

April 16, 2014

We start with a couple of items about the relationship between Russia and Germany. On trips to Russia in the early 90's Pickerhead was struck with how Germany was referred to by Russians when discussing the Second World War. When discussing the manifold German atrocities would never say "Germans" it was always "the Nazis." Without going into detail, suffice it to say the Germans were guilty of the most unspeakable and disgusting things. That there were any Germans left alive in areas controlled by the Russians at the end of the war, is a demonstration of Russian forbearance.

Craig Pirrong of Streetwise Professor is first.

In a sign of the impending apocalypse, Der Spiegel has run several articles that evaluate critically Germany's all too accepting and "understanding" approach to Russia, including during the Ukraine and Crimea crises. The articles argue that there is a volatile brew of psychology (neuroses, actually), philosophy, and ideology, which when combined with the economic interests of German industry, makes Germany ambivalent at worst about Russia.

World War II of course plays a central role in this. One of the articles notes that the Germans are acutely conscious of the horrific things they did in the East, and that despite that, the Russians do not really hold that over the Germans. This impels the Germans to make amends, and makes them somewhat grateful to the Russians. In contrast American moralism about German actions during the war rankles the Germans deeply: this helps explain why the Germans revel in shrieking about American transgressions, notably Viet Nam and more lately, Snowden. If the Americans are morally tainted, Germans can feel less guilty about their past. (Similar considerations apply with force to German attitudes towards Israel.)

One point that the articles all make is the deep anti-western streak in German thought and attitudes. The similar anti-westernism in Russia, which is central to Putin's new ideology, therefore resonates deeply in Germany and makes Germans think that Russians are kindred spirits. These attitudes are particularly pronounced in the former GDR.

More specifically, there is a strong element of anti-Anglo Saxon-ism in both German and Russian thought. ...

And here's Christian Neef, Der Spiegel's Foreign Editor.

Since the start of the Crimea crisis, we've constantly heard that Germans somehow understand Russians. Indeed, hardly any other view has been repeated as often. But nothing could possibly be more misleading. The Germans don't understand Russians: They understand less about the Russians than they do about the British, Spanish or French.

It's true that Germany had a special relationship with the Russian Empire long ago. Germans served as czars and czarinas, once as the Russian prime minister, and they were officers, doctors and teachers in the royal court in St. Petersburg. German engineers operated ore mines in the Ural Mountains, German farmers plowed land along the Volga and Dnieper rivers. In turn, they were introduced to Russian writers. Pushkin introduced Germans to the strange but likable Russian

soul. And cities like Moscow and St. Petersburg wouldn't be what they are today without Germans. That's the romanticized side of German-Russian relations.

Then came the wars of the past century and the devastation the Germans unleashed on the Soviet Union. Since then, the image Germans have of Russia is inaccurate.

The postwar generation grew up with a latent fear of the Russians. In the east of Germany, people saw them as an occupying force, while in the west many believed that an invasion was imminent. Then came Gorbachev. The Germans celebrated him because he gave them the gift of reunification. In one blow, the aversion of the 1960s and 1970s to everything that came out of the Kremlin seemed to be forgotten. It was a time of enthusiasm and relief, especially in the West. Gorbachev became a much-admired figure for Germans. They projected their fantasies for a new relationship between Germans and Russians on him and the new Russia. The Germans believed the Russians might somehow become just like them.

But Russia isn't Europe, and it never will be. Russia never went through any period of enlightenment after the destruction wrought by Stalin on the country's soul. Germans never seriously considered that fact, because it would have interfered with their image of Russia.

They should have been warned. Not only because Mikhail Gorbachev in no way represented the kind of hard-nosed leaders the Russians had become accustomed to over hundreds of years. Nor did they listen to what Russian writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn had to say about perestroika's inventor. He said Gorbachev's leadership style wasn't governance, but rather "a thoughtless renunciation of power." Gorbachev ultimately became the most unpopular Kremlin leader in recent history.

The Soviet Union's implosion, which they blame on Gorbachev, didn't just rob them of their homeland. It also plunged them headfirst into a kind of capitalism that was even more reckless than Manchester capitalism. In no time at all, a handful of oligarchs appropriated the country's most precious assets and a majority of the Russian people fell into poverty. ...

A couple of our favorites have posted on the issue of women's wages. [Thomas Sowell](#) is first.

The "war on women" political slogan is in fact a war against common sense.

It is a statistical fraud when Barack Obama and other politicians say that women earn only 77 percent of what men earn — and that this is because of discrimination.

It would certainly be discrimination if women were doing the same work as men, for the same number of hours, with the same amount of training and experience, as well as other things being the same. But study after study, over the past several decades, has shown repeatedly that those things are not the same.

Constantly repeating the "77 percent" statistic does not make them the same. It simply takes advantage of many people's ignorance — something that Barack Obama has been very good at doing on many other issues. ...

And then Michael Barone.

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Such legislation attacks a problem very largely solved. The male-female pay differential for those working at similar levels has been reduced nearly, but not quite, to the vanishing point. Remaining differences result almost entirely from personal choices by women and men.

Those choices shifted sharply 40 years ago but haven't changed much lately. The percentage of mothers seeing full-time work as an ideal, [Pew Research Center reports](#), was 30 percent in 1997 and 32 percent in 2012.

By any realistic standard the equal pay problem is minor, certainly in comparison to the growth-stifling effects of the current tax code and the unsustainable trajectory of current entitlement programs.

But this president, unlike his two predecessors, has chosen not to address such major problems in his second term. ...

Andrew Malcolm with late night humor.

Fallon: Hugh Hefner's friends threw him a big 88th birthday party today. They had a naked woman jump out of a giant bran muffin.

Fallon: Top movie this weekend was ‘Captain America.’ Earned \$303 million worldwide. In other words, Captain America has more money than regular America

Conan: There's a new website that helps people write elaborate works of personalized fiction. It's called “Match.com.”

Streetwise Professor

[Germany & Russia: Psychology, Ideology, Economics—and Romanticism](#)

by Craig Pirrong

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actually), philosophy, and ideology, which when combined with the economic interests of German industry, makes Germany ambivalent at worst about Russia.

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More specifically, there is a strong element of anti-Anglo Saxon-ism in both German and Russian thought.

This anti-westernism is rooted in Romanticism. [Five years ago, I wrote a post drawing the parallels between the Romantic elements in German and Russian culture and thought.](#) Here's a taste:

Following on Pauli, Viereck hypothesizes that German Romanticism was the product of the division of Germany between the Latinized West and the Barbarian East. That Germany was on the divide between two civilizations with wildly different mental and moral universes. Romanticism was a revolt of the East against the West.

Russia, too, has a very uneasy, conflicted relationship with the Latinized West. Indeed, although the dividing line did not run directly through Russia, as it did Germany (thanks to Hermann/Arminius), post-Peter I's introduction of Western ideas into Muscovy, the same conflict has rent Russia, with many of the same consequences, political and psychological. The Slavophiles and latterly, the Eurasianists (new and old), are in essence Russia's indigenous Romantics. (It is well known that German Romanticism was quite influential in Russia. I think that this is primarily a matter that the doctrine found very fertile soil waiting for it there.)

In brief, Russia's conflicted relationship with the West, and the psychological complexes associated therewith, bear uncanny similarities to Germany's. Both Germany and Russia lie on civilizational fault lines, and Russia and the non-Romanized parts of Germany were not all that dissimilar in terms of economy and social organization. It should not be too surprising that each reacted similarly to the onslaught of modernity and the hegemony of the Latinized West, though each of course exhibits its own distinct characteristics.

Similarly, my post [On Russophobia](#) I noted the deep anti-liberal strains in Russian thought: similar strains exist in Germany.

If you combine economic interest, latent (and not so latent) guilt, and deep anti-western (and specifically anti-American) sentiments rooted in Romanticism, Germany is entirely unreliable in opposing Putin.

And don't doubt that Putin hasn't figured that out, and is planning accordingly. And also don't doubt that he is playing this for all it is worth. Exhibit A: Snowden.

Der Spiegel

[A Sober Look: It's Time To Stop Romanticizing Russia](#)

The view Germans have of Russia is skewed by romanticism and historical baggage. Without taking a sober look at Moscow, we will never find an adequate strategy for dealing with Vladimir Putin's conservative, anti-Western approach to power.

by Christian Neef

Since the start of the Crimea crisis, we've constantly heard that Germans somehow understand Russians. Indeed, hardly any other view has been repeated as often. But nothing could possibly be more misleading. The Germans don't understand Russians: They understand less about the Russians than they do about the British, Spanish or French.

It's true that Germany had a special relationship with the Russian Empire long ago. Germans served as czars and czarinas, once as the Russian prime minister, and they were officers, doctors and teachers in the royal court in St. Petersburg. German engineers operated ore mines in the Ural Mountains, German farmers plowed land along the Volga and Dnieper rivers. In turn, they were introduced to Russian writers. Pushkin introduced Germans to the strange but likable Russian soul. And cities like Moscow and St. Petersburg wouldn't be what they are today without Germans. That's the romanticized side of German-Russian relations.

Then came the wars of the past century and the devastation the Germans unleashed on the Soviet Union. Since then, the image Germans have of Russia is inaccurate.

The postwar generation grew up with a latent fear of the Russians. In the east of Germany, people saw them as an occupying force, while in the west many believed that an invasion was imminent. Then came Gorbachev. The Germans celebrated him because he gave them the gift of reunification. In one blow, the aversion of the 1960s and 1970s to everything that came out of the Kremlin seemed to be forgotten. It was a time of enthusiasm and relief, especially in the West. Gorbachev became a much-admired figure for Germans. They projected their fantasies for a new relationship between Germans and Russians on him and the new Russia. The Germans believed the Russians might somehow become just like them.

But Russia isn't Europe, and it never will be. Russia never went through any period of enlightenment after the destruction wrought by Stalin on the country's soul. Germans never seriously considered that fact, because it would have interfered with their image of Russia.

They should have been warned. Not only because Mikhail Gorbachev in no way represented the kind of hard-nosed leaders the Russians had become accustomed to over hundreds of years. Nor did they listen to what Russian writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn had to say about perestroika's inventor. He said Gorbachev's leadership style wasn't governance, but rather "a thoughtless renunciation of power." Gorbachev ultimately became the most unpopular Kremlin leader in recent history.

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than Manchester capitalism. In no time at all, a handful of oligarchs appropriated the country's most precious assets and a majority of the Russian people fell into poverty.

Why Russians Can't Be Compared to the West

The Germans witnessed this drama as it happened, but they didn't understand what was going through the minds of Russians.

In her book "Second-Hand Time," Russian novelist Svetlana Alexievich seeks to explain why a citizen of the former Soviet Union cannot be compared with one from the West. "All of us, the people who came from socialism, are different from other people," she writes. "We have our own ideas about good and evil, about heroes and victims. We are full of hate and prejudice. We all come from the place that was once the home of gulags and of collectivization, or Dekulakization, the forced resettlement of entire populations. It was socialism, but it was also our lives." She then goes on to explain what happened after 1991. "Many conceived the truth (about our Soviet past) to be the enemy. The same applied to freedom. Russia changed, but also hated itself for this change."

The Germans believed that the Russians would be excited about glasnost and the new era. They hoped all Russians would be of the type that would be fans of groups like Pussy Riot. Even politicians who regularly traveled to Moscow spent most of their time speaking to members of the pro-Western minority who aren't really representative of Russia. This also happened for practical reasons: They were often the ones who could speak English.

Vladimir Putin sussed out very precisely the mindset of his compatriots. He himself comes from a very simple background, having grown up in modest accommodations in St. Petersburg. When he became president, he pacified Chechnya, deprived the oligarchs of their power and also created a bit of prosperity for the average Russian. Putin knew that the majority of Russians still longed for a strong leader and that they detested anything that even had a whiff of liberalism. He knew that this majority supports a firmer position against foreigners and anything "Un-Russian" as well as the reintroduction of the death penalty.

Putin's Conservative, Anti-Western Ideology

Putin pushed for greater power and applied a conservative, anti-Western ideology to justify it. "We can see how many of the Euro-Atlantic countries are actually rejecting their roots, including the Christian values that constitute the basis of Western civilization," Putin said in a [speech](#) given in September. "They are denying moral principles and all traditional identities: national, cultural, religious and even sexual." In a [speech](#) given in December, Putin cited 20th century Russian religious and political philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev, stating that "the point of conservatism is not that it prevents movement forward and upward, but that it prevents movement backward and downward, into chaotic darkness and a return to a primitive state." He believes Russia must lead the way. That sentiment strikes a deep chord in a people who fear further change after 80 years of experimentation that resulted in considerable bloodshed.

Those Germans who have friends in Moscow who occasionally come to see them also register that their acquaintances' previous enthusiasm for the West has been supplanted by a more critical view. Suddenly the German supermarkets have become too small for them -- much smaller than the ones in Moscow, and the selection is too limited, the people on the street are too reserved and

the women dressed too shabbily. In contrast to the past, the Russian friends are keen to go back home these days -- they may speak negatively about their cities, but they are also proud of them. And of the greatness of their country. They are also pleased that Crimea once again belongs to Russia. Not even the most reflective of my acquaintances in Moscow try to conceal their belief that the return of Crimea is a completely natural course of events. In recent years, Putin has taken this kind of sentiment and applied it directly to his politics. This was evident even five or six years ago. We could have gotten used to it. Instead, it has come as a terrible surprise.

A Gulf of Opinions

How should we respond to the annexation of Crimea? The range of opinions is wide. Elderly statesman Helmut Schmidt represents one school of thought; Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble the other. Schmidt considers Putin's actions in the Crimea to be "understandable" and thinks the West is getting too worked up about it. He argues we must keep the peace. The former chancellor is a representative of the war generation. He served in the military under Hitler and one can certainly sympathize with his fears of renewed tensions in Europe. What is not acceptable is the attitude with which he tries to lecture fellow Germans that his view is the only one imaginable. Fellow Social Democrat Egon Bahr, who drafted former German Chancellor Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik of détente with the Soviet Union, goes even further by questioning the "legal basis of the current government in Kiev." But he ignores the fact that a majority of the opposition parties as well as the old block aligned with Viktor Yanukovych had accepted the correlating constitutional changes before the government changed.

Schmidt and Bahr both have an outmoded image of Russia that is based on 40-year-old thinking from the 1970s. Much has happened in Russia since then, but that was apparently lost on these two.

The fact that Schmidt's statement found such great resonance just goes to show that our image of the Russians is still shaped by old feelings of guilt and by our desire to clear ourselves of it. It also reveals our preference to try to find fault in ourselves instead. This distorts the image we have of Russia even further.

Russophiles are fond of saying that the West badly slighted Russia during the 1990s and that Moscow is now taking justified revenge for its defeat in the Cold War. But those who say this are overlooking the fact that it was Western Europe that pushed the hardest at the time for the IMF and the World Bank to provide \$40 billion in loans to Moscow. At the time, the oil price had fallen to \$17 and Russia otherwise would have slipped into an economic catastrophe.

They also like to claim that NATO continued its expanse into the East despite its own pledges to the contrary, thus constricting Russia. However, the promise not to station any additional foreign troops or nuclear weapons only applied to the former East Germany. Of the 275,000 US soldiers that used to be stationed in Germany, only around 43,000 remain today. Moscow cannot truly perceive NATO as a military threat.

Indifferent Leadership

Finally, they argue that we must understand the urge of Russians in Crimea for the right to self-determination and the protection of a minority (in Ukraine). But the experience of the Chechen war showed us that Russian leaders were indifferent when it came to these lofty principles. The

Chechens were denied their right to self-determination and the rebellious republic was bombed. When I sat in the bomb shelters of Grozny to cover the war, there weren't just Chechens there, but also Russians -- and the Kremlin didn't care about their fate. Many Russians were killed, by Russian bombs.

There's little in the current debate in Germany over Russia's Ukraine policies to suggest much in the way of expertise. People claim the new government in Kiev is fascist and has fallen into the hands of right-wing extremists and anti-Semitic forces. The far-left Left Party's claims are sheer nonsense. When were the party's intellectual leaders -- Gregor Gysi and Sahra Wagenknecht -- last in Kiev? If we're going to discuss developments in Ukraine, then we should also talk about right-wing extremists in Russia and the anti-Semitism that is tolerated there.

It's also nonsense to claim that Crimea is "ancestral Russian territory". As of 1441, Crimea belonged to the realm of the Tatar, a state that at one point stretched from today's Romania across the Caspian Sea to an area a short distance from Moscow. It wasn't until the 1700s that Potemkin used cunning and force to conquer the Tatars for Catherine the Great.

Force Remains a Proven Means in Russia

The Germans' romantic image of the Russians is to be blamed for Berlin's misguided policies toward the country and for the fact that the Kremlin is no longer inclined to take us seriously. The oft cited line is that we should be more inclusive of Russia rather than keep it at arm's length. That's what happened in 1996 when, in the midst of a war in Chechnya that had been launched by Moscow, Russia applied for membership in the Council of Europe, the continent's human rights watchdog. The appeasers prevailed with the argument that it was a way of preventing Moscow from entering into further acts of military force. The second Chechen war began three years later.

Force has remained a tried and true element of Russian policy since 1991. The kind of political compromise that is standard in the West is seen as a sign of weakness. And that thinking isn't just isolated to the Kremlin -- it's the mentality shared by most of Russian society. That's why you don't even find dissent against Crimea's annexation among Putin's opponents. This is fueled by a major Russian superiority complex. First the Russians spoke disparagingly of people in the Caucasus, calling them "our blacks." Despite the fact that they are in great demand in the labor market, the Tajiks and Uzbeks have never been much liked either. The Jews are the constant subject of discussion in Russia. Now the Russians are going on about the Ukrainians -- about their "*Khokhol*," a play on the hairstyles of Dnieper Cossacks during the medieval period, but also used today as a pejorative term in Russia for ethnic Ukrainians. The idea being that the Ukrainians are somehow a backward people.

And that takes us back to Wolfgang Schäuble. Many found the comparison he made last week of the occupation of Crimea with the Nazi occupation of the ethnic German Sudetenland in the former Czechoslovakia offensive. Of course it is absurd to compare Putin with Hitler. But astoundingly similar arguments were made in both the speech given by Hitler on Sept. 26, 1938 in Berlin and in Putin's appearance at the Kremlin on March 18 -- at least in the vocabulary about providing protection to compatriots located outside the country. Why should we keep quiet about that? And why should we keep quiet about the fact that the coverage on Russian television leading up to the annexation of Crimea, with all its lies and agitation, was reminiscent of Joseph Goebbels?

Germany is currently scratching its head over the best way to deal with Russia in the future. If we don't finally take a sober look at Russia, one that is erased of all romanticizing and historical baggage that distorts our view of Putin's world, then we will never succeed in finding a reasonable strategy.

Christian Neef is an editor at DER SPIEGEL's foreign desk and the magazine's former longtime Moscow correspondent. Translated from the German by Daryl Lindsey.

Jewish World Review

Statistical Frauds

by Thomas Sowell

The "war on women" political slogan is in fact a war against common sense.

It is a statistical fraud when Barack Obama and other politicians say that women earn only 77 percent of what men earn — and that this is because of discrimination.

It would certainly be discrimination if women were doing the same work as men, for the same number of hours, with the same amount of training and experience, as well as other things being the same. But study after study, over the past several decades, has shown repeatedly that those things are not the same.

Constantly repeating the "77 percent" statistic does not make them the same. It simply takes advantage of many people's ignorance — something that Barack Obama has been very good at doing on many other issues.

What if you compare women and men who are the same on all the relevant characteristics?

First of all, you can seldom do that, because the statistics you would need are not always available for the whole range of occupations and the whole range of differences between women's [patterns](#) and men's patterns in the labor market.

Even where relevant statistics are available, careful judgment is required to pick samples of women and men who are truly comparable.

For example, some women are mothers and some men are fathers. But does the fact that they are both parents make them comparable in the labor market? Actually the biggest disparity in incomes is between fathers and mothers. Nor is there anything mysterious about this, when you stop and think about it.

How surprising is it that women with children do not earn as much as women who do not have children? If you don't think children take up a mother's time, you just haven't raised any children.

How surprising is it that men with children earn more than men without children, just the opposite of the situation with women? Is it surprising that a man who has more mouths to feed is more likely to work longer hours? Or take on harder or more dangerous [jobs](#), in order to earn more money?

More than 90 percent of the people who are killed on the [job](#) are men. There is no point pretending that there are no differences between what women do and what men do in the workplace, or that these differences don't affect income.

During my research on male-female differences for my book "Economic Facts and Fallacies," I was amazed to learn that young male doctors earned much higher incomes than young female doctors. But it wasn't so amazing after I discovered that young male doctors worked over 500 hours more per year than young female doctors.

Even when women and men work at jobs that have the same title — whether doctors, lawyers, economists or whatever — people do not get paid for what their [job title](#) is, but for what they actually do.

Women lawyers who are pregnant, or who have young children, may have good reasons to prefer a 9 to 5 job in a government agency to working 60 hours a week in a high-powered law firm. But there is no point comparing male lawyers as a group with female lawyers as a group, if you don't look any deeper than job titles.

Unless, of course, you are not looking for the truth, but for political talking points to excite the gullible.

Even when you compare women and men with the "same" education, as measured by college or university degrees, the women usually specialize in a very different mix of subjects, with very different income-earning potential.

Although comparing women and men who are in fact comparable is not easy to do, when you look at women and men who are similar on multiple factors, the sex differential in pay shrinks drastically and gets close to the vanishing point. In some categories, women earn more than men with the same range of characteristics.

If the 77 percent statistic was for real, employers would be paying 30 percent more than they had to, every time they hired a man to do a job that a woman could do just as well. Would employers be such fools with their own money? If you think employers don't care about paying 30 percent more than they have to, just go ask your boss for a 30 percent raise!

Examiner

[Dems play politics with bogus 77-cent differential in male-female pay](#)

by Michael Barone

An economist serving on a second-term president's Council of Economic Advisers might expect to weigh in on fundamental issues, restructuring the tax system or making entitlement programs sustainable over the long term. [Barack Obama](#) once talked of addressing such issues, and Republican leaders like House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp are doing so.

But that's not what University of Michigan economist and CEA member Betsey Stevenson finds herself doing. Instead, she is defending the use of misleading statistics in support of legislation addressing a minor problem.

The legislation is Obama's latest pay equity measure, which failed to [pass a test vote](#) in the Senate last week. The misleading statistic is 77 cents, cited repeatedly by Obama as the amount women earn for every dollar earned by men.

When [challenged on this](#) by MSNBC's Irin Carmon, Stevenson admitted that the 77 cents figure is misleading. "If I said that 77 cents was equal pay for equal work, then I completely misspoke," she admitted.

"There are a lot of things that go into that 77 cents figure," she went on. "There are a lot of things that contribute and no one's trying to say that it's all about discrimination, but I don't think there's a better figure."

Of course some people are trying to say that "it's all about discrimination" — starting with Stevenson's boss, President Obama, and including the political ad-makers preparing to cut 30-second spots accusing Republicans of a "war on women."

So Stevenson is fibbing about that. And when she says "there are a lot of things that contribute" to male-female earnings disparities, she is indicating that she understands the weakness of using the 77 cents number.

This isn't controversial stuff. As my American Enterprise Institute colleague Christina Hoff Sommers [writes in the Daily Beast](#), the 77 cents "does not account for differences in occupations, positions, education, job tenure or hours worked per week."

Those factors are acknowledged in a 2012 Bureau of Labor Statistics report cited by AEI scholars Mark Perry and Andrew Biggs [in the Wall Street Journal](#). It shows that men tend to work longer hours than women, men tend to take riskier jobs with premium pay, and female college graduates tend to specialize in lower-paid fields than male college graduates.

As a result, the BLS concludes, women who worked 40-hour weeks earned 88 percent of what similar men did. Single women who never married earned 96 percent of men's earnings.

Stevenson concedes that not all the differential comes from discrimination or sexism. "Some of women's choices come because they are disproportionately balancing the needs of work and family," she told MSNBC.

By "disproportionately" she presumably means that more women than men choose to work stay home to care for children. "Which of these choices should we consider legitimate choices," she asks, "and which of them should we consider things that we have a societal obligation to try to mitigate?"

This raises the specter of government bureaucrats intervening in marital decision-making, pushing more husbands to stay home with the kids. Even the Obama administration stops short of that.

The Democrats' problem is that sex discrimination by employers was outlawed by the Equal Pay Act signed by John Kennedy in 1963 — 51 years ago. To make "the war on women" an issue and rally single women to the polls, the Obama Democrats have had to concoct legislation putting new burdens on small employers and ginning up business for their trial lawyer contributors, as the 2009 Lilly Ledbetter Act's extended statute of limitations did.

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By any realistic standard the equal pay problem is minor, certainly in comparison to the growth-stifling effects of the current tax code and the unsustainable trajectory of current entitlement programs.

But this president, unlike his two predecessors, has chosen not to address such major problems in his second term. And so Betsey Stevenson has to defend the indefensible 77 cents statistic.

IBD

[Late Night Humor](#)

by Andrew Malcolm

Fallon: Hugh Hefner's friends threw him a big 88th birthday party today. They had a naked woman jump out of a giant bran muffin.

Fallon: Top movie this weekend was 'Captain America.' Earned \$303 million worldwide. In other words, Captain America has more money than regular America

Conan: There's a new website that helps people write elaborate works of personalized fiction. It's called "Match.com."

Conan: "The Walking Dead" is reportedly going to be edited into a family-friendly version for younger audiences. It will be retitled, "Dad's Home For Dinner!"

Seth Meyers: A new survey ranks LaGuardia as the worst airport in the country. JFK is the second worst. The third worst was LaGuardia again.

Fallon: Kathleen Sebelius resigned from President Obama's cabinet. Which explains why being thrown under a bus is now covered by ObamaCare.

Conan: Barbara Walters says her final day on 'The View' is May 16. Not a total shock since she was in the last year of her 80-year contract.

Conan: The White House may ban people from taking selfies with President Obama. Not only that, the White House now has photo-bomb sniffing dogs.

Conan: The White House has decided against banning "selfies" with the president. However, they are cracking down on "Vice-Presidential NipSlips."

SethMeyers: The official presidential candidate for the Ukrainian Internet Party is a man in a Darth Vader costume. Not to be confused with the president of Russia, who is Darth Vader in a man costume.

Letterman: Getting so crowded here in New York City. Today a guy gave me \$200 to take a later elevator.

SethMeyers: A Twitter employee live-tweeted her baby's birth the other other day with the hashtag "#InLabor." The woman was forced to stop tweeting after she crushed the phone with her bare hands.

Fallon: A new study says procrastinating can be passed from generation to generation. I asked my Dad and he said he'd been meaning to tell me.

SethMeyers: Al Sharpton responded to accusations that he served as an FBI informant saying, "I was not and am not a rat. I'm a cat. I chase rats." He added, "I was not an informant on a boat, I was not an informant on a goat, I was not an informant in the rain, I was not an informant on a train."

Conan: A Catholic priest is causing controversy by calling Lego products "tools of Satan." Sounds to me like *SOME*-one just stepped on a Lego barefoot!

SethMeyers: San Francisco police are seeking vandals tipping Smart cars over. Well, they're assuming it's vandals. It could have just been a stiff breeze.

SethMeyers: Hillary Clinton admits she's thinking about running for President. It would be more shocking if she admitted to ever thinking about anything else.

Conan: 'Captain America' is the top movie in China now. The Chinese say their favorite part is when Captain American asks Captain China for a \$17 trillion loan.

SethMeyers: New legislation in France makes it illegal to work after 6 P.M. They're hoping to encourage workers to spend more time with their mistresses.

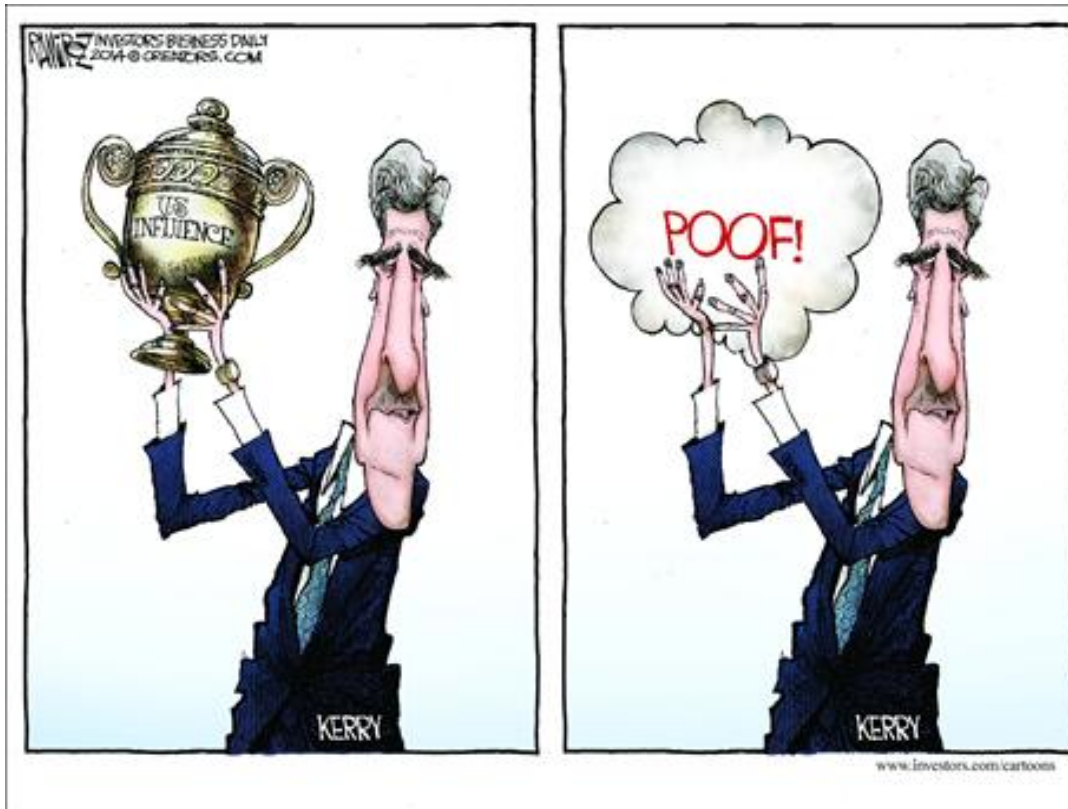
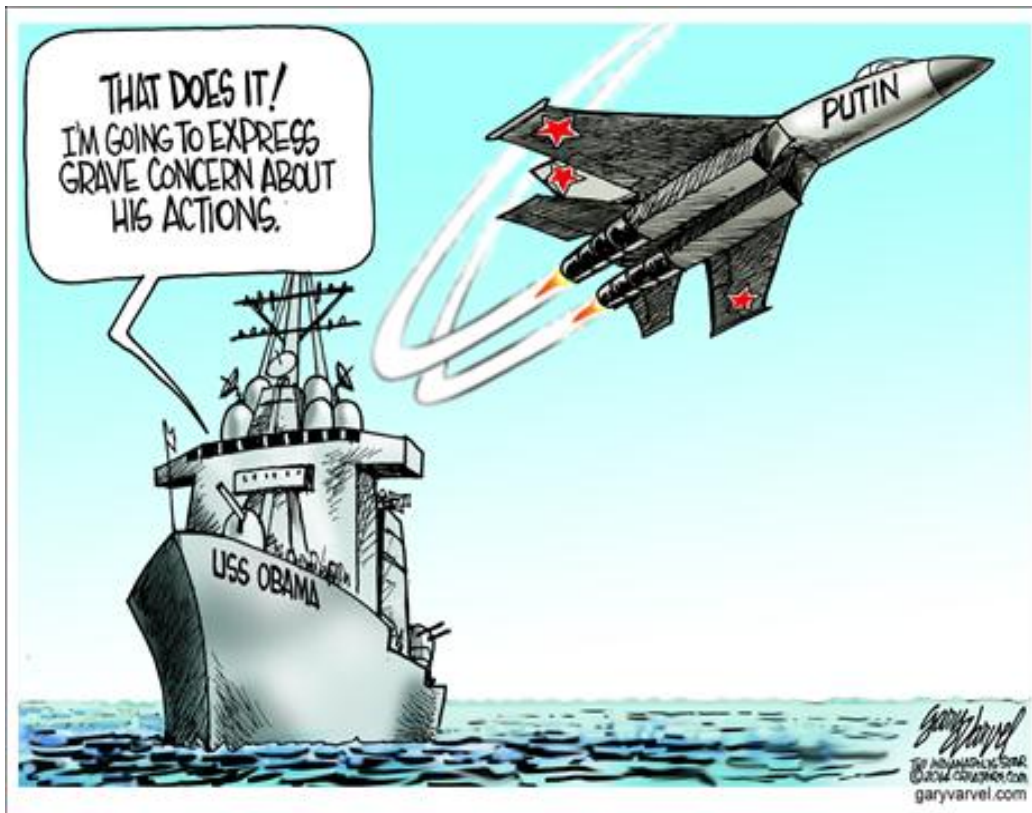
SethMeyers: Astronomers name a newly-discovered nebula "The Engagement Ring" because it's not quite as big as they would have liked.

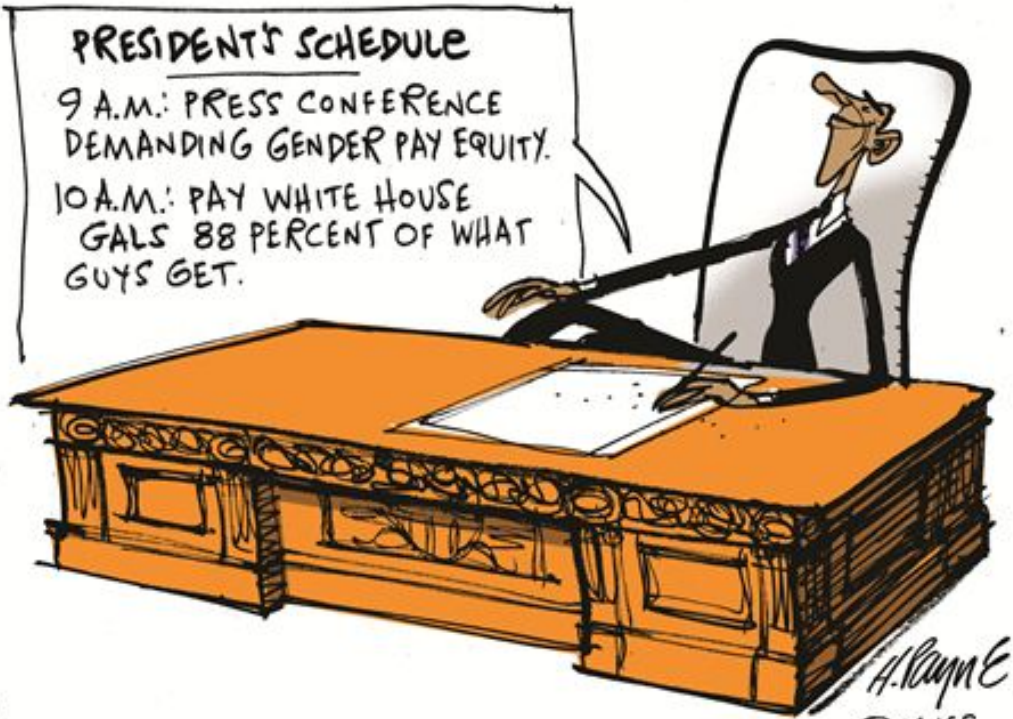
Conan: Secret Service agents can no longer drink alcohol 12 hours before duty. The rule came at the request of President Barack OBuzzkill.

Conan: North Korean dictator Kim Jong-Un has been re-elected with 100% of the vote. He said, "I haven't been this happy since I scored 700,000 on the SATs."

SethMeyers: Whole Foods stock is up 12-fold since 2008. The stock is now valued at \$50.32 a share, or about one cantaloupe from Whole Foods.

Fallon: A California family was just reunited with its dog, seven years after it went missing. But the dog said, "No, I'm just here to get my CD's."





PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE

9 A.M.: PRESS CONFERENCE
DEMANDING GENDER PAY EQUITY.
10 A.M.: PAY WHITE HOUSE
GALS 88 PERCENT OF WHAT
GUYS GET.