized on and magnified into gruesome bills of indictment. Ideologue professors at our leading universities indoctrinate impressionable undergraduates with carelessly fact-free theories alleging that gender is an arbitrary, oppressive fiction with no basis in biology.

Is it any wonder that so many high-achieving young women, despite all the happy talk about their academic success, find themselves in the early stages of their careers in chronic uncertainty or anxiety about their prospects for an emotionally fulfilled private life? When an educated culture routinely denigrates masculinity and manhood, then women will be perpetually stuck with *boys*, who have no incentive to mature or to honor their commitments. And without strong men as models to either embrace or (for dissident lesbians) to resist, women will never attain a centered and profound sense of themselves as women.

From my long observation, which predates the sexual revolution, this remains a serious problem afflicting Anglo-American society, with its Puritan residue. In [France](#), Italy, [Spain](#), Latin America and Brazil, in contrast, many ambitious professional women seem to have found a formula for asserting power and authority in the workplace while still projecting sexual allure and even glamour. This is the true feminine mystique, which cannot be taught but flows from an instinctive recognition of sexual differences. In today's punitive atmosphere of sentimental propaganda about gender, the sexual imagination has understandably fled into the alternate world of online pornography, where the rude but exhilarating forces of primitive nature rollick unconstrained by religious or feminist moralism.

It was always the proper mission of feminism to attack and reconstruct the ossified social practices that had led to wide-ranging discrimination against women. But surely it was and is possible for a progressive reform movement to achieve that without stereotyping, belittling or demonizing men. History must be seen clearly and fairly: obstructive traditions arose not from men's hatred or enslavement of women but from the natural division of labor that had developed over thousands of years during the agrarian period and that once immensely benefited and protected women, permitting them to remain at the hearth to care for helpless infants and children. Over the past century, it was labor-saving appliances, invented by men and spread by capitalism, that liberated women from daily drudgery.

What is troubling in too many books and articles by feminist journalists in the U.S. is, despite their putative leftism, an implicit privileging of bourgeois values and culture. The particular focused, clerical and managerial skills of the upper-middle-class elite are presented as the highest desideratum, the ultimate evolutionary point of humanity. Yes, there has been a gradual

transition from an industrial to a service-sector economy in which women, who generally prefer a safe, clean, quiet work environment thrive.

But the triumphalism among some — like Hanna Rosin in her book, *The End of Men*, about women's gains — seems startlingly premature. For instance, Rosin says of the sagging fortunes of today's working-class couples that they and we had "reached the end of a hundred thousand years of human history and the beginning of a new era, and there was no going back." This sweeping appeal to history somehow overlooks history's far darker lessons about the cyclic rise and fall of civilizations, which as they become more complex and interconnected also become more vulnerable to collapse. The earth is littered with the ruins of empires that believed they were eternal.

After the next inevitable apocalypse, men will be desperately needed again! Oh, sure, there will be the odd gun-toting Amazonian survivalist gal, who can rustle game out of the bush and feed her flock, but most women and children will be expecting men to scrounge for food and water and to defend the home turf. Indeed, men are absolutely indispensable right now, invisible as it is to most feminists, who seem blind to the infrastructure that makes their own work lives possible. It is overwhelmingly men who do the dirty, dangerous work of building roads, pouring concrete, laying bricks, tarring roofs, hanging electric wires, excavating natural gas and sewage lines, cutting and clearing trees, and bulldozing the landscape for housing developments. It is men who heft and weld the giant steel beams that frame our office buildings, and it is men who do the hair-raising work of inseting and sealing the finely tempered plate-glass windows of skyscrapers 50 stories tall.

Every day along the Delaware River in Philadelphia, one can watch the passage of vast oil tankers and towering cargo ships arriving from all over the world. These stately colossi are loaded, steered and off-loaded by *men*. The modern economy, with its vast production and distribution network, is a male epic, in which women have found a productive role — but women were not its author. Surely, modern women are strong enough now to give credit where credit is due!

Paglia's opening statement at the [Munk Debate](#), "Resolved: Men Are Obsolete," held in Toronto

WSJ

Camille Paglia: A Feminist Defense of Masculine Virtues

The cultural critic on why ignoring the biological differences between men and women risks undermining Western civilization itself.

by Bari Weiss

Philadelphia

"What you're seeing is how a civilization commits suicide," says Camille Paglia. This self-described "notorious Amazon feminist" isn't telling anyone to Lean In or asking Why Women Still Can't Have It All. No, her indictment may be as surprising as it is wide-ranging: The military is out of fashion, Americans undervalue manual labor, schools neuter male students, opinion makers deny the biological differences between men and women, and sexiness is dead. And that's just 20 minutes of our three-hour conversation.

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The fact that the acclaimed book—the first of six; her latest, "Glittering Images," is a survey of Western art—was rejected by seven publishers and five agents before being printed by Yale University Press only added to Ms. Paglia's sense of herself as a provocateur in a class with [Rush Limbaugh](#) and [Howard Stern](#). But unlike those radio jocks, Ms. Paglia has scholarly chops: Her dissertation adviser at Yale was Harold Bloom, and she is as likely to discuss Freud, Oscar Wilde or early Native American art as to talk about Miley Cyrus.

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But no subject gets her going more than when I ask if she really sees a connection between society's attempts to paper over the biological distinction between men and women and the collapse of Western civilization.

She starts by pointing to the diminished status of military service. "The entire elite class now, in finance, in politics and so on, none of them have military service—hardly anyone, there are a few. But there is no prestige attached to it anymore. That is a recipe for disaster," she says. "These people don't think in military ways, so there's this illusion out there that people are basically nice, people are basically kind, if we're just nice and benevolent to everyone they'll be nice too. They literally don't have any sense of evil or criminality."

The results, she says, can be seen in everything from the dysfunction in Washington (where politicians "lack practical skills of analysis and construction") to what women wear. "So many women don't realize how vulnerable they are by what they're doing on the street," she says, referring to women who wear sexy clothes.

When she has made this point in the past, Ms. Paglia—who dresses in androgynous jackets and slacks—has been told that she believes "women are at fault for their own victimization." Nonsense, she says. "I believe that every person, male and female, needs to be in a protective mode at all times of alertness to potential danger. The world is full of potential attacks, potential disasters." She calls it "street-smart feminism."

Ms. Paglia argues that the softening of modern American society begins as early as kindergarten. "Primary-school education is a crock, basically. It's oppressive to anyone with physical energy, especially guys," she says, pointing to the most obvious example: the way many schools have cut recess. "They're making a toxic environment for boys. Primary education does everything in its power to turn boys into neuters."

She is not the first to make this argument, as Ms. Paglia readily notes. Fellow feminist Christina Hoff Sommers has written about the "war against boys" for more than a decade. The notion was once met with derision, but now data back it up: Almost one in five high-school-age boys has been diagnosed with ADHD, boys get worse grades than girls and are less likely to go to college.

Ms. Paglia observes this phenomenon up close with her 11-year-old son, Lucien, whom she is raising with her ex-partner, Alison Maddex, an artist and public-school teacher who lives 2 miles away. She sees the tacit elevation of "female values"—such as sensitivity, socialization and cooperation—as the main aim of teachers, rather than fostering creative energy and teaching hard geographical and historical facts.

By her lights, things only get worse in higher education. "This PC gender politics thing—the way gender is being taught in the universities—in a very anti-male way, it's all about neutralization of maleness." The result: Upper-middle-class men who are "intimidated" and "can't say anything. . . . They understand the agenda." In other words: They avoid going against certain sacred cows by "never telling the truth to women" about sex, and by keeping "raunchy" thoughts and sexual fantasies to themselves and their laptops.

Politically correct, inadequate education, along with the decline of America's brawny industrial base, leaves many men with "no models of manhood," she says. "Masculinity is just becoming something that is imitated from the movies. There's nothing left. There's no room for anything manly right now." The only place you can hear what men really feel these days, she claims, is on sports radio. No surprise, she is an avid listener. The energy and enthusiasm "inspires me as a writer," she says, adding: "If we had to go to war," the callers "are the men that would save the nation."

And men aren't the only ones suffering from the decline of men. Women, particularly elite upper-middle-class women, have become "clones" condemned to "Pilates for the next 30 years," Ms. Paglia says. "Our culture doesn't allow women to know how to be womanly," adding that online pornography is increasingly the only place where men and women in our sexless culture tap into "primal energy" in a way they can't in real life.

A key part of the remedy, she believes, is a "revalorization" of traditional male trades—the ones that allow women's studies professors to drive to work (roads), take the elevator to their office (construction), read in the library (electricity), and go to gender-neutral restrooms (plumbing).

" [Michelle Obama](#)'s going on: 'Everybody must have college.' Why? Why? What is the reason why everyone has to go to college? Especially when college is so utterly meaningless right now, it has no core curriculum" and "people end up saddled with huge debts," says Ms. Paglia. What's driving the push toward universal college is "social snobbery on the part of a lot of upper-middle-class families who want the sticker in the window."

Ms. Paglia, who has been a professor of humanities and media studies at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia since 1984, sees her own students as examples. "I have woodworking students who, even while they're in class, are already earning money making furniture and so on," she says. "My career has been in art schools cause I don't get along with normal academics."

To hear her tell it, getting along has never been Ms. Paglia's strong suit. As a child, she felt stifled by the expectations of girlhood in the 1950s. She fantasized about being a knight, not a princess. Discovering pioneering female figures as a teenager, most notably [Amelia Earhart](#), transformed Ms. Paglia's understanding of what her future might hold.

These iconoclastic women of the 1930s, like Earhart and Katharine Hepburn, remain her ideal feminist role models: independent, brave, enterprising, capable of competing with men without bashing them. But since at least the late 1960s, she says, fellow feminists in the academy stopped sharing her vision of "equal-opportunity feminism" that demands a level playing field without demanding special quotas or protections for women.

She proudly recounts her battle, while a graduate student at Yale in the late 1960s and early '70s, with the New Haven Women's Liberation Rock Band over the Rolling Stones: Ms. Paglia loved "Under My Thumb," a song the others regarded as chauvinist. Then there was the time she "barely got through the dinner" with a group of women's studies professors at Bennington College, where she had her first teaching job, who insisted that there is no hormonal difference between men and women. "I left before dessert."

In her view, these ideological excesses bear much of the blame for the current cultural decline. She calls out activists like Gloria Steinem, Naomi Wolf and Susan Faludi for pushing a version of feminism that says gender is nothing more than a social construct, and groups like the National Organization for Women for making abortion the singular women's issue.

By denying the role of nature in women's lives, she argues, leading feminists created a "denatured, antiseptic" movement that "protected their bourgeois lifestyle" and falsely promised that women could "have it all." And by impugning women who chose to forgo careers to stay at home with children, feminists turned off many who might have happily joined their ranks.

But Ms. Paglia's criticism shouldn't be mistaken for nostalgia for the socially prescribed roles for men and women before the 1960s. Quite the contrary. "I personally have disobeyed every single item of the gender code," says Ms. Paglia. But men, and especially women, need to be honest about the role biology plays and clear-eyed about the choices they are making.

Sex education, she says, simply focuses on mechanics without conveying the real "facts of life," especially for girls: "I want every 14-year-old girl . . . to be told: You better start thinking what do you want in life. If you just want a career and no children you don't have much to worry about. If, however, you are thinking you'd like to have children some day you should start thinking about when do you want to have them. Early or late? To have them early means you are going to make a career sacrifice, but you're going to have more energy and less risks. Both the pros and the cons should be presented."

For all of Ms. Paglia's barbs about the women's movement, it seems clear that feminism—at least of the equal-opportunity variety—has triumphed in its basic goals. There is surely a lack of women in the C-Suite and Congress, but you'd be hard-pressed to find a man who would admit that he believes women are less capable. To save feminism as a political movement from irrelevance, Ms. Paglia says, the women's movement should return to its roots. That means abandoning the "nanny state" mentality that led to politically correct speech codes and college disciplinary committees that have come to replace courts. The movement can win converts, she says, but it needs to become a big tent, one "open to stay-at-home moms" and "not just the career woman."

More important, Ms. Paglia says, if the women's movement wants to be taken seriously again, it should tackle serious matters, like rape in India and honor killings in the Muslim world, that are "more of an outrage than some woman going on a date on the Brown University campus."

Ms. Weiss is an associate editorial features editor at the Journal.

Bloomberg **Colleges' Athletics Arms Race Is for Losers**

By Richard Vedder

With the college football bowls under way, all most of us will care about are the winners. But as a nation purporting to care about the costs of higher education, we should pay far more attention to the many losers.

Thanks to a newly available database, we can grasp the ugly truth: Universities are increasing their spending on intercollegiate sports exponentially, far faster than they are investing resources in teaching and research, and at rates that force higher institutional subsidies, usually paid by students.

The trove of information comes from the [Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics](#), a group dominated by past and present university presidents and committed to "restoring the balance" of costs and benefits to college sports.

Consider this eye-popping figure: Among the more than 100 top athletic powers (the football bowl subdivision), which enroll more than 3 million students, inflation-adjusted academic spending per student rose a modest 8 percent from 2005 to 2011. Meanwhile, "athletic spending per athlete" rose by more than 38 percent. (This is based on the 90 schools for which data were available.) At the same time, university subsidies -- "institutional funding for athletics per athlete" -- expanded on average by an extraordinary 51 percent, despite rising television and ticket

revenue. Commercial receipts covered only 74 cents of each extra dollar of costs incurred in this athletics arms race.

In 2011, median academic spending per student at these schools was \$13,736, while athletic spending per athlete was seven times as much -- \$96,948. Some of the highest-spending teams (such as No. 2-ranked [Auburn University](#), which spent more than \$212,000 per athlete) obtain large revenue from television, tickets, concessions and branding, so they can claim their investment has paid off.

But the cost-benefit balance doesn't look the same at, say, [Rutgers University](#), where spending per athlete more than doubled from 2005 to 2011, and inflation-adjusted academic spending was flat. Or at my school, Ohio University, where inflation-adjusted academic spending per student fell about 6 percent, while inflation-adjusted spending per athlete rose 77 percent. At Rutgers, commercial revenue (ticket sales, television, concessions and so on) paid only 53 percent of total athletics costs, and much less -- 15 percent -- at Ohio University. ("Athletics costs" includes sports such as swimming, wrestling and cross country, as well as the big revenue programs football and basketball.)

Schools spend more for two reasons. First, they calculate that athletic spending will lead to more victories, and with that more revenue. Second, they gamble that the spending will improve national name recognition and enhance student admissions demand, improving the school's reputation. In reality, neither occurs often.

Thus the 134 percent increase in spending per athlete at [Florida International University](#) wasn't followed by much revenue. Athletic subsidies per athlete roughly doubled and the school accumulated more than \$30 million in debt incurred to build new athletic facilities. FIU's national reputation, as measured by national rankings, remains negligible.

Worse, some schools that invest substantially in intercollegiate athletics suffer declines in their reputations. Ohio University was ranked 98th by [U.S. News & World Report](#) in 2005. Despite some moderate athletic success, however, it fell 26 spots to No. 124 by 2011 (and has fallen even more since). Rutgers, ranked 58th in 2005, now ranks 69th.

It isn't just reputation we should care about. Take the case of [Boise State University](#), which has embraced the mantra of spending on ball-throwing contests as a path to greatness. In athletic terms, this has been a success. Yet the university's six-year graduation rate is an extraordinarily low 29 percent, about half that (56 percent) of its less athletically obsessed state rival, the [University of Idaho](#). Boise State, where 28 percent of athletics costs are financed by institutional subsidies, spent a lowly \$9,134 on instructional spending per student in 2011, and spent \$172,415 -- 19 times as much -- on "football spending per scholarship football student."

Of course, academic reputation and athletics can go hand in hand. The University of [Notre Dame](#) is a top school, and its distinction has been enhanced by a long-term record of athletic excellence. [Ohio State University](#) is so successful athletically that the program is no drain on institutional finances, and the pursuit of athletic excellence has led to some academic success, as its rankings have risen somewhat. The same is roughly true for the [University of Texas](#) and the University of [Southern California](#). But the sales pitch that spending more on coaches' salaries and stadiums, among other sports subsidies, is a relatively risk-free way of improving academic achievement and reputation is a fantasy.

No school will unilaterally disarm, and the solution will probably have to be imposed from outside. Although everyone complains about higher education costs, politicians have been timid in proposing ways to limit the mania for sports. Yet state governments could limit the proportion of their subsidies to public universities that could be devoted to athletics (to, say, 3 percent). Federal income tax deductions could be removed for private gifts for athletic facilities or operational support.

Good luck with this, you may say. Yes, such measures may be politically unfeasible. The students and [taxpayers](#) who subsidize the profligacy even though they don't benefit from it are no match for the powerful lobbies that support sports. But the next time you hear business and political leaders decry the costs of U.S. higher education and shaky academic standards, remember: That touchdown wasn't free.

Richard Vedder directs the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, teaches economics at Ohio University and is an adjunct scholar at the [American Enterprise Institute](#).

Neatorama

[The Forbidden Island](#)

by Miss Cellania



The following is an article from [Uncle John's 24-Karat Gold Bathroom Reader](#).

Ever heard of North Sentinel Island? Probably not ...even thought's one of the most unusual places on Earth. What makes it so odd? The people -they've been there a long time, completely cut off from the rest of the world.

MAROONED

Late on the night of August 2, 1981, a Hong Kong freighter navigating the choppy waters of the Bay of Bengal ran aground on a submerged coral reef. The ship, called the *Primrose*, was hopelessly stuck. But there was no danger of it sinking, so after radioing for assistance, the captain and crew settled in for a few days' wait until help arrived.

The following morning, as it became light, the sailors saw an island a few hundred yards beyond the reef. It was uninhabited, as far as anyone could tell: There were no buildings, roads, or other signs of civilization there -just a pristine, sandy beach and behind it, dense jungle. The beach must have seemed like an ideal spot to wait for a rescue, but the captain ordered the crew to remain aboard the *Primrose*. It was monsoon season, and he may have concerned about lowering the men into the rough sea in tiny lifeboats. Or perhaps he'd figured out just *which* tiny island lay beyond the reef: It was North Sentinel -the deadliest of the 200 islands in the Andaman Island chain.

SOME WELCOME

A few days later, a lookout aboard the *Primrose* spotted a group of dark-skinned men emerging from the jungle, making their way toward the ship. Was it the rescue party? It seemed possible ...until the men came a little closer and the lookout could see that every one of them was naked.

Naked ...and *armed*, but not with guns. Each man carried either a spear, a bow and arrows, or some other primitive weapon. The captain made another radio distress call, this one much more urgent: "Wild men! Estimate more than 50, carrying various homemade weapons, are making two or three wooden boats. Worrying they will board us at sunset."

A WORLD APART



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The outside world has known about North Sentinel Island for centuries, but the islanders have been almost completely cut off from the rest of the world *all* that time, and they fiercely maintain their isolation to this day. No one knows what language they speak or what they call themselves -they have never allowed anyone to get close enough to find out. The outside world calls them the "Sentineli" or the "Sentinelese," after the island. It's estimated the the 28-square-mile island (slightly larger than Manhattan) is capable of supporting as many as 400 hunter-gatherers, but no one knows how many people live there.

HOME ALONE

North Sentinel Island is amazingly well suited to both support and isolate a tribe like the Sentinelese. It's too small to interest settlers or colonial powers, especially when there are bigger, better islands within a few hours' sailing time. And unlike many of those islands, North Sentinel has no natural harbors, so there's no good place for a ship to take shelter from a storm. Furthermore, the island is surrounded by a ring of submerged coral reefs that prevent large ships from approaching. This was especially true during the age of sail, when ships had no way of quickly maneuvering out of harm's way once they realized that the reefs were there. Narrow openings in these reefs allow small boats to slip through and land on the beach, but these are passable only in good weather and calm seas, which occur as infrequently as two months out of the year. For the remaining ten months, the island cannot be safely approached from the sea.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY



At the same time that they keep strangers out, the coral reefs help keep the Sentinelese in, because the reefs create several shallow lagoons that are teeming with sea life. The food provided by these lagoons is so plentiful that the Sentinelese have never needed to fish in the deep sea waters beyond the coral reefs. They propel their dugout canoes through the shallow lagoons by poling along the bottom, but they cannot navigate in water deeper than the length of the poles. They've never invented oars, without which they cannot leave the island.

The Andaman Islands, North Sentinel included, sit at the crossroads of ancient trade routes between Europe, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Ironically, this may have further encouraged the isolationist tendencies of the Sentinelese, because their dark skin and African appearance would have made them the targets of any slave traders who might have tried to land on the island over the centuries. Periodic contact with such outsiders would have only intensified the tribe's hostility toward the outside world and their desire to be left alone.

WHO ARE YOU WEARING?

One more thing that has protected the Sentinelese from outsiders: the age-old belief that all Andaman Island tribes were cannibals. There is no evidence that any of them were, except that some tribes wore the bones of their ancestors as jewelry (including the skulls), which they wore strapped to their backs. It would have been easy to mistake such people for cannibals. Who'd stick around long enough to find out that they weren't?

By the time the Greek astronomer Ptolemy wrote of an "Island of Cannibals" somewhere in the Bay of Bengal in the second century AD, sailors were already giving the Andamans a wide berth. Marco Polo didn't help matters in the 1290s when he described the Andamanese as "a

brutish and savage race... [who] kill and eat every foreigner whom they can lay their hands upon." Claims like these certainly did help to keep strangers away. And considering how fiercely the Sentinelese and other Andaman tribes defended their islands, it's probably a lucky thing they did.

STRANGERS BEARING GIFTS



The first real threat to the natives of North Sentinel Island appeared in 1858, when the British established a penal colony at Port Blair on nearby South Andaman Island, and set out trying to pacify the local tribes -the Great Andamese, the Onge, the Jarawa, and eventually the Sentinelese. One technique the British used was to kidnap a member of an unfriendly tribe, hold him for a short period, treat him well, and then shower him with gifts and let him return to his people. In doing so, the British hoped to demonstrate their friendliness. If the first attempt didn't work, they'd repeat the process with as many tribesmen as it took to turn an unfriendly tribe into a friendly one.

In 1880 a large, heavily-armed party led by 20-year-old Maurice Vidal Portman, the British colonial administrator, landed on North Sentinel and made what is believed to be the first exploration of the island by outsiders. Several days passed before they made contact with any Sentinelese, because tribe members disappeared into the jungle whenever strangers approached.

Finally, after several days on the island, the party stumbled across an elderly couple who were too old to run away, and several small children. Portman brought the two adults and four of the children back to Port Blair. But the man and the woman soon started to get sick and then died,

probably from exposure to Western diseases like smallpox, measles, and influenza, to which they would have had little or no resistance. So Portman returned the four children to North Sentinel Island and released them with gifts for the rest of the tribe. The children disappeared into the jungle and were never seen again.

INDIA'S TURN

After this experience, the British left the Sentinelese more or less alone, and focused their pacification efforts on the other tribes. When India won its independence from Great Britain in 1947, the Andaman Islands were handed over to India, but the Indians ignored the Sentinelese, too, for about 20 years.

Then in 1967, the Indian government launched its own large-scale expedition to North Sentinel Island, complete with plenty of armed policemen and naval officers for protection. The visit was less aggressive than the British had been 87 years earlier (no kidnapping), and it was more scientific (an anthropologist named T.N. Pandit was a member of the party). But they never made contact with a single Sentinelese soul -once again, the tribe members vanished deeper into the jungle whenever the outsiders approached.

RE-GIFTING



That began a decades-long policy of "contact visits" by the Indian government to North Sentinel Island. From time to time during the short calm-weather season, an Indian naval vessel would anchor outside the coral reefs and dispatch small boats through the openings in the reefs to approach the beaches. *Approach* the beaches, but not land. The boats had to be sure not to come within an arrow's flight of the beach or risk being attacked by the Sentinelese.

These strangers, like the British before them, came bearing gifts -usually bananas and coconuts, which do not grow on the islands, and sometimes other gifts, including bead necklaces, rubber balls, plastic buckets, and pots and pans. Once the visitors approached as closely as they felt was safe, they would toss the items overboard to wash upon the beach. Or, if the party were large enough to frighten the Sentinelese into retreating into the jungle, it might even land on the beach, but only long enough to drop off the gifts and beat it out of there [before the Sentinelese attacked](#). When a *National Geographic* film crew lingered too long during one such visit in 1975, a Sentinelese warrior with a bow and arrow shot the director in the thigh, and then stood there on the beach laughing at his accomplishment.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

It wasn't until the early 1990s, after more than 20 years of such visits, that the Sentinelese finally relaxed their guard -just a bit- and allowed the boats to come closer. Sometimes unarmed tribesmen stood on the beach while the people on the boats tossed the coconuts overboard. A few times, they even [waded out in the water](#) to collect the coconuts in person. Even so, they did not allow the visitors to stay long. After just a few minutes, the Sentinelese would signal with menacing gestures or "warning shots" -arrows fired with no arrowheads attached- that the visit was over.

LEAVE 'EM ALONE

That was about as close as the Sentinelese ever came to opening up to the outside world. In the mid-1990s, the Indian government decided that its policy of forcing contact with the Sentinelese made no sense, and it ended the visits in 1996.



The visits made no sense to India, but they were actually dangerous for the Sentinelese. With so little resistance to Western diseases, the islanders risked not just the death of individuals with each contact with outsiders, but the extinction of the entire tribe. That was the experience with other Andaman Island tribes: When the British established their penal colony on South Andaman Island in 1858, the native population of the Andaman Islands was nearly 7,000 people. But the British arrival was followed by a succession of epidemics, including pneumonia, measles, mumps, and the Russian flu, which decimated the tribes. After more than 150 years of exposure to Western diseases, their numbers have dropped to fewer than 300 people, and continue to decline. Some tribes have gone completely extinct. The Sentinelese, by refusing contact with the outside world, are the only tribe that has avoided this fate.

WAVE GOODBYE

The Sentinelese even survived the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the deadliest in recorded history, with few or no casualties. Though the tsunami killed more than 230,000 people in surrounding countries, it appears that the Sentinelese were able to sense the coming of the tsunami and escape to higher ground before it arrived. When an Indian Navy helicopter arrived three days after to check on their well-being and drop food parcels on the beach, a Sentinelese warrior came out of the jungle and warned the helicopter off with a bow and arrow, a clear sign that the Sentinelese did not want help from outsiders.



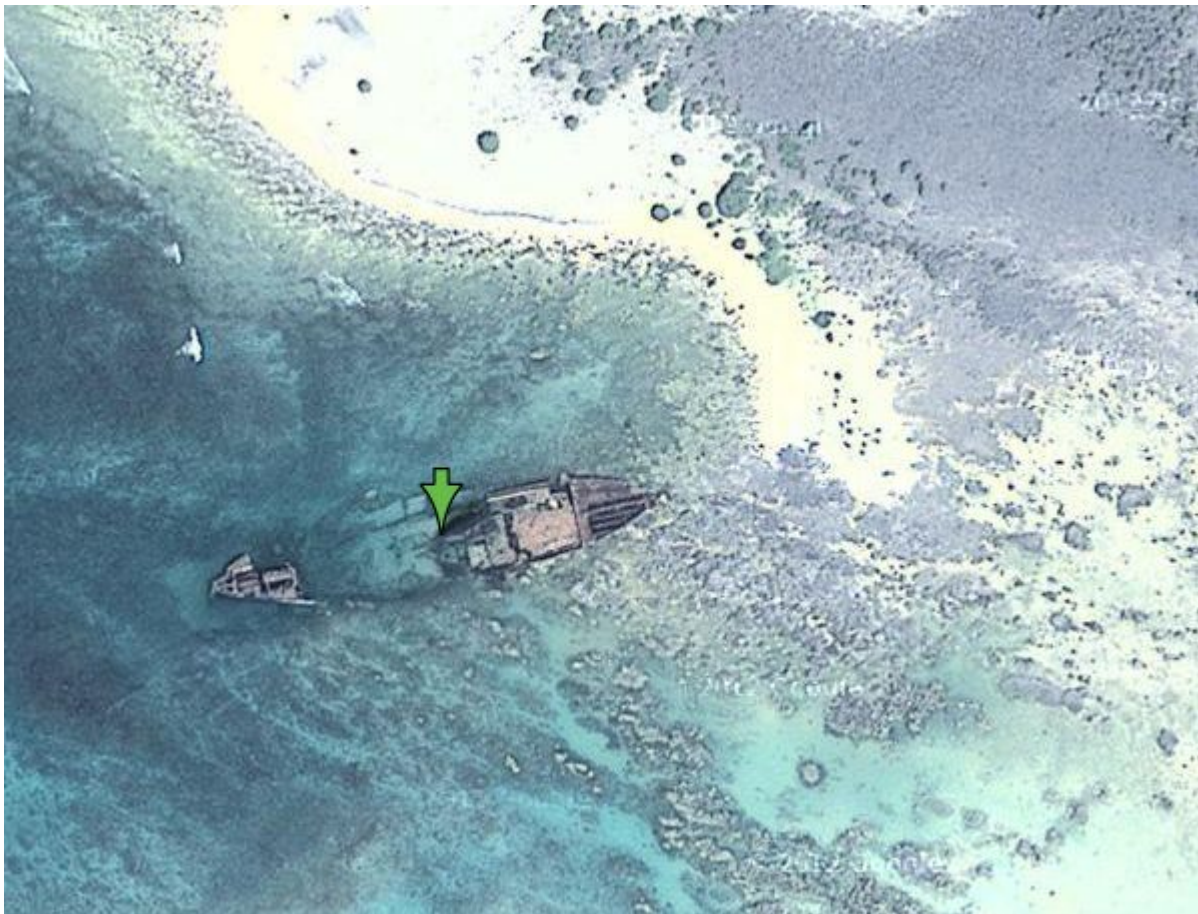
KEEP OUT

Today the Indian government enforces a three-mile exclusion zone around North Sentinel Island with regular sea and air patrols. Heavy fines and jail time await anyone caught trespassing in the zone. And if that isn't enough of a deterrent, the Sentinelese continue to defend their island as fiercely as ever. In 2006 two poachers who'd spent the day fishing illegally inside the exclusion zone dropped anchor near the island and went to sleep, apparently after a night of heavy drinking. Sometime during the night the anchor came loose and the boat drifted onto the coral reefs. The Sentinelese killed both men and buried their bodies on the beach. At last report the bodies are still there; when an Indian Navy helicopter tried to recover them from the beach, the Sentinelese fought it off with bows and arrows.

EYE IN THE SKY

Today anyone with a laptop and internet access can use Google Earth to spy on places that are not meant to be seen by outsiders. You can look at satellite photos of Area 51, the secret

military air base in the Nevada desert. You can look at Mount Weather, a secret facility in Virginia that is rumored to be the place that members of Congress are evacuated in times of national emergency. You can even peer down on secret watersides on the outskirts of Pyongyang, North Korea, that are the playground of that country's Communist Party elite.



But when you look down on North Sentinel Island in the Bay of Bengal, all you can make out is the wreck of the *Primrose*, still stuck on the reef where it ran aground in 1981. You can't see the Sentinelese, their dwellings, or anything else that might shed light on how many people there are on the island, or how they live their lives. The dense jungle canopy that covers every inch of the island except the beaches conceals everything: Even when viewed from outer space, the Sentinelese remain free from prying eyes.

Science News

Hebrew University researchers reach breakthrough on understanding persistent bacteria



Professor Gadi Glaser

The mechanism by which some bacteria are able to survive antibacterial treatment has been revealed for the first time by Hebrew University of Jerusalem researchers. Their work could pave the way for new ways to control such bacteria. In addition to the known phenomenon by which some bacteria achieve resistance to antibiotics through mutation, there are other types of bacteria, known as "persistent bacteria," which are not resistant to the antibiotics but simply continue to exist in a dormant or inactive state while exposed to antibacterial treatment. These bacteria later "awaken" when that treatment is over, resuming their detrimental tasks, presenting a dilemma as to how to deal with them. .

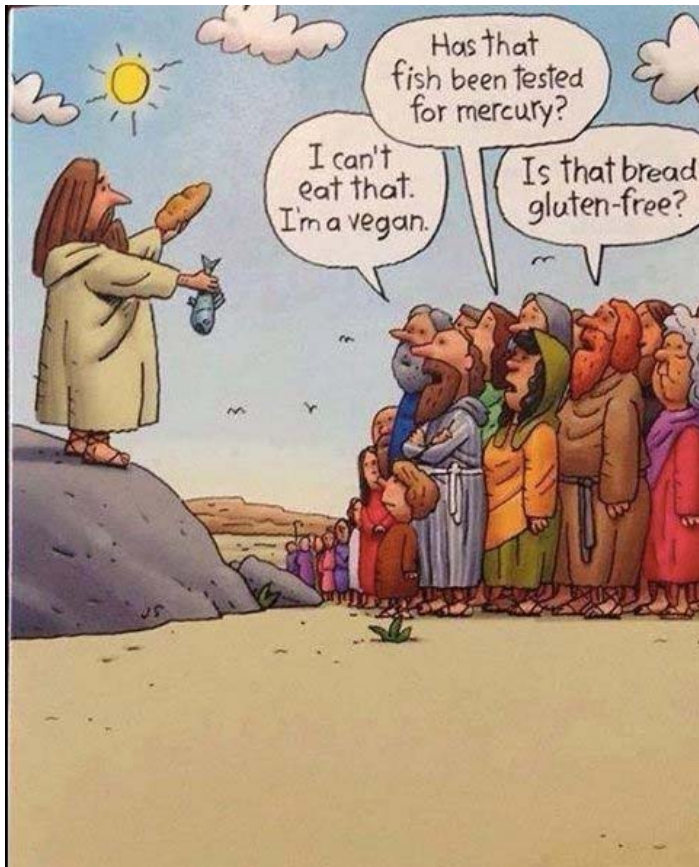
Until now, it had been known that there is a connection between these kind of bacteria and the naturally occurring toxin HipA in the bacteria, but scientists did not know the cellular target of this toxin and how its activity triggers dormancy of the bacteria.

Now, the Hebrew University researchers, led by Prof. Gadi Glaser of the Faculty of Medicine and Prof. Nathalie Balaban of the Racah Institute of Physics, have been able to demonstrate how this comes about. Their research showed that when antibiotics attack these bacteria, the HipA toxin disrupts the chemical "messaging" process necessary for nutrients to build proteins. This is interpreted by the bacteria as a "hunger signal" and sends them into an inactive state, (dormancy) in which they are able to survive until the antibacterial treatment is over and they can resume their harmful activity.

The research on persistent bacteria has been conducted in Prof. Balaban's lab for several years, focusing on the development of a biophysical understanding of the phenomenon. It will be combined with other work being done in Prof. Glaser's laboratory focusing on combating persistent bacteria, in the hope of leading to more effective treatment for bacterial infections.



Yeah... that's how it'll work.



**CHUCK NORRIS WAS BORN MAY 6, 1945.
THE NAZIS SURRENDERED MAY 7, 1945.**



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