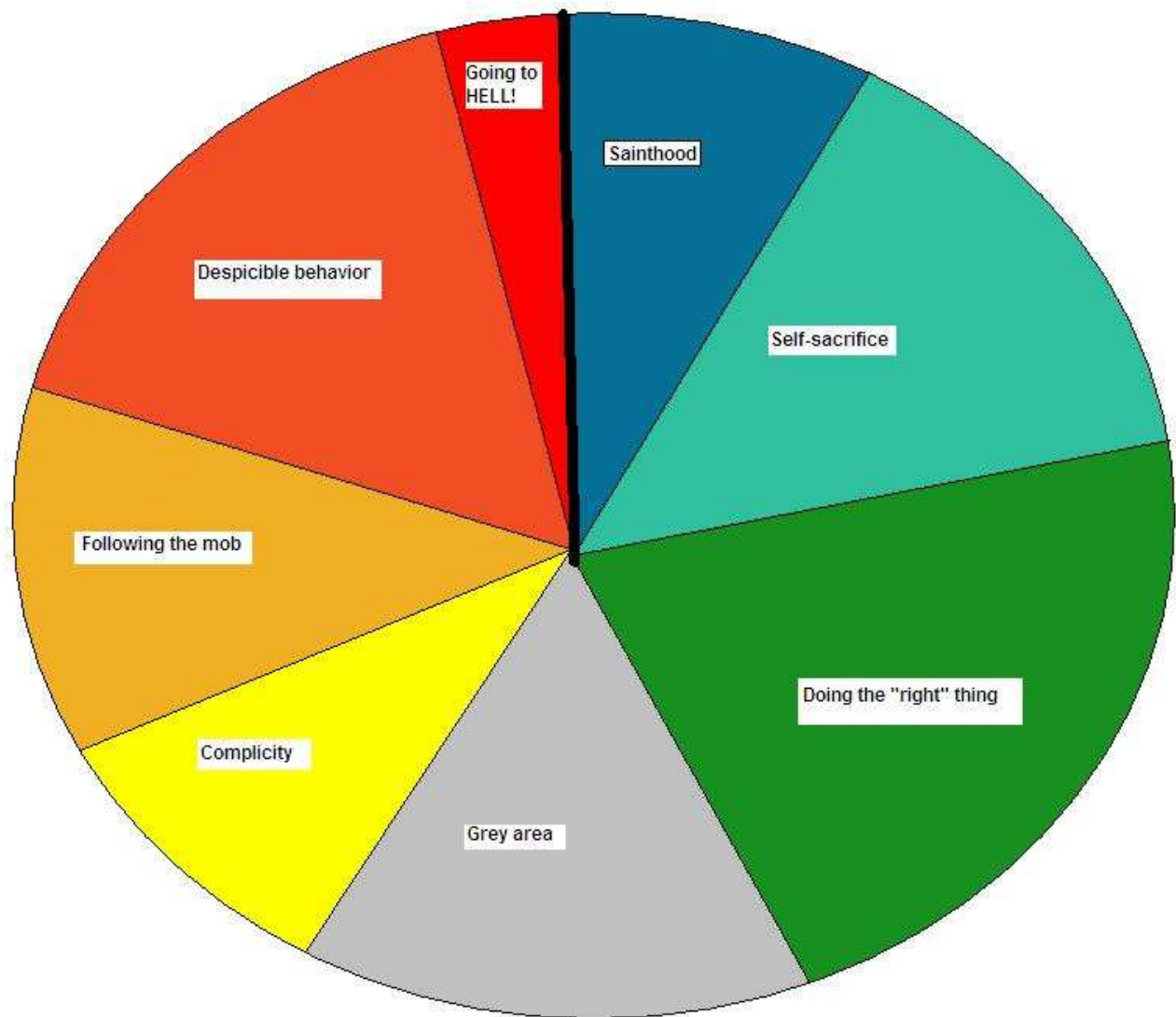


The Moral Compass Scorecard



How we as humans, despite our well founded value system, consistently end up at the wrong end of the moral compass

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Introduction

I started by writing about subjects I wanted to write about. I wondered about some very important events in our history and how people behave. Everyone has a value system that we live by we consider our moral compass. As we grow and mature our value system guides us in the way that we behave and make decisions. How is it then, that our history is filled with some of the most despicable acts that go against anyone's sense of moral compass? How is it that sometimes people overcome temptation, fear, and greed to do the right thing and perform deeds that are truly heroic?

It starts with the holocaust. This is the one event in human history that stands out. The whole act of murdering 6 million people because they are Jewish is the standard-bearer for despicable human behavior.

We all have a value system. For a lot of people it starts with the 10 commandments, or at least the ones that resonate with everyone – thou shalt not kill, steal, bear false witness (lie!). As Americans we also are strongly influenced by the constitution – freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion. “We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.” For modern times this is updated to “all men and women are created equal.” I'll bet everyone would feel proud if at the end of their life they could say they lived by these values.

What happens that gets us away from living by these values – I'm going to identify a few motivators that have a habit of making people stray from these values.

- Greed – the constant drive in our lives for money and power.
- Fear – the constant fear of some unknown event we've been told to fear or just naturally fear on its own
- Ideology – we're often motivated to follow an ideology, such as capitalism vs. socialism, democracy vs. communism.
- Follow the mob mentality – when mobs of people are whipped up into a frenzy about something, it's easier to follow the mob than to stand up against it.
- Obedience to authority – this is a big one that comes up again and again. See the Stanley Milgram experiment because it explains a lot.

This in a nutshell is the theme. While we profess to live by a value system, we're all hypocrites and we live by the values of the sins – greed, fear, ideology, follow the mob, and obey authority. Admit it, we all do it. It's only a matter of how often we fall prey to the temptations. I'd also contend that most people would like to think they are altruistic and self-sacrificing, but in reality are selfish.

On the flip side, there are countless stories of people who are strong and adhere to the value system, overcoming their fears and their temptations to follow the mob. One example is the story of Denmark 1943 where the Danish people risked their lives to help thousands of Danish Jews escape being sent to the Nazi death camps.

So this book is a series of vignettes. What ties them together is how people profess a certain value system, but frequently fall into being driven by greed, or fear, or obedience to authority. And sometimes the opposite happens, and people overcome the fears and often risk their lives to do something exemplary.

What also ties these vignettes together are that they're things I wanted to write about. I saw the movie "Guilty By Suspicion" and I became fascinated with the blacklisting of the 1950s. I saw the movie "Missing" and became interested in the 1973 coup in Chile. I heard the song "Hurricane" by Bob Dylan and wanted to know more about the story of Hurricane Carter (that one may surprise you). For each of these stories, I tried to research what really happened as opposed to what is represented in the movie or song or in popular culture.

The Nazis

We begin with the Nazis. The Nazis represent the lowest point into the abyss of despicable behavior by carrying out a systematic extermination of a specific group of people, the Jews. The concentration camps by the end of the war were the most effective killing factories in history. When we look at our history with slavery and civil rights and political corruption, we know we will never go as far to the dark side as Nazi Germany. Driven by Hitler, the entire German population was convinced that getting rid of the Jews was the answer to their problems. Meanwhile thousands of SS officers participated in systematic killing of the Jews not because it was right, but because it was what they were told to do.

Nazi concentration camps started out in Germany as detention camps for political prisoners. The early camps were not built explicitly for Jews. In 1933 the first camp in Dachau was built, and people considered enemies of the state were sent there, including German Communists, Socialists, and Social Democrats. The term “concentration” meant that the imprisoned would be concentrated in one location as opposed to being dispersed in multiple prisons across Germany. It wasn’t until years later that the camps became destinations for Jews.

Meanwhile, Jews in Germany systematically had their rights as citizens taken away. By 1935 Hitler had enacted the Nuremberg Laws which stripped Jews of their civil rights based on race. Jews were considered “non-Aryans”. During this period Hitler was conscious of how Germany’s policies would look to the world. Berlin hosted the 1936 Olympics, and they did allow German Jews to participate, thus avoiding an international boycott.

Hitler’s plans accelerated as Germany annexed a willing Austria in 1938 and invaded Poland in 1939. Now Jews in Germany and its occupied lands were forced to live in segregated sections called ghettos, were forced to wear yellow stars called “Jew badges”, and were stripped of all their possessions. Life in the ghettos was intolerable, as crowded conditions, malnutrition, and disease brought many deaths. Still Germany tried to make its treatment of Jews seem humane to the rest of the world, as International Red Cross inspectors were allowed to see the Jewish settlement of Theresienstadt in Czechoslovakia.

Meanwhile camps sprung up at an alarming rate after 1939. Some camps were labor camps, some were stopping points on the way to other camps. The most notorious death camps such as Auschwitz and Treblinka became operational by 1942. Jews were loaded onto trains with no idea where they were going, under the ruse of resettlement. The unknowing victims were actually charged for the one-way train tickets, and were given postcards to send back to the ghettos to assure family and friends they were ok. The killing started with Nazi squads arriving at camps and shooting the victims. Eventually the Nazis discovered they could use gas to kill more faster and efficiently, and it would spare the Nazi shooters from emotional anguish. By the end of the war, the

genocide of Jews was responsible for 5.8 million deaths, or about 1/2 of Europe's entire Jewish population.

As if the death camps were not cruel enough, the Nazis performed unthinkable human experiments on Jews. Led by Dr. Josef Mengele, some Jews were selected right off the trains at Auschwitz to be experimented on. Mengele was known as the "angel of death". Some of the experiments had the guise of helping with the war effort, such as being subjected to a tank of ice cold water for hours so the Germans could learn about the effects of hypothermia. Other experiments were performed to support the theory that the Aryan race was superior. They injected chemicals into the victims' eyes to see if their eye color would change. They injected them with malaria then tried to treat them various chemicals. They performed bone, muscle, and nerve transplants without anesthesia, causing the victims disfigurement and agony. Those who were killed in the gas chambers right away might be considered the lucky ones. Mengele somehow avoided capture after the war and lived for 30 more years in South America. We can only hope he lived out his years tormented by his actions in the war.

The range of human behavior can be looked at with the story of "Schindler's List", brought to life in the 1993 movie starring Liam Neeson. Oskar Schindler saved the lives of 1100 Jews by putting them to work in a factory that made defective weapons for the German army. What started as a money making operation for Schindler became a mission for doing the right thing against all odds. On the flip side, the character "Goth" in Schindler's List played by Ralph Fiennes represents the most base form of human behavior. Empowered as an SS lieutenant to do his part in the final solution, Goth is shown in the movie murdering people indiscriminately with seemingly no feeling at all. Did this character exist in the real concentration camps? Only those who survived the camps would know for sure.

The holocaust represents a perfect storm of many sinful behaviors. Hitler and his inner circle were driven by greed and power. They were the masterminds of the most efficient killing machine in our time. Countless Nazis in the Nuremberg trials used the excuse "we were doing what we were told" which really speaks volumes about the obedience to authority factor. They had to believe at some level the killing and torturing of Jews was wrong, but did it because they were told to. Did some Nazi SS guards actually enjoy the abuse they were giving the Jews? Or was it all blind obedience? To top it off, Germans and those in other occupied countries were taught to fear the Jews and to believe they were responsible for the struggles in their lives. They were all too happy to see the Jews first moved to the ghettos, then carted off to the camps.

All of the horrors of the holocaust have been exposed and documented and we've evolved as humans to never again perform mass killings based on race or ethnicity, right? Think again. Pol Pot's regime in Cambodia in the 1970s systematically killed over 1 million of its citizens. Ethnic cleansing in Bosnia in the 1990s killed and maimed thousands. Then there was Rwanda and Darfur even more recently. Leaders who ordered these genocides still must believe as Hitler did that exterminating a class of people is somehow right, as deranged as that may seem. And the leaders can still find

underlings to carry out their orders because that is what they're told to do. The only thing that stops these genocides is exposure to the rest of the world.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Hitler and Top Nazi Leaders	F – (going to hell!)	Ordering the extermination of an entire class of people goes beyond any moral standard of despicable behavior
Nazi Guards	D	Blind obedience to authority caused them to kill and torture Jews.
Nazi Doctors Who Performed Experiments on Jews	F	Experiments deliberately treated Jews as sub-human creatures.
Non-Jews Who Stood By	D	People who did nothing while their neighbors were carted off to their deaths, and didn't question the idea that Jews were to blame for their struggles.
Oskar Schindler	A-	His efforts began as a way to make money. By the end of the war he'd saved thousands of Jews.

The holocaust in its horror also brought out wonderful deeds that some like Schindler did at great risk to themselves. The next story, Denmark 1943 is one of those.

Denmark, 1943

This is the story of how the people of Denmark helped save thousands of Jews during Nazi occupation by hiding them or giving them help in escaping to Sweden. The events that happened in the fall of 1943 are wonderfully brought to life in the song Denmark, 1943 by singer/songwriter Fred Small.

The Germans invaded Denmark in 1940 and the Danes did not resist. There were nearly 8000 Jews living in Denmark, most of them Danish citizens. Danes were supportive of the Jews and considered them their friends. Unlike other countries occupied by the Nazis, Danish Jews were spared the indignities of being forced to be relocate to the ghettos or being forced to wear yellow stars. The kinship between the Danes and the Jews would be tested severely as the Jewish new year approached in 1943.

*And it's Eichmann and Himmler are turning the screws
The Führer they say grows impatient
"How can it be Denmark's Jews still walk free
After three years of kind occupation?
We will take them like sheep in their beds as they sleep
On the second night of their new year
Devoutly at home they'll be helpless alone
When they cry out no one will hear"*

In September the decision was made by Hitler to round up and deport the Danish Jews as part of The Final Solution. On September 28, a German diplomat Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz warned the non-Jewish Danes of the impending deportation of Jews. The non-Jewish Danes quickly spread the word and thus began one of the most amazing rescue operations in history.

*Christian policemen, shopkeepers, and teachers
Tell their friends of the quickening storm
While students on bicycles race through the streets
Searching for Jews to be warned
And Katlev the foreman blurts out to the trainman
"My family has no place to hide"
"Well bring 'em to my house," the stranger replies
"And we'll spit in the damn Nazi's eyes"*

A rescue operation was organized immediately led by non-Jewish Danes to find hiding places for the Jews and eventually to get them to the coast of Denmark. From there, dozens of fisherman ferried about 7200 Jews and 700 of their non-Jewish relatives across the Øresund sea to neutral Sweden.

*Frozen with fright in the October night
Families huddle in basements and barns
Mistaking each breath for the angel of death
The Gestapo, the shot, the alarm
Then down into the hold with the stench and the cold*

*And drug all the babies with schnapps
Someone shouts, "Valkömmen till Sverige
You are in Swedish waters at last"*

When the Germans began their raid on October 1 they found only a few Jews. Nearly 95% of all the Jews living in Denmark escaped. Over 7000 people had to be hidden from the Nazis, transported to the Danish coast, then ferried across to Sweden in a few short days. The spirit of the Danish Jews and their non-Jewish friends is unprecedented to be able to pull this off.

Still 470 Jews were transported to Theresienstadt in Czechoslovakia. While not a death camp it was still a detention center, and the Danish Red Cross demanded information about the living conditions for their fellow Danes. The Red Cross pressured the Germans to allow inspections of Theresienstadt and to allow care packages to be delivered to the prisoners there. It's likely the Danes deterred the Germans from transporting the Danish Jews to the death camps in Poland.

When the war was over, the Danish Jews were welcomed back to their country where their homes and businesses were still intact. Danish authorities refused to allow the Germans or anyone to steal their possessions or destroy their homes.

*Seven thousands of Jews smuggled over to Sweden
By fishermen, nurses, and priests
Hitler sends Eichmann to hunt them down
But his quarry have vanished like mist
When the war's over the Jews return
Cheers and flowers adorn their way home
"We're not heroes or martyrs," so say the Danes
"We were just looking after our own"*

This is an incredible story about the human spirit. While many in other European countries occupied by the Nazis were all too happy to see their Jewish countrymen carted off in cattlecars to their certain death, the Danes risked their own lives to help rescue the Jews. It's not only a story of courage of the Danes, but it's also a story of how the Danes resisted the easy thing to do (which would be to do nothing) and went the extra mile to do what was clearly the right thing to do in saving their fellow countrymen. Fred Small also deserves all the credit in the world for writing and performing **Denmark, 1943**. I am still moved every time I hear it.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Eichmann and Himmler	F (going to hell!)	They ordered Denmark's Jews to be deported and killed, just the same as every other country's Jews.
Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz	A	Though he was a German he defied his

		country and did the right thing by warning the Danes of the upcoming raids.
Danish Christians	A+	They risked their lives to help the Jew escape, then welcomed the Jews back to Denmark when the war was over.

Japanese Internment Camps

Nazi Germany stands out as one of history's largest moral failings, but we have our own black mark. During World War II while Jews were being exterminated in Nazi death camps, Japanese-Americans were rounded up and brought to detention camps around the US.

On February 19, 1942, just two months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 which authorized the rounding up of anyone of Japanese ancestry and relocating them to the camps. The justification was that Japanese-Americans on the Pacific coast could make radio transmissions to Japanese ships on the Pacific. Perhaps there was some other paranoid justification, but it's no excuse for ripping people out of their homes and bringing them to the camps, forcing them to leave their entire lives behind. Again, you have the public complicity, with the frenzy of war and hatred of Japanese ratcheted up right after Pearl Harbor.

There can be no comparison between the Nazi death camps and the Japanese internment camps. The Nazi camps were killing and torturing factories, aimed at treating other human beings as sub-human, eventually slaughtering them. No, the internment camps weren't as bad as the Nazi death camps. But conditions were difficult in the camps. There was not adequate food or medical supplies, and some Japanese died because of the inadequate conditions. 62% of the Japanese relocated were American citizens. These were not prisoners of war.

You'd think there would be something in the constitution or the bill of rights that would prevent the government from forcibly relocating people because of the race. However, in 1944 the Supreme Court case *Korematsu v. United States* the Hugo Black court upheld the government's right to relocate Japanese Americans. The court essentially said the danger from potential espionage allows the government to suspend basic human rights for its citizens. Something is wrong here...

In a bit of collective remorsefulness, in the Civil Rights Act of 1988, America essentially apologized to the Japanese-Americans interned in WWII and their descendents. Some of the text of the act is

"The Congress recognizes that, as described in the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, a grave injustice was done to both citizens and permanent residents of Japanese ancestry by the evacuation, relocation, and internment of civilians during World War II.

As the Commission documents, these actions were carried out without adequate security reasons and without any acts of espionage or sabotage documented by the Commission, and were motivated largely by racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.

I think it's a great thing in this case the government admits a grave injustice was done, and it's interesting that it's called out that motivation was racial prejudice, wartime hysteria and lack of political leadership. It's so easy for fear mongering and mass hysteria to make us go over to the dark side of the moral compass. While we apologized for this one, there are many other despicable things we've done without the future self-reflection.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

President Roosevelt	D	I have a very hard time scrutinizing FDR for decisions during WWII as the world's survival was at stake. However in this case he got it wrong.
Supreme Court	D	These were American citizens. To uphold the right of the government to rip them out of their homes out of fear goes against the freedom we stand for.
American Public	D	No one spoke up for these people as we were so consumed with fear and hatred for the Japanese during wartime.
Congress and President in 1988	B+	It was brave of the government to acknowledge the mistake of the Japanese internment camps. Too bad it took 46 years.

Tuskegee Experiment

The Nazis set the standard for despicable behavior, and one of the most despicable was the human experiments. Imagine being forced to take untested drugs, or being injected with fluids to see if your eyes would change color. Of course there was no informed consent, as the Nazis treated their Jewish prisoners as sub-human. Like the Japanese internment camps, Americans have another black mark in human experimentation, and this is the Tuskegee experiment.

In 1932 in a rural county in Alabama, the US Public Health Services recruited 412 black men who had syphilis along with 200 others who didn't have syphilis. They were attempting to replicate a study done in Norway on the long term effects of syphilis. The government paid for them to get transportation to the clinic, hot meals, and money to ensure they could be buried in caskets, not seed bags. The men were told they were being treated for "bad blood". They were never told they had syphilis. They were never treated at all for the disease. The only medicine they were given was placebos.

There was no effective treatment for syphilis in 1932. Still the men were not told that they were being studied and were not told the real nature of the disease they had. There were no laws for research that required a participant to give informed consent. The government and the researchers thought they were helping the men, since they couldn't effectively treat them anyway. The study was supposed to last for 6 months, but year after year it went on. Little by little, the men began to get sick from the disease. It was known that after the contagious period, syphilis would remain asymptomatic for years before it returned to make the person sick.

In 1947 penicillin was discovered to be an effective treatment for syphilis as well as a number of other infections. Penicillin. The most common anti-biotic used today was found to kill the syphilis infection. Now if you're the director of the Tuskegee study, or you are the US government underwriting the study, what do you do? At the start in 1932 there's no effective treatment for syphilis, but now in 1947 there is. Of the 412 men in the original study, many of them could be saved at this point. I think the easiest moral choice anyone can make is "try anything if you think you can save a life". Penicillin works against syphilis. Stop the study, give these men penicillin and try to save their lives.

Unbelievably, the researchers said the show must go on. In the name of science. It was now clear that the study's purpose was to follow the men until their death and autopsy them. The science of 15 years would be invalid if they gave the men penicillin to save their lives now, so the show must go on. In 1947 the US government sponsored rapid treatment centers to go out to the communities and administer penicillin so they could wipe out syphilis. The men in Tuskegee were prevented from getting penicillin by the researchers. The public didn't know about the study. The men didn't know they had syphilis and could be cured. There was no moral outrage because no one would know.

Many more years went by, as more men got sick and died. The government continued to fund the study with full knowledge there was treatment available. Finally in 1972 a whistleblower Peter Buxton, a venereal disease specialist who knew about the study, went to the press and the story was exposed by the Washington Post. A huge public outcry followed, Congress held hearings, and the study was terminated. The government tried to repair the damage by providing free medical care to the survivors and their families, but this dark chapter left a stain on Americans especially African Americans. Years later in 1997 President Bill Clinton formally apologized to the people in Tuskegee for the government's despicable acts. Just like the Japanese camps in World War II, the government sees the light of moral outrage years later. Why were they unable to see it while it went on?

The men who ran the study, including African American doctor Eugene Dibble, knew they would not be treating the men. Indeed there was no effective treatment for syphilis in 1932 when the study began. It was certainly in the moral gray area at this time. When penicillin did become available is when these people went off the moral cliff. Was it the science of studying syphilis until it kills so compelling? Or was it that the black men were expendable, like the Jews were in the Nazi experiments.

Nurse Eunice Rivers, also an African American, was a crucial part of the whole experiment. She recruited the men to take part in the study, gave them rides and hot meals, and generally earned their trust all the while keeping the real purpose of the study to herself. She stayed with Tuskegee for the whole period, providing support and comfort to the men as their health declined in the later stages of syphilis. A black female nurse in the 1940s was in no position to question the male doctors. Rivers' failure to take a moral stand against the study when penicillin would fall into the blind obedience category. She did make the choice to not quit altogether in 1947 and not tell the men or anyone else that the study was more important than saving their lives. Beyond that, she unwittingly enabled the study to go forward by earning the trust of the men, something the doctors were unable to do on their own. I find it hard to brand Eunice Rivers with the moral low ground. Her main motivation was love for the men she cared for.

The Tuskegee experiment represents one of the low points in our history. We pride ourselves in treating our people with respect and dignity, especially the most vulnerable. We pride ourselves in never reaching the moral depths that the Nazis did during the holocaust. In Tuskegee a group of poor black men were left untreated for a lethal disease when treatment was available. While Tuskegee was not as deliberate and sadistic as the Nazis, it was still a low point in our history.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

US Public Health Services	D	In 1932 there was no treatment for syphilis. However, it's unconscionable to create a study of all black men and not tell them they're being studied.
Eugene Dibble	D	An African-American himself, Dr. Dibble's motives for continuing the study after penicillin was discovered were highly questionable.
Eunice Rivers	C	It's hard to brand Rivers for this fiasco, as her motivation was compassion for the men she cared for. However, she could have blown the whistle and exposed the Tuskegee experiment years earlier.
Peter Buxton	A	It took until 1972 but finally someone had the scruples to expose the moral bankruptcy of Tuskegee.

Jackie Robinson



The end of World War II brought major league baseball back, as many of the stars such as Ted Williams and Bob Feller missed multiple seasons fighting for their country. Baseball had its stars back, but it was still missing one thing – no one of color was playing in the major leagues. Blacks could fight and die in the military albeit in a segregated military, but they could not play major league baseball.

Visionary general manager Branch Rickey of the Brooklyn Dodgers thought it was time to break the color barrier, and in 1945 he signed Jackie Robinson who would become baseball's first player of color. Rickey felt there were many players in the Negro leagues skilled enough to play in the major leagues, but chose Robinson also because of his temperament. He knew Robinson would face racist taunts and hostility from both the fans and his fellow players.

On April 15, 1947 Robinson made his major league debut at Ebbets Field in Brooklyn. He had to deal with his own teammates, some who refused to play alongside him. He had to deal with rival teams yelling racial slurs and often trying to take him out on the basepaths. And he had to deal with who shouted the worst kind of racial slurs imaginable. Rickey had instructed Robinson to turn the other cheek, and that he did. Robinson had a terrific rookie season and was awarded Rookie of the Year.

Some of Robinson's teammates embraced him right away. Pee Wee Reese the Dodger shortstop was known to have stood by Robinson in the midst of the racial slurs. Bobby Bragan, the Dodgers' second-string catcher, at first was one of a group of white players, largely from the American South, who signed a petition protesting Robinson's presence. But Bragan quickly relented. "After just one road trip, I saw the quality of Jackie the man and the player," Bragan told mlb.com in 2005. "I told Mr. Rickey I had changed my mind and I was honored to be a teammate of Jackie Robinson." When

Bragan attended Rickey's funeral in 1965, he stated that he decided to attend because, "Branch Rickey made me a better man."

- From Wiki pedia and Ken Burn's Baseball

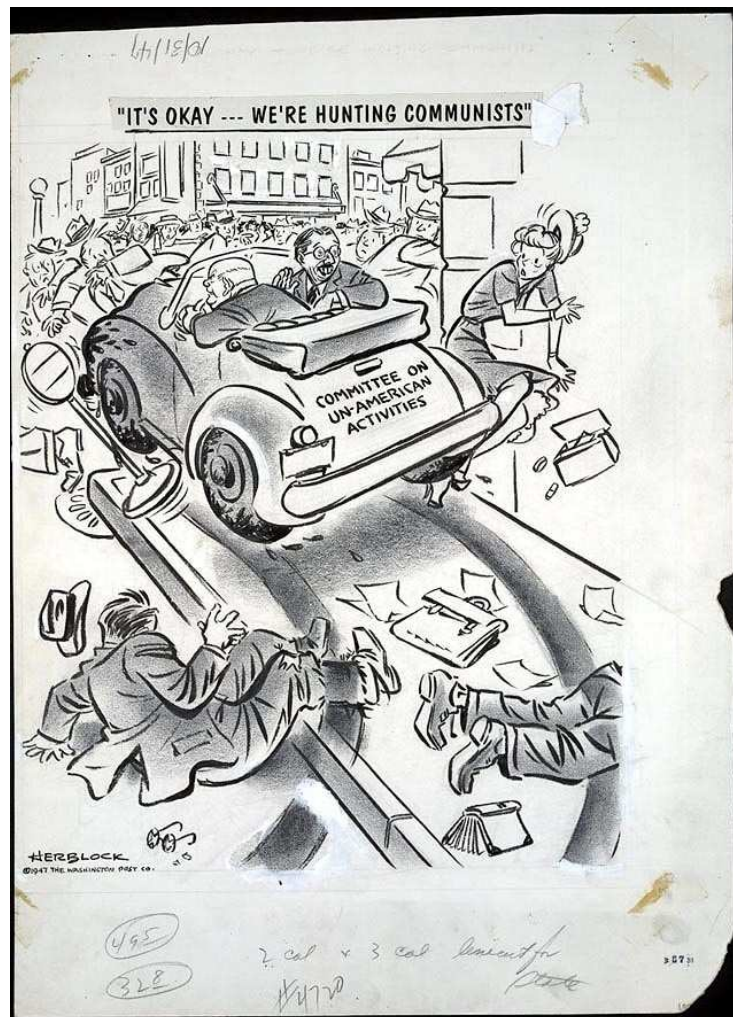
Robinson played 9 more seasons for the Dodgers, winning the MVP twice and helping the Dodgers to a World Series win. More importantly Robinson led the way for more players of color to come into the game. If Jackie Robinson hadn't been so brave to break the color barrier, we might not have seen Willie Mays, Hank Aaron, Ernie Banks, Roberto Clemente, and Frank Robinson in the 1950s and 1960s. All had to put up with the racism that was still percolating in America. In addition, while the color barrier was broken on the field, it took until 1975, 3 years after Robinson passed way, before baseball had a black manager.

What was wrong with these people? For years before Robinson, it was obvious that players in the Negro leagues were just as good as major leaguers. Because of racism, two of the greatest Negro leagues Satchell Page and Josh Gibson never got a chance in the major leagues. Josh Gibson died before he saw any player of color play in the majors. Satchel Paige finally got a chance to play for the Cleveland Indians at age 42 well past his prime. He could have been one of the greatest pitchers ever, and in 1971 Paige was elected to baseball's hall of fame. Giving Paige a chance late in his career and inducting him to the Hall of Fame are partial remorse from Major League Baseball for keeping the doors closed for so long for black players.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Jackie Robinson	A+	Robinson endured the burden of racial hatred for the good of all who came after him. He is today honored by having his number 42 retired at all major league stadiums.
Branch Rickey	A+	Rickey had the vision and guts to do what was right for baseball and for society as a whole.
Players who taunted and Abused Robinson	F	Motivated by racial hatred or even self-interest, there was no excuse for the Dodger players or players on other teams to treat Robinson the way they did.
Bobby Bragan	B+	Bragan started out as one of the men who wouldn't accept Robinson, but he evolved and became a better man.

Blacklisting of the 1950s



In the early 1950s World War II was over and our country emerged stronger than ever. Unfortunately with the end of one war came the beginning of another called the Cold War. The Soviet Union also emerged from World War II stronger, but they took their strength and swallowed up other countries. Lots of them. Before long they had a bomb, and the world was launched into a frightening period of fear. We feared nuclear war. We feared the Soviet Union would swallow us up and impose their totalitarian ways on us.

Fear is a powerful emotion in that it causes us to become irrational. It causes us to follow those who say they can prevent our fears from coming true. The 1950s were a period when we feared Communism, the Soviet Union, and nuclear war. Because of our intense fear, we allowed ourselves to be led by people who ceased rational thought and made our country act like a paranoid schizophrenic.

First, let's clear up a couple misconceptions. The House Un-American Activities Committee, or HUAC, was the committee that many from the entertainment industry

were grilled by. Joseph McCarthy had nothing to do with this effort. McCarthy, who the term McCarthy-ism was named after, was the junior senator from Wisconsin who made his name by accusing lots of government officials of being Communist. Both the HUAC and McCarthy campaigns went on during the same time period and they used the same tactics –

- haul people before the committee
- ask them questions like “are you or have you ever been a member of the Communist party?”
- ask them for the names of other people who are associated with the Communist party
- cite them with contempt if they refuse to answer

If they refused to answer or refused to incriminate others, they’d be effectively blacklisted from whatever their chosen profession was. They were essentially convicted of the crime of being associated with Communism (which is not really a crime).

I do understand that there was real fear in the early 1950s and there were incidents of so-called subversive activity. I’ll go along with the fact that Julius and Ethel Rosenberg did sell secrets to the Soviet Union that helped them build the atomic bomb. However, going to a Communist party meeting one time is a lot different than committing international espionage.

The most well known cases of blacklisting happened with the entertainment industry. The HUAC first brought people in the Hollywood film industry to testify in 1947. The fear was that people making the films were secretly inserting Marxist subversive messages into the films, so they wanted to expose anyone in Hollywood who had any sorts of ties to the Communist party. 10 of the witnesses refused to answer questions such as “Are you or have you ever been a member of the Communist party?” These 10 would become known as the Hollywood Ten. While there is nothing illegal about being a member of the Communist party, and there was nothing illegal about these 10 exercising their constitutional First Amendment rights, Congress voted to cite these 10 with contempt of Congress, and the following day film executives declared that these 10 would be fired and would never work again until they had sworn they were not Communists. Thus the Hollywood blacklist began.

Over the coming years, scores of workers in the entertainment industry were blacklisted based on their suspected involvement with the Communist party. There were no laws broken, no due process, no innocent until proven guilty. If your name was on the list of suspects, you couldn’t work. The HUAC convened again in 1951 and again presented people with a choice of informing on their colleagues or being cited with contempt. In actor Larry Parks’ testimony he pleaded with the committee

Don't present me with the choice of either being in contempt of this committee and going to jail or forcing me to really crawl through the mud to be an informer. For what purpose? I don't think it is a choice at all. I don't think this is really sportsmanlike. I don't think this is American. I don't think this is American justice.

Parks eventually testified as a friendly witness and named names, but was blacklisted anyway. Many others were brought before the committee and presented with the same choice – name names or be guaranteed the blacklist treatment. Some, like Elia Kazan, willingly named names and ruined the lives of many of their colleagues. Others refused to name names, citing their 5th amendment rights. Many like Lionel Stander, made eloquent statements about how the committee was depriving them of the very rights the hearings were trying to defend.

I know of a group of fanatics who are desperately trying to undermine the Constitution of the United States by depriving artists and others of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness without due process of law.... I can tell names and cite instances and I am one of the first victims of it... [This is] a group of ex-Fascists and America-Firsters and anti-Semites, people who hate everybody including Negroes, minority groups and most likely themselves.... [T]hese people are engaged in a conspiracy outside all the legal processes to undermine the very fundamental American concepts upon which our entire system of democracy exists.

Standar was making this statement about the committee itself. His statement goes to the heart of the issue. Through all of the hearings no evidence was ever found of movies being made that had subversive messages. This period of our history was all about the fear of our country being taken over by Communists and the Soviet Union. Why did we fear it? Our country was founded on freedom, democracy, the constitution, and the bill of rights. We feared that we'd find ourselves taken over by the totalitarian state which was the Soviet Union. However, in the process of defending that freedom, we took it all away. None of the Hollywood Ten broke any laws. None of those who refused to testify were subversives intent on converting our country to a totalitarian state. Yet their freedom was taken away. They were deprived of their due process. They were deprived of their First Amendment rights.

The blacklisting went on for years in the 1950s. Entertainers had to choose to renounce their principles or not work. Some, like actor Philip Loeb, committed suicide after being blacklisted. Blacklisting wasn't confined to only film stars in Hollywood. Folksinger Pete Seeger testified before the committee in 1955 and refused to answer questions. For many years musical venues would not book him for concerts. In 1967 he was booked for the Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour and there was a lot of buildup as this would be a big coming out for Seeger after years of being blacklisted. Seeger, ever true to his principles, sang the song "Waist Deep in the Big Muddy" which many considered a direct criticism of President Johnson and the Viet Nam war. The performance was cut from the show by CBS. Seeger was no longer blacklisted, but still subject to censorship if his message wasn't what everyone wanted to hear.

Years later it's easy to see how the blacklisting in the 1950s was completely against our principles and driven by fear. The fear of Communism allowed us to grant the power to the House Un-American Activities Committee and allowed the blacklisting to ruin lives. It deprived us of talented people in Hollywood and the entertainment industry whose only crime was exercising their freedom. Of course, we're smarter now and we'd never allow the constitution and the bill of rights to be stomped on now, right? After 9/11 the Bush administration went on a systematic campaign to root out terrorists, and in the process

they used warrantless wiretaps and arrests without charges. They resorted to waterboarding prisoners. Have we learned nothing?

Moral Compass Scorecard:

McCarthy and HUAC	D-	They only avoid an F because during the time there was such pervasive fear of Communism. However, the tactics of fanning the flames of fear and ruining lives was unconscionable.
The Hollywood Ten	A	They exercised their constitutional rights of free speech. They paid the price.
Larry Parks	--	His speech about crawling through the mud was eloquent and his moral dilemma was evident. He still named names trying to save himself. He was blacklisted anyway. I pass. What would you have done?
Lionel Stander	A	His speech about the fanatics trying to undermine the constitution was needed.
Pete Seeger	A	He endured years of blacklisting for telling the truth. When he got the chance again in the 1967 Smothers Brothers show, he told the truth again.

Segregation and Jim Crow



In 1863 the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves. No longer could black people be bought and sold like property. However, as we know, the end of slavery did not bring the end of institutionalized racism. Even though black people now could not be bought and sold, states could still make laws that prohibited people of color from being first class citizens.

Fast forward to the 1950s. America no longer had slavery, but states and local municipalities were free to make laws that segregated blacks and whites. Laws could be made for restaurants, bathrooms, busses, railroads, hospitals, and prisons which enforced separate facilities for blacks and whites. Public schools were separate. Among the most

offensive were the literacy tests and poll taxes placed on blacks who tried to register to vote. Blacks were given literacy tests that no one could pass, and forced to pay fees that no one could afford. Black voter registration was pitifully low, so the racists who made these laws were never voted out of office. In southern states where blacks were 30-40% of the population in some communities, they were 2nd class citizens and powerless to change things.

Two Supreme Court decisions in the 1950s began the unraveling of the segregation establishment. The first was *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 which said that separate black and white schools are inherently unequal. The second decision was *Browder v. Gayle* in 1956 which grew out of Rosa Parks refusing to move to the back of the bus in Alabama. In this case the Supreme Court ruled it that racial segregation on buses was unconstitutional.

With these two decisions, the Supreme Court acknowledged that racial segregation was wrong and that laws of our land could not be made to continue such wrong-headed practices. However, people especially in the South were not going to give up segregation just because the Supreme Court said so. Groups all over the South began to organize to resist the actual practice of integration.

Mississippi was one state where the resistance to integration was most organized and eventually violent. After the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, white people in all parts of Mississippi began to form chapters of what were called the “Citizens Council”. These groups did not want their schools integrated and did not want their public facilities integrated. To them, everyone was happy with the social order, including black people. It was the “Yankees” from up north and the Supreme Court that was meddling in their lives. They used terms like the fight against “forced integration” and the fight to “preserve racial integrity”. Parents of white children were concerned about inter-racial dating and about schools being able to maintain discipline once they were integrated. These groups pressured local politicians and law enforcement officials to maintain segregation practices. They created a large propaganda machine with mailings, radio ads, and even a local television show that aired right after the news. They used sanitized, patriotic rhetoric like

“If you agree that individual liberty and constitutional government must be preserved, if you want to do something positive and worthwhile to protect our freedom, then we want to hear from you.”

In practice, the council maintained order by intimidation. For blacks, if anyone challenged a Jim Crow law, they could be fired. The same went for whites who showed any sympathy for blacks. They branded anyone a Communist if they spoke out against any of the council’s activities. Publically they shunned violence, but people mysteriously were found dead in isolated places. Cops and local authorities were part of the citizen’s council, and in many cases they carried out these acts or simply looked the other way.

While whites in Mississippi and other southern states fiercely resisted integration, civil rights groups organized brave actions all over to push for racial equality. In 1957 Martin Luther King helped to form the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Early on, they established that the tactics of the civil rights movement would be civil disobedience and nonviolence. According to King, it was essential that the civil rights movement not sink to the level of the racists and hate mongers who opposed them: "We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline."

source -- [Civil Rights Movement Timeline \(14th Amendment, 1964 Act, Human Rights Law\) — Infoplease.com](http://www.infoplease.com/spot/civilrightstimeline1.html#ixzz1H3gy4qS) <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/civilrightstimeline1.html#ixzz1H3gy4qS>

In 1960 the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was formed providing young black students a place in the non-violent movement to fight segregation.

These two organizations organized marches, sit-ins, and support for blacks in the numerous confrontations that occurred in the late 1950s and 1960s. Some of the most well known standoffs between blacks and whites were

- 1957 - Little Rock Arkansas – In the all white Central High School, the attempt to integrate is blocked by governor Orval Faubus. Nine black students are blocked from entering the school, and President Eisenhower is forced to send in Federal Troops to allow the black students to enter. These students are known as the “Little Rock Nine”.
- 1960 – Greensboro, North Carolina – Four black students stage a sit-in at a segregated lunch counter in a Woolworth’s store. The students are allowed to sit at the counter, but are refused service. This event triggers numerous other sit-ins in the South at parks, swimming pools, theaters, and libraries where black and white sections of the public facilities had been firmly in place.
- 1961 – The Freedom Riders – Student volunteers take bus trips throughout the South defying the state segregation laws in effect for public transportation. Riders face angry white mobs and in some cases are arrested at the end of their trips as the state level Jim Crow laws are still in effect.
- 1962 – Ole Miss University – James Meredith becomes the first black student to enroll at Ole Miss. Violence and riots erupts at the college as whites attempt to prevent him from enrolling. President Kennedy sends federal troops to escort Meredith into the college.
- 1963 – Birmingham Alabama – Police Commissioner Eugene “Bull” Connor uses attack dogs and fire hoses on black demonstrators. Images of the brutality are broadcast on national television.
- 1963 – Jackson, Mississippi – NAACP field secretary Medgar Evers is murdered. The shooter, Byron De La Beckwith, whose fingerprints are found on the murder weapon, is tried twice in 1964 by all white juries, and both trials result in hung juries. De La Beckwith is convicted 30 years later.

- 1964 – Neshoba County, Mississippi – 3 civil rights workers are murdered by the Ku Klux Klan, and the subsequent FBI investigation triggers a wave of racial violence. 7 of the Klan members who committed the murders are eventually tried and convicted on federal civil rights violation charges.
- 1965 – Selma Alabama – Blacks begin a march from Selma to Montgomery to support voting rights. Local police blockade the march and many marchers are hospitalized as police use tear gas, whips, and clubs against the marchers. The media refers to the event as “Bloody Sunday”.

Each of the confrontations turned the tide of the country against racial segregation, as it was painfully clear who was on the right side of history. You had black people exercising their rights in a non-violent way, and white segregationists violently brutalizing and sometimes murdering them to preserve segregation and white supremacy. The country grew up in these days. People were inspired to do the right thing and they eventually forced Washington to come around. On August 28, 1963 200,000 people listened to Martin Luther King’s “I Have A Dream Speech” and millions of others saw it broadcast.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

...

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

...

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

Source: <http://www.usconstitution.net/dream.html>

Amidst all of the violence and racial hatred, King’s speech was a game changer. How could anyone not be inspired? How could anyone want to preserve segregation when King had so eloquently expressed the true moral high ground for our American values?

Washington did come around, though it wasn’t easy. Kennedy was assassinated, but President Johnson, a Southerner himself, pushed through the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Johnson clearly saw what was right and used his considerable political skills in persuading Congress to pass these landmark pieces of legislation. No longer would it be ok for states to make laws that treated blacks as 2nd class citizens. No longer would it be ok for blacks to be prevented from voting.

Clearly we turned a corner in the 1960s, but racial segregation, prejudice, and hatred did not end there. The country still had many more struggles to go through and we're still going through it. Forced school integration and bussing in the 1970s brought racial issues to the forefront again. The police beating of Rodney King caught on video, and the subsequent acquittal of the officers caused racial riots in 1992. But black Reverend Jesse Jackson was a serious candidate for President in 1984 and 1988. And of course, our first black President Barack Obama was elected in 2008.

Is institutionalized racism really gone from our society? It's no longer acceptable for people to be publically racist, but I'm sure there are plenty who still believe schools should be segregated and colored people should still sit in the back of the bus. In 2002 Senator Trent Lott of Mississippi was giving a tribute to long time Senator Strom Thurmond on his 100th birthday. Strom Thurmond was a man who in 1948 ran for President on a platform of individual states having the right to institute any racist law they saw fit. Lott said:

"When Strom Thurmond ran for president, we voted for him. We're proud of it. And if the rest of the country had followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all these problems over the years, either"

Whoops! All of those years of being a politician, and Lott finally let it slip out. In other words, if we'd elected Strom Thurmond, we would have been able to keep the Jim Crow laws in place, none of the civil rights "problems" would have happened, and blacks would still be 2nd class citizens. Lott was extremely embarrassed by his sudden candidness, and had to backpedal instantly. I'm sure plenty of Southerners and racists everywhere agree with Lott, but in 2002 you just can't say it out loud.

Segregation and Jim Crow laws are part of our history which we should never forget. Segregationists and racists used their own moral arguments in trying to preserve their way of life which was so obviously wrong. Eventually those who fought for integration and racial justice won out against those who tried to keep blacks as second class citizens.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Supreme Court	A	The court did the right thing in its landmark cases Brown v. Board of Education and Browder v. Gayle.
Rosa Parks	A	Parks faced certain arrest by refusing to sit in the back of the bus.
Mississippi Citizens Council Groups	F	There's no justification for the groups' continued resistance to ending racial segregation.
Freedom Riders, James Meredith, Medgar Evers, many others	A	These people faced hatred and violence in standing up for their rights of racial equality.
Martin Luther King	A+	Led the civil rights movement through

		the toughest of times, all the while preaching non-violence.
Ku Klux Klan	F	Could there be any lower ground than the KKK? They used intimidation and violence to try to keep white supremacy, all the while hiding their identity in white bedsheets costumes.
Trent Lott	D	He apologized after his too candid remarks, but he expressed the true feelings of many white Southerners years after the civil rights movement.

Quiz Show Scandal

In the mid 1950s television began to take over our lives. One of the most popular shows was the quiz show, where common people became national stars as they answered difficult questions and won huge cash prizes while millions of people tuned in on their brand new TVs. Quickly the show producers and sponsors found that the quiz shows were much more popular and entertaining when the contestants won these large cash prizes, and the shows devolved into blatant manipulation where the most popular shows pre-selected the winners turned the contestants into actors who knew all of the answers to all of the questions beforehand. The massive fraud was eventually exposed, and American's had to give up their love affair with contestants who'd been promoted as wonderful role models of intellectualism.

The quiz show "The \$64,000 Question" debuted in 1955. Overnight the show was a huge success and its contestants became big stars by answering questions of increasing difficulty as the stakes got higher. The American public was fascinated by ordinary people winning large sums of money. Meanwhile the sponsors were only too happy to spend their money because television advertising made their sales go through the roof. The \$64,000 Question and the early television quiz shows were not rigged, at least at first. The contestants were tested behind the scenes so that the producers knew what questions would trip up the contestants. When the producers and sponsors wanted someone off the show, they would just ask them a question they knew the contestant would not be able to answer. Eventually, the manipulation became more direct as the shows got more popular. Contestants would soon be given the questions beforehand, and later the outcomes of the quiz shows would be pre-determined.

Twenty-one was the most notable of the quiz shows both for its popularity and for the scandal that ensued. The first pilot was aired in 1956 and was played honestly. The show was a dismal failure. The contestants failed to answer many of the questions, and the show's sponsor threatened to pull out of the show if that happened again. The producers Dan Enright and Jack Barry then decided that the show would be rigged. Not only were contestants given the answers beforehand, but their every move was choreographed for maximum entertainment value. They were instructed to comment about the questions in a certain way and show excitement or disappointment. They turned off the air conditioning in the contestants' booths, then showed close-ups of them sweating and mopping their brow at strategic times, all for dramatic effect.

Twenty-one brought in and promoted their contestants for maximum entertainment value. The first champion was Herb Stempel, a smart but rather nerdy former military man. While he had a very high IQ and could have performed well on his own answering the questions, his reign as champion was completely rigged. Later, they brought in Columbia college professor Charles Van Doren to challenge Stempel. Van Doren was good looking, smooth talking, and a natural entertainer. The weekly show reached its height of popularity as they staged a series of ties between Stempel and Van Doren, with both contestants being paid well but knowing it was all a fraud. America was riveted to the

show every week, mostly with people rooting for the all-American hero Van Doren to knock off the nerdy Stempel. Finally, Stempel was ordered to lose. He was ordered to miss an easy question which he clearly knew the answer to. Stempel protested to the producers and offered to face off against Van Doren straight without being given the answers, but to no avail. Though he could have answered the question correctly when his turn came, he dutifully answered it wrong, and Van Doren became the champion.

America celebrated Charles Van Doren as its intellectual hero. He appeared on the cover of Time magazine and was given a spot as a regular on NBC's Today show. Meanwhile, Stempel was cast into obscurity. Stempel then tried to blow the whistle on Twenty-one but with no concrete proof of the show's rigging, his accusations were passed off as jealousy. Richard Goodwin, a Congressional lawyer, eventually traveled to New York to investigate rumors that the show was rigged. He interviewed the show's producers as well as Stempel and Van Doren, but at first failed to find any concrete proof other than Stempel's statements.

Twenty-one and the rest of the quiz shows unraveled almost at once starting with the downfall of the show "Dotto" when concrete proof of the show's rigging was presented to the press. One by one the quiz shows were shown to be fraudulent, but Americans hung on to their hope that Twenty One and Van Doren were honest, despite Stempel's accusations. Eventually Goodwin located one of the other Twenty One contestants who had a sealed registered letter to himself containing all of the answers to the questions the day before the show was aired. This provided the smoking gun. Van Doren was forced to testify under oath to a House committee and he admitted that he'd been given the answers. Though he came clean, Van Doren was dropped immediately by NBC and was forced to resign his professorship at Columbia. America does not want a hero to be someone that deceives us. Afterwards, quiz shows and all other broadcast media were regulated to the point of it was no longer legal to present lies, deception, and fraud on television.

I understand this is about quiz shows and entertainment, but this story really cuts to the heart of morality. People are willing to lie and deceive if there's a lot of money on the table. Good people, like Herb Stempel and Charles Van Doren, are willing to throw away honesty for money and fame. The producers Jack Barry and Dan Enright weren't bad people either in my opinion. They just wanted their show to succeed and saw the rigging as the best way to do it. What about us? Americans were willing to believe Van Doren was honest even in the face of mounting evidence to the contrary. We want an American hero so much we don't let go easily.

I often wonder about when people show remorse after their lies and fraud are exposed. They say it was a mistake and they'd do things differently if they had to do it over again. Look at the Nixon's men in the Watergate scandal. Look at every politician who is caught cheating on his wife or committing some financial fraud. Would they say it was a mistake if they didn't get caught? Perhaps the mistake was getting caught. Can you live with yourself if you lie and deceive and commit fraud but don't get caught? Would Van

Doren ever have admitted the fraud had he not been forced to? Or would he have continued to enjoy being America's hero?

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Dan Enright and Jack Barry	D-	Their justification for the fraud of the show Twenty-one was that it was just entertainment.
Herb Stempel	B-	Herb isn't blameless. He attempted to blow the whistle on Twenty-one only after he was bounced from the show.
Charles Van Doren	C-	He became America's intellectual hero but eventually did the right thing by coming clean in his statement to Congress.
Richard Goodwin	A	He persisted in finding out the truth about Twenty-one.

Stanley Milgram Experiment

You might be asking what a social science experiment is doing in a book with all of these important historical events. In fact, this book is not just about history but rather it's about human nature. It's not just about what people did in our history, but why they did it. What is it about human nature that drives to the wrong side of the moral compass? This experiment may help explain it.

The original Milgram experiments began in 1961 at Yale University. Subjects were recruited and paid to participate in an experiment they thought was a memory experiment. Subjects were brought in and assigned to play either the role of a teacher or a learner. What the subjects didn't know was they would always be assigned to be the teacher, and the learner was actually an actor. The teacher was to administer a memory test, and whenever the learner got an answer wrong, the teacher would administer an electric shock. With each incorrect answer, the voltage of the shock would be increased. The learner was in another room, but the subject could hear them as they shouted in pain as the voltage of the shock increased. The experimenter was in the room with the subject, and if the subject objected the experimenter was to give 4 prompts to encourage the subject to go on –

Prod 1: Please continue *or* Please go on.

Prod 2: The experiment requires that you continue.

Prod 3: It is absolutely essential that you continue.

Prod 4: You have no other choice, you *must* go on.

Source: http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/psychology/milgram_obedience_experiment.html

The results were surprising and shocking. I won't bore you with the specifics except to say that more than 50% of the subjects continued to the end to give shocks of the maximum voltage, even when the subject could hear the person screaming in pain. The maximum voltage was 450 volts. If that's not a lethal shock, it's enough to cause serious injury. And it was made clear to the subjects that the people they thought they were shocking had a heart condition. Those 4 simple prompts were enough to make the subjects obey, even though it was clearly against their better judgment.

The Milgram experiment has been replicated many times, always with similar results. Subjects are uncomfortable with administering shocks but they still do it.

This experiment came under a great deal of criticism. People said it was ethically wrong to put people under such strain where they have to choose to either hurt someone or disobey an authority figure. I agree that deceiving people and putting them under unexpected stress like this is on shaky ground ethically. However, human beings needed to find this out about themselves. We need to know how that our natural reaction is to suspend our own moral judgment and obey authority. If more than ½ of us will obey

when it's so clearly wrong, it's likely all of us would obey authority when commanded to do something that "might" be wrong.

The experiment was performed explicitly as an attempt to explain Nazi Germany. Milgram's first experiments occurred right after the trial of Adolf Eichmann, one of the most notorious Nazis who performed the most heinous crimes against the Jews. Were the Nazis some special class of evil people who were the only ones capable of inflicting such torture on other human beings? Or were they just following orders, the same orders that you and I would have followed. Eichmann's defense along with that of the other Nazis who were tried after the war was just that – we did what we were told. Obedience apparently trumps judgment, even when it is torturing other human beings. We needed Milgram to tell us this about ourselves. It's a deep dark skeleton we really don't want to know but it's there. Hopefully, anyone who learns about the Milgram experiment (it's taught in virtually every intro psychology class) will think twice when ordered to do something unethical. Hopefully we can evolve as humans and make the right moral decisions despite our tendency to blindly obey authority.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Stanley Milgram	A	He performed the experiment despite controversy and criticism.
Subjects Who Continued To Shock to Maximum Voltage	D	Obedience to authority is not an excuse for such amoral behavior. The experiment showed that many people will obey authority no matter what.

The Daisy Girl Advertisement

The year was 1964. Kennedy had recently been assassinated, and now Lyndon Johnson was running to prove that he was worthy of the office of President, not just a shadow of the country's beloved Kennedy. Running against Johnson was Barry Goldwater, who was far to the right of many people's comfort level. Right or wrong, there was a perception that Goldwater would start a nuclear war if elected President. The Johnson campaign hired a Madison Avenue ad agency to exploit the public's fear, and they came up with "Peace Little Girl" or what is now known as the Daisy Girl Advertisement.

The ad depicts a little girl counting the pedals of a daisy. When she reaches nine after miscounting several times, an ominous voice begins a countdown from 10 down to 1 finishing with the devastating explosion and mushroom cloud of a nuclear bomb. Johnson's voice comes in right after the explosion.

These are the stakes. To make a world in which all of God's children can live. Or to go into the dark. We must either love each other or we must die.

Then an announcer comes in.

Vote for President Johnson on November 3. The stakes are too high for you to stay home.

Goldwater is never mentioned in the ad. There was a great deal of controversy, and the Johnson campaign withdrew the ad after having aired it only once. But the damage was done. It was replayed on the news over and over, and the daisy girl appeared on the cover of Time magazine. Many believe the ad was a big contributor to the Johnson landslide.

The Daisy Girl ad was the first political ad to blatantly manipulate people's emotions. I'm sure the campaign and ad creators were shocked at how well it worked. They learned that the best way to sway people's opinions was to skip over logic, issues, and information, and go right for their fear. In other words, if the public is afraid of the other guy they'll surely vote for our guy. This trick will later be used over and over in political campaigns and all kinds of campaigns that attempt to sway public opinion. The means used to make us afraid of something include whatever distortions, exaggerations, half-truths, and outright lies are necessary. Even after the lies are exposed, the ads usually work. We'd rather vote for a liar than whatever he or she has depicted the other guy as. I believe truth and integrity do have a place in political campaigns, but clearly the candidates place a higher value on winning.

The ironic thing about the Daisy Girl affair is it was executed by Johnson, a liberal Democrat. So much of my thesis and the examples in this book center around the

conservatives using lies, manipulation, and fear mongering. The liberals are just as capable of using these techniques because they work.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Johnson Campaign	C-	This was a blatant (and successful) attempt to manipulate the public using fear to turn against Goldwater. They eventually pulled the ad.
News Media	D	The news media gave the ad more free air time than it deserved, allowing the fear mongering to set in.
American Public	C	It's hard to know how much the public was swayed by this manipulative ad or if Johnson would have won in a landslide anyway.

The Beatles Are More Popular Than Jesus

To say that the Beatles changed the world is a statement that can't be argued with. The onset of the fab four, first in England then in the United States and the rest of the world changed forever the music we listen to. Some would say they changed every aspect of life. After the Beatles touched down in Kennedy Airport on February 7, 1964 and played two appearances on the Ed Sullivan show, the Beatles overnight became the dominant figure in pop culture. They dominated the charts. On April 5, Billboard's top five songs were

Can't Buy Me Love
Twist and Shout
She Loves You
I Want To Hold Your Hand
Please, Please Me

It wasn't just Beatles music on every radio and every record player that made up Beatlemania. Boys had to have the mop haircuts to look like the Beatles, and every young girl seemed to have a crush on one or more of the boys in the band. The boys took their fame in stride and continued to churn out new music, play concerts all over the world, and make feature films.

I was all of 6 years old when the Beatles phenomenon was going on. I heard the music on the radio but had no idea what the impact really was. I had no idea how much the Beatles were shaking up the establishment and making it uncomfortable. The late 50's and early 60's were a time of Father Knows Best and Leave It To Beaver. Clean cut family values were the order of the day. Dad worked at the same company for years, while Mom stayed home with the kids and everyone went to church on Sunday. Rock and roll had already shaken up things in the 50s with Elvis, and before the Beatles the music industry had gone through a period of promoting acts to bring back the clean cut image and tame Rock and Roll.

It's fair to say when the Beatles took the music scene by storm it made a lot of people uncomfortable. The clean cut idyllic life so many were accustomed to was being challenged. Conservatives and religious leaders no longer had the ear of their followers who were swept up in the Beatles' frenzy. The Beatles were seen as a group of free spirit young people who could break all the rules and everyone loved them. It only got worse for the conservative establishment when stories came out about the Beatles' experiments with drugs. While one generation couldn't get enough of the Beatles, the older generation was looking for a way to bring them down.

The opportunity came in 1966. John Lennon, always the most outspoken Beatle, did an interview with ... As part of his discussion of religion in current day affairs, he was quoted:

'Christianity will go,' he said. 'It will vanish and shrink. I needn't argue about that; I'm right and I will be proved right. We're more popular than Jesus now; I don't know which will go first-rock 'n' roll or Christianity. Jesus was all right but his disciples were thick and ordinary. It's them twisting it that ruins it for me.'

The interview was published in England and had really no impact. People in England read the interview and thought it was just John being John. Who could argue with the statement that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus. They were. This was a non-event. The Beatles continued making music, movies, and touring to an adoring generation.

It was only months later in August of 1966 when the quote was picked up in the United States that the backlash was unleashed. John Lennon said the Beatles were more popular than Jesus. He's gone too far. Somehow it spread all across the south where religious leaders in combination with radio stations whipped up a great Beatle boycott. They stopped playing their records and set up stations where people could bring Beatles records to be destroyed. People listened and followed the Beatle boycott like flocks of sheep. The Beatles received death threats. They nearly had to cancel some concert appearances in the south.

In a famous explanation, apology/non apology, Lennon tried to respond.

... I made these statements in reference to England, that we meant more to kids than Jesus did, or religion, at that time. I wasn't knocking it or putting it down. I was just saying it....

I'm not saying we're better, or greater, or comparing us with Jesus Christ as a person or God as a thing or whatever it is. I just said what I said and it was wrong, or was taken wrong, and now it's all this ...

The Beatle backlash definitely knocked the Beatles down a notch. It gave the conservatives an issue to latch on to. They'd been looking for something to take the Beatles down, and Lennon's statements gave it to them. But what is it about Lennon's exercise of free speech that gave rise to such a frenzy? It was a simplistic appeal to people's basic emotions. It goes like this – Lennon says the Beatles are more popular than Jesus – what he means is he's questioning your right to worship Jesus – you can't let him do that – this is an affront to your religious values. Something like that. Why did this work for so many people – to bring them to reject the Beatles all at once because Lennon exercised his free speech? And why did many others, no doubt deeply religious people, continue to love the Beatles?

We see this same dynamic over and over. People refuse to think through issues thoroughly and allow themselves to be swept up into a simplistic world view based on raw emotions. Is it fear? No doubt fear plays a role. In this case, it's fear of someone taking away your freedom to worship Jesus.

John Lennon overcame all the criticism and gave us many more classics, like Revolution, Imagine, and Give Peace a Chance before his life was cut short by a crazy gunman Mark David Chapman in 1980. It's not clear whether Chapman's murder of Lennon was set off by Lennon's views on religion or Chapman's obsession with Holden Caulfield from "The Catcher In The Rye".

I always wondered how related to these events his lyrics were in the Ballad of John and Yoko

Christ you know it ain't easy

You know how hard it can be

The way things are going

They're gonna crucify me

Moral Compass Scorecard:

John Lennon	A	John Lennon exercised his right to free speech over and over, in his original interview and in the words to his songs. Criticizing religion is just as much his right as anything else.
Radio stations and religious leaders who organized the Beatles' boycotts.	C-	They were as much within their rights as Lennon was to say what they believed about the Beatles. However, to twist Lennon's words and turn him into a pariah was wrong.
People who participated in great Beatle boycott and who threatened violence against the Beatles	D	Again, exercise of free speech is fine. However when the mob frenzy turns into death threats it's way over the line
Mark David Chapman	F	The man who murdered John Lennon was mentally ill but I believe understood that he was taking someone's life when he fired those shots.

The Vietnam War

*Gimme an F!
Gimme a U!
Gimme a C!
Gimme a K!
What's that spell?
What's that spell?
What's that spell?*

*Well come on all of you big strong men
Uncle Sam needs your help again
He's got himself in a terrible jam
Way down yonder in Vietnam
Put down your books and pick up a gun
We're gonna have a whole lot of fun*

These were the words of Country Joe McDonald at the Woodstock festival on August 16, 1969. He captivated nearly ½ million people with the signature Vietnam War protest song. I'm sure most of the ½ million Woodstock goers were against the war by this time, as was much of the country. At the same time, nearly ½ million troops were in Vietnam fighting and dying every day. The country was experiencing in 1969 one of the biggest splits since the Civil War.

How did we get to this point? How is it that both sides could claim the moral high ground so passionately?

It's easy to look back at Vietnam and see that the North simply wanted to be reunited with the South after years of being a French colony. However, we were in the middle of the Cold War and the Communist hysteria in the 1960s, so the North threatening the South fit right into the domino theory, where first Vietnam would be Communist, then Cambodia, Laos, and the rest of the region. Before we knew it, the Communists would be at our doorstep. Given that the early 60s had brought the Berlin Wall and the Cuban missile crisis, it's easy to see how losing South Vietnam was thought to be a serious threat.

What's hard to reconcile is how each step in the escalation of the war brought us further into the dark side, with this "ends justify the means" logic. There were many steps, but the first big one was the Gulf of Tonkin resolution. President Johnson was able to get agreement from Congress to use military force in Vietnam without a formal declaration of war, based on an attack by North Vietnam that likely didn't even occur. Did Johnson knowingly lie to Congress and the American people about Tonkin? Or did he fail at due diligence in finding out what the truth really was? Johnson needed an excuse to send in combat troops, because the moral imperative was to save the South in Johnson's mind. Saving the South from Communism (and by extension ourselves and the world) became the justification for every misstep that followed. Everyone from President Johnson to

Defense Secretary McNamara to General William Westmorland repeatedly said we were making progress and if we had more troops we would be able to win the war. But little by little the facts contradicted their public statements and the war dragged on.

General William Westmoreland, in a speech to a joint session of Congress in 1967, said

"In evaluating the enemy strategy, it is evident to me that he believes our Achilles heel is our resolve ... Your continued strong support is vital to the success of our mission ... Backed at home by resolve, confidence, patience, determination and continued support, we will prevail in Vietnam over the Communist aggressor!"

(Source Wikipedia)

As the war escalated and young people were drafted in greater numbers, public support for the war eroded steadily. Protests against the war occurred at college campuses and in major cities. In 1967 Dr. Martin Luther King came out publicly against the war, as did Senator Robert Kennedy. Protests against the war continued and were legitimized by these great leaders, who were both assassinated in 1968. The Tet Offensive in early 1968 showed many in the country that this war could not be won. The split in the country boiled over at the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago, where violence erupted between Mayor Daley's police forces and hundreds of protesters outside the convention hall.

Somehow Richard Nixon was elected in 1968 as he successfully sold his "secret plan" to end the war and achieve "peace with honor". But the draft went on and troops were still in Vietnam throughout Nixon's first term. It's my belief that both Johnson and Nixon and most of their advisors could not fathom being the first to lose a war. This combined with the Cold War values that dominated the times allowed them to be blinded to how wrong it was to have our American soldiers fighting and dying in a war that could not be won.

There were dissenters. George Ball, Assistant Secretary of State during the Johnson administration, objected to every increase in the war effort, accurately predicting that the war could not be won as early as 1965. Imagine the strength of character it took for Ball to present his opinion as the lone voice while the rest of Johnson's advisors argued only on how to prosecute the war.

Source - <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pentagon4/doc260.htm>

Then there was Daniel Ellsberg. Ellsberg had access to and contributed to a set of top secret documents about the Vietnam War decision making process in our government. To Ellsberg, it was clear that the American people were being lied to about Vietnam. While the public was told the war would be won if we persevered a little longer, these documents, later known as the Pentagon Papers, showed evidence that the war was not winnable and it would lead to many more American casualties than the public was led to believe. Ellsberg felt it was his duty to make these documents public, even if it meant

he'd have to go to prison. He secretly made copies of the documents and in 1971 the Pentagon Papers were made public by the New York Times and Washington Post. Ellsberg was subject to prosecution for theft of the documents, but also was subject to harassment from the Nixon Administration's plumbers who sought to discredit him. His psychiatrist Lewis Fielding had his office broken into in a plot carried out by E. Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy. Ellsberg understood his own personal risk but felt that greater good would come out of doing the right thing by making the Pentagon Papers public.

The soldiers that served in Vietnam must have struggled every day with their own sense of right and wrong. I'm sure most soldiers only hoped they'd come out alive, but part of carrying out their mission was to destroy villages and massacre civilians. How many innocent people were killed because our soldiers did not know who the enemy was? The worst case was the My Lai massacre which occurred on March 16, 1968, in which hundreds of civilians including women and children were brutally murdered by our troops. The most well known murderer at My Lai was Lieutenant William Calley who personally shot many of the civilians and ordered other soldiers to do the same. What kind of blind craziness could have possessed a man to murder women and children one by one? What kind of struggle did the other soldiers have who were ordered to shoot these people but knew it was wrong?

Then there were the young people at home who relentlessly protested the war, but knew they could receive a draft notice at any time. I was at summer camp in 1970 as an 11 year old, and my camp counselors played the song "I Feel like I'm Fixing to Die Rag" over and over. To me it was amusing to hear

*And it's 1, 2, 3, what are we fighting for
Don't ask me I don't give a damn
My next stop is Vietnam
And it's 5, 6, 7, open the pearly gate
Well there ain't no time to wonder why
Whoopee we're all gonna die*

To my camp counselors, this was serious stuff. They might have been in college or working at the time, but each one could have gotten a draft notice at any time and found themselves fighting for their lives in the jungle instead of teaching archery to kids. Many who were drafted faced that dilemma – my government is telling me to report for service, but I know the war is wrong. Do I report for service anyway? Do I apply to be a conscientious objector? Do I go to Canada to avoid the draft? Do I go to prison? Muhammad Ali made the most interesting choice in my mind. To Ali, it's ok the hurt people in the boxing ring but it's not ok to kill them in a war that is wrong. Vietnam is one of the most compelling events in our history because it forced everyone to take a stand. From Johnson to Nixon to Calley to Ellsberg to the draft resisters and protesters, our country was tested in where we stood on doing the right thing. I'd only hope we don't repeat the events of Vietnam and the way to tore our country apart.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

President Lyndon Johnson	C-	His decisions to escalate the war without a full hearing of how the war couldn't be won are hard to justify. Clearly he struggled with Viet Nam every step.
President Richard Nixon	D	By the time Nixon was elected, so much more was known about how the war couldn't be won. Still he persisted and even widened the war.
George Ball	A	He had the courage to speak up even though he was the lone dissenter in cabinet meetings.
William Westmorland	F	Purposely misled the President and the public about how well the war was going.
Martin Luther King	A	He used his stature as a civil rights leader to take the right stand against the war.
Robert Kennedy	A	Kennedy put it all on the line against the war in his aborted run for President in 1968.
Lt. William Calley	F	There's no way to justify the murder of hundreds of women and children even during wartime.
Viet Nam Soldiers	--	Soldiers are trained to obey their superior officers and they were in many cases just trying to stay alive. I pass.
Viet Nam Draft Dodgers	A	I believe to defy their country and not go to fight in a war they knew was wrong was high moral character. Others will certainly disagree.
Daniel Ellsberg	A	Ellsberg risked everything to expose the Pentagon Papers. He knew he was breaking the law, but considered it a higher duty to let the public know the truth about Viet Nam.
Country Joe MacDonald	A	I have no problem with the man yelling "fuck" in front of ½ million people at Woodstock, or singing an irreverent song about a war that was wrong.
Muhammad Ali	A	Wow! It's ok to hurt people for sport but not ok to kill them in a war that's wrong. That's principle.

Coup in Chile

On September 11 the world changed. Many people lost their lives, and for many others the world would never be the same.

Some people call September 11, 1973 the other September 11. On this day the democratically elected president of Chile Salvador Allende was overthrown by a military coup, and thus began the brutal dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet where thousands of Chileans were killed. And while the coup was carried out by the Chilean military, this September 11 had American fingerprints all over it.

This story began in 1970 when Salvador Allende, a Marxist, won the election in Chile. The Nixon administration, which was deep in Cold War politics and still trying to extricate itself from the disaster in Viet Nam, decided right away that the Allende presidency had to be brought down. Nixon used the CIA to first try to prevent Allende from taking power. When that failed, plans were made to support a potential military coup. Nixon's Secretary of State Henry Kissinger denied multiple times that America was involved in any coup attempt, however declassified documents from the 1970's prove otherwise. Clearly the Chilean people could not be trusted to make their own decision about who to elect. To our government, democracy is great – unless you elect someone we don't like. And we don't like anyone who is on the wrong side of the Cold War politics.

A quote from Kissinger

"I don't see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people. The issues are much too important for the Chilean voters to be left to decide for themselves."

Allende's presidency went about like any Marxist one would. He nationalized the banks, the copper industry, and set about to redistribute land. You can argue whether these Socialist policies are good policies or not. If the Chilean people were not happy with the results, they could elect someone else. America made sure the Chilean people were not happy but blocking foreign aid and loans to the Chilean government, and using the CIA to plant anti-Allende propaganda in the Chilean press.

On September 11 the Chilean military staged a coup in which Allende was killed. The Nixon administration was ecstatic. "Chile's coup de etat was close to perfect" sited one official, and another characterized September 11, 1973 as "Chile's day of destiny and D-Day". The Chilean people were hardly ecstatic. Hundreds of people were rounded up and brought to the national stadium in the days after the coup. There they were tortured, raped, and put to death by all sorts of horrible means. Singer Victor Jara was one of the victims. Known for his songs about peace, he had his hands broken, so the story goes. When he rose up to sing again, he was shot multiple times and his body was dumped in the street.

These are the words from the Holly Near song "It Could Have Been Me"

The junta took the fingers from Victor Jara's hands

They said to the gentle poet play your guitar now if you can

Well Victor started singing until they shot his body down

You can kill a man but not a song when it's sung the whole world round

Americans Charles Horman and Frank Terruggi were also executed in the national stadium. The story of Charles Horman was the subject of the movie "Missing" with Jack Lemmon and Sissy Spacek. Did US officials know that Horman and Terruggi had been brought to the national stadium to be executed, and do nothing about it? It is alleged in the movie that Horman knew about American involvement in the coup. Could US officials put the exposure of its involvement in the coup ahead of protecting Americans?

American aid began to flow back to Chile in the aftermath of the coup. Now they were a friendly regime since they'd gotten rid of the Marxist. The Pinochet junta continued to torture and execute anyone suspected of virtually anything. To the Nixon and Ford administrations, the horrible human rights record in Chile was an embarrassment. And there you have it. Allende, the democratically elected president had to be overthrown because he was a Marxist. Pinochet brutally tortures and kills thousands of his own people, and he is a public relations problem.

The Pinochet reign of terror lasted until 1990 when power was at last returned to civilians. Pinochet somehow avoided prosecution for all of the murders and human rights abuses. This whole incident will never make sense to me. How can America engineer the overthrow of a democratically elected president, but stand with a brutal dictator who kills his own people? The Cold War politics clearly put us on the wrong side of the moral compass. The American people never would have accepted this Cold War policy had it been public, and Nixon and his administration knew this so it all had to be done in secret. During the Cold War this theme is repeated again and again. See Nicaragua, El Salvador, South Africa. If your politics is to our liking, we support you no matter how badly your people are treated.

Source: <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/KOR309A.html>

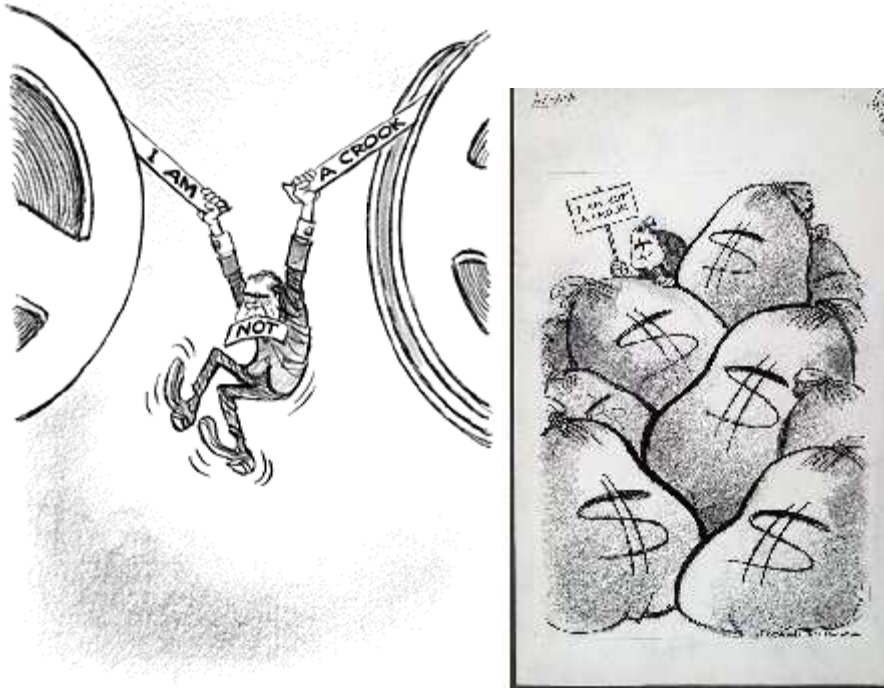
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1973_Chilean_coup_d'%C3%A9tat#cite_note-MV-86

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Nixon, Kissenger	F	To overthrow a democratically elected government and support a brutal dictator goes against everything we stand for.
Salvadore Allende	A	Allende's only crime was to be a Marxist
Pinochet	F	Pinochet represents the low point in killi thousands of Chilean people in order to retain power.

Victor Jara	A	He'll be remembered as a singer who stood up for what he believed in.
Charles Horman and Frank Terruggi	A	These are Americans who stood up for the Chilean people and were killed before their stories could be told.

Watergate



For those that don't remember or were too young or not born when Watergate was going on, this is the Cliff-notes version:

Nixon had his plumbers and his slush funds
Re-elect the President is what was on their minds.
Burglars were caught breaking into Democratic headquarters.
Good god! Woodward and Bernstein followed the scandal all the way through to the White House.
Nixon and his men denied, denied, denied.
The public wanted to know what did the President know and when did he know it.
Nixon said "I am not a crook" despite the cancer on his presidency
But there are tapes ...
Nixon said we can't have them.
The Supreme Court said yes we can
But there's an 18 minute gap
It was accidentally erased by our secretary
We had a Saturday night massacre
The tapes were the smoking gun
Nixon resigned, Ford became President, Ford pardoned Nixon. End of story.

Ok. Ok. Even those who were old enough probably don't remember these events. When Watergate was going on, I was 13 years old. I didn't like Nixon and was already leaning

Democratic, but for the life of me couldn't understand what the fuss was about. What could Nixon have done that was so bad he'd have to be impeached for it?

It turns out that Watergate was the first scandal that public officials were caught red-handed. I always found it fascinating, so fascinating that I read "All The President's Men" twice and saw the movie about 12 times.

Don't worry. I'm not going to go all Woodward-Bernstein on you and recite all the events, payoffs, slush funds, lies, and dirty tricks the Nixon White House pulled. A little recap, however, is necessary. Somewhere around 1971, 3 years after his election, Nixon formed a group of men called "The Plumbers". Their task was to stop leaks to the press, hence the name. What evolved was the plumbers running a series of dirty tricks against Nixon's enemies. Their first task was to dig up dirt to smear Daniel Ellsberg, the one who leaked the Pentagon Papers, by breaking into Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office. One of their more famous tricks was done to Democratic candidate Edmund Muskie. Two weeks before the New Hampshire primary, someone wrote a letter to a New Hampshire paper accusing Muskie of condoning the racial slur "Canucks". Muskie had a temper tantrum and cried on television, which eventually led to his demise and the rise of George McGovern, the very liberal candidate Nixon wanted to run against in the first place. The letter was written by someone at the White House as part of the plumbers operation, and Nixon won 49 states against McGovern. Dirty tricks work!

Watergate is known as Watergate because in a plot to bug Democratic headquarters in the Watergate office complex, 5 burglars were caught. Woodward and Bernstein first linked White House operative E. Howard Hunt to the burglary. Hunt's response to the inquiry from Woodward was to say "Good God!" and hang up the phone. Woodward and Bernstein kept digging and their paper the Washington Post kept publishing stories of how the White House was involved in the break-in, cover-up, and other dirty tricks. Woodward made use of a shadow source known as "Deep Throat" who guided their investigations but remained anonymous. The stories of White House corruption kept coming, and the White House denied everything. The rest of the country ignored them as Nixon won re-election in one of the largest landslides in history.

As Nixon began his second term in 1973 the evidence mounted so much that a Congressional committee was formed and a special prosecutor was named to investigate. White House counsel John Dean was the first high ranking official to tell the truth and admit that high ranking officials were deeply involved by telling Nixon and later the Watergate committee "There is a cancer growing on the Presidency." Then it was discovered that Nixon had a taping system that had all the recordings of all the conversations held in the oval office. Perhaps there was evidence of Nixon's involvement on the tapes? Ya think? Nixon did everything in his power to make sure the tapes never became public. When they did, an 18 ½ minute gap in the tapes was found. Their story, silly as could be, was that a secretary name Rose Mary Woods accidentally erased a section of the recording. Ya think there might be something interesting in those 18 ½ minutes? You can't make this stuff up! Turns out Woods only admitted to possibly erasing 5 minutes. We still don't know where the rest of the audio went. Then, since special prosecutor Archibald Cox was getting too close to the truth, Nixon's solution was

to fire him. On Saturday, October 20, 1973, high ranking administration officials Elliot Richardson and William Ruckelshaus both resigned as they refused to fire Cox. The dirty work was left to Robert Bork in what became known as “The Saturday Night Massacre.” Nixon then sheepishly claimed in a televised speech “I am not a crook!”

The Supreme Court in 1974 finally ruled that the tapes had to be turned over. Congress began to draw up articles of impeachment which would removed Nixon from office. Turns out Nixon was a crook and he had nowhere to go. On August 8, 1974 Nixon resigned as President. Vice President Gerald Ford was sworn in as President to fill the remainder of Nixon’s term in office. Exactly 1 month later on September 8, 1974 Ford issued a pardon to Nixon so that Nixon would not be prosecuted for his crimes and theoretically the country could move on.

The country survived Watergate and some laws are in place to prevent the complete abuse of power that Nixon orchestrated. But politicians still find their ways to abuse power and enrich themselves or to get re-elected. There must be some great perks to being a politician. Nixon because the wise old elder statesman as his advise was sought after even though he’d admitted his involvement in Watergate once out of office. Ford lost re-election in 1976 perhaps because the country couldn’t forgive him for pardoning Nixon. Deep Throat was finally revealed in 2005 to be FBI agent Mark Felt. And now any scandal when people in public life get caught now has the convenient “gate” added to it. Look up Billy-gate, Iran-gate, Contra-gate, Monica-gate, spy-gate, trooper-gate, and many others. It’s now part of our vernacular.

How do we size up Watergate? The whole unraveling of the scandal wouldn’t have been possible without Woodward and Bernstein. Were their lives in danger as Deep Throat warned them? Whatever the truth, Woodward and Bernstein showed incredible courage and persistence in untangling the mess. Deep Throat – his inside information was invaluable, but to be a source on a huge scandal then to remain anonymous for another 30 years?

Nixon and his men could not have thought that burglaries, slush funds, and dirty tricks were morally ok. Could it be their lust for power and their loyalty to Nixon the man and Nixon’s cause blinded them all? John Dean’s courage to speak up made it ok for many others to tell the truth no doubt. And what do we make of Gerald Ford – he pardoned the man who committed crimes from the highest office in the land.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Richard Nixon	F	Consumed with power and hatred of his enemies, Nixon dispensed with right and wrong early on and stayed on the dark side until his resignation.
The Plumbers	D	They did their job in blind obedience to their superiors, who went all the way up to Nixon.

Woodward and Bernstein	A	They latched onto the story of wrongdoing and showed persistence and courage even when no one believed them.
John Dean	A	He was the first to publically tell the truth about Watergate. He valued doing the right thing over blind loyalty.
Elliot Richardson, William Ruckelshaus	A	They resigned from the government instead of carrying out the order to fire the special prosecutor.
Gerald Ford	C	Ford is the toughest to grade. Nixon was guilty of crimes carried out as President and deserved to be prosecuted. However, you could argue for the good of the country ... Poor Gerry had no way out.

Hurricane Carter

*Pistols shots ring out in the barroom night
Enter Patty Valentine from the upper hall
She sees the bartender in a pool of blood
Cries out "My God they killed them all"
Here comes the story of the Hurricane
The man the authorities came to blame
For something that he never done
Put him in a prison cell but one time he could-a been
The champion of the world.*

These are the lyrics to the start of the song “Hurricane” by Bob Dylan. If you’ve been reading carefully up to this point, the story of Hurricane Carter is a perfect one for this book. It’s a clear case of a moral injustice made widely known by a popular song. This is a song written by no less than Bob Dylan, perhaps the greatest songwriter of our time. Dylan wrote such classics as “Blowin’ In The Wind” and “The Times They Are A Changing”, and when I first heard Hurricane it got my attention. The Carter story was also made into a movie in 1999 starring Denzel Washington.

The song and the movie are tour de forces telling the story of how Ruben “Hurricane” Carter was falsely accused and then convicted of a triple murder in Patterson, New Jersey in 1966. This story has all the components of the classic moral injustice – the petty criminals coerced to make a deal with the cops to testify for the prosecution, the racist cops needing to build a case against someone for a horrible triple murder, and framing a black man Ruben Carter with virtually no evidence. Then you have the trial and conviction with the all white jury, and Hurricane Carter spending his life behind bars for a crime he didn’t commit.

*Rubin Carter was falsely tried
The crime was murder 'one' guess who testified
Bello and Bradley and they both baldly lied
And the newspapers they all went along for the ride
How can the life of such a man
Be in the palm of some fool's hand ?
To see him obviously framed
Couldn't help but make me feel ashamed to live in a land
Where justice is a game.*

I would suspect most people heard the song, heard Dylan’s voice of authority on the subject, and couldn’t imagine why Carter wasn’t released immediately given it was so obvious he didn’t commit the crime. The song even implies the guilty ones were Bello and Bradley, but since they were white and Carter was black, it was just another symbol of the awful racism in our country. I will say however, it always bothered me that what really happened was Carter was retried for the same crime after the song came out. And

he was convicted again! How could that be when according to Dylan he was so obviously framed?

I started to research the events, and quickly found that there are many sides of the story. First of all, Carter was no angel. Before his boxing career began, he had a lengthy criminal record and was dishonorably discharged from the army. He was not a number 1 contender for the middle-weight crown. In fact, his boxing career had been going downhill at the time of the murders as he'd lost 7 fights over the previous year. Some considered Carter a civil rights hero, when in fact he had no credentials at all with the civil rights movement.

Never mind, let's get to the crime itself. Carter and two others were pulled over just minutes away from the crime scene (not in another part of town as described in Dylan's song). Carter was lying down in the back seat when the car was pulled over (why?) Bello actually identified Carter and described the getaway car in his statement to police. The man questioned in the hospital to try to identify Carter, according to Dylan, said "Wha'd you bring him in here for? He ain't the guy!" Actually, the man, Willie Marins, told police he didn't know. According to multiple news stories, Marins admitted later to at least 3 people that he could identify Carter as the killer but wouldn't do so publically because he feared for his life. Yes, there was some coercion by police to get Bello and Bradley to have consistent stories, and they were given breaks lighter sentences for their crimes to testify against Carter. But Carter's alibi was also inconsistent. The first jury was all white, but the second jury in the trial of 1976 had 2 black members, and they convicted him as well.

The story of Ruben Carter is shades of gray at best, and at worst Dylan's song and the movie are entertainment that ignore the facts. This is not to say that stories of corrupt cops, lying witnesses, and racism don't happen. The story of Hurricane Carter is just not one of them. Perhaps this is why Dylan has not performed "Hurricane" in public since 1976.

<http://www.graphicwitness.com/carter/song.html>

<http://www.graphicwitness.com/carter/moviepoints.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rubin_Carter

<http://members.shaw.ca/cartermyths/>

Moral Compass Scorecard – This one is difficult. We will never know for sure if Carter was guilty or not. The scorecard is flipped on its head if Carter really was innocent. I think he's guilty based on all that I read. What do you think?

Bob Dylan	C	I think he really thought Carter was innocent when he wrote the song. We can blame Dylan for jumping too quickly to get entertainment value.
Ruben Carter	F	He rode on the racism and apparent injustice to make his case.

AIDS

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SOPHIA

AMERICA RESPONDS TO AIDS



AIDS was and still is a public health crisis like no other. On the surface, AIDS is a terrible disease that began showing up in the early 1980s, and people afflicted with the disease died. 100% of them died. Thousands of people died in the early 1980s while medical science struggled to find the answers. More importantly our society and our political system gave AIDS the big “nada” when it came to priority, and money to tackle this terrible disease. How many lives could have been saved in the early years if AIDS had been given the priority it should have?

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome and is now understood to be caused by the HIV virus. A person afflicted with AIDS has their immune system weakened to the point where they are vulnerable to opportunistic infections that people with healthy immune systems are not. In the early 1980s gay men in New York and California began showing up with awful infections and cancers. No one understood what it was or how it spread. The disease didn’t even have a name for a time.

What we did understand is it affected gay men. It became known as a gay disease, or a gay plague. The unofficial name for a while was Gay-related Immune Deficiency, or GRID. The common wisdom, or ignorance as it were, about the disease was that it was a gay disease and if you stayed away from gay people you were safe. Even though it was known that it wasn’t limited to gay men, and that 100% of the victims died, there was no massive effort to educate the public on the real facts of the disease. More importantly,

there was virtually no research money put into the scientific community to stop it. The conservative family values Reagan administration wouldn't touch it. After all, it was a gay disease.

In the absence of real factual information communicated to the public, the religious right filled the vacuum. Jerry Falwell, leader of the Christian right's Moral Majority, gave us this nugget:

AIDS is not just God's punishment for homosexuals; it is God's punishment for the society that tolerates homosexuals.

In a society that supposedly values tolerance of people, how was Falwell's bigotry allowed to stand? He certainly doesn't represent my moral values. But we digress...

Finally the disease was given the name AIDS, which didn't brand it as a gay disease. Eventually it was discovered that people receiving blood transfusions were getting infected as well. The agencies in charge of the blood supply resisted full screening of the blood supply for the AIDS virus even after a reliable test could be performed. How many lives could have been saved if the blood supply had been tested right away?

The subject of the gay bathhouses is a tricky one. A bathhouse is a club where men can go and have sex with other men. In the days before AIDS bathhouses were a place where gay men could find willing sexual partners in a safe place without facing the bigotry of the straight world. Once it was known that AIDS was spread by sexual contact, it was clear that many gay men had become infected by sexual partners in the bathhouses. The cities of New York and San Francisco moved to close the bathhouses but there was a lot of resistance from the gay community. One could argue that men would still have unprotected sex outside the bathhouses, or that the bathhouses could provide free condoms and supervise men to prevent the spread of AIDS. In the end, it's clear the cities had no choice but to close the bathhouses.

Scientists struggled to find the answers to what caused AIDS in the early 1980s. Was it a new virus? Was it a virus already known about? Dr. Robert Gallo is one of the world's foremost biomedical researchers and is credited with co-discovering the AIDS virus along with a team of French researchers at the Pasteur Institute in Paris. The truth is the French researchers had isolated the AIDS virus nearly a year before Gallo published his results. The crucial blood test to determine if someone had the AIDS virus was likely delayed for a year, all because Gallo wanted to receive the credit for the discovery. Gallo and the Pasteur Institute battled for 3 years after that over patents, when energy should have been spent trying to conquer the disease. How many lives could have been saved if Gallo had put his ego aside and done the right thing for the common good?

The tragedy of AIDS wasn't that our population was infected with a deadly virus. The tragedy was so little was done to stop it in the early crucial period that thousands of people got sick and died needlessly. From the non-existent research dollars to the failure to screen the blood supply to society's blaming the gay lifestyle, AIDS was allowed to spread when it could have been stopped. President Reagan, whether you agreed with his

politics or not, could deliver a speech on television that could move the country. Imagine if Reagan had gone on television in about 1982 and delivered this speech:

My fellow Americans – AIDS is the biggest public health crisis of our time. Right now, anyone who contracts the AIDS virus will die. It is not limited to gay people. Anyone who has sexual contact with an infected person, heterosexual or homosexual, will get the AIDS virus. Anyone who receives a blood transfusion with tainted blood will get the AIDS virus.

I am today committing 1 billion dollars to the scientific community for AIDS research. I am committing another 1 billion dollars to public education about AIDS. Together my friends, we are going to make AIDS impotent and obsolete!

Of course it didn't happen that way. Reagan was completely silent about AIDS until 1987, after more than 25,000 people had died of AIDS. Reagan was silent even after his close friend and fellow actor Rock Hudson died of AIDS in 1985. And yes it came out that Rock Hudson, the handsome womanizing leading man in so many movies, was gay.

Activity on AIDS and the public perception has evolved greatly in the years since the early 1980s. HIV-AIDS is no longer a death sentence. In 1991 basketball star Earvin "Magic" Johnson was diagnosed with HIV. The world saw that this very public figure contracted HIV and was not gay or an intravenous drug user. Johnson and millions of others have been able to live with HIV by taking a combination of drugs that prevent the disease from becoming full-blown AIDS. Public education in the US has greatly reduced the rate of infections. However, in the poor countries of Africa the rate of infection was startling. Funds for developing the drugs and getting them to faraway places like Africa have increased greatly over the years, as the facts have become widely accepted. Of all people, George W Bush committed \$15 billion over five to fight the disease worldwide in his 2003 state of the union address. Rock star Bono has been instrumental in pressuring politicians to continue the commitment. Bono credits Bush for the progress made on AIDS, though the two would certainly be on opposite sides of most political issues.

AIDS was a tragedy in the early 1980s when our inaction and fear-mongering caused so many people to needlessly get sick and die. I'm glad to say today that HIV-AIDS is no longer considered a gay disease or one that people contract because of their "sins". Today governments and charitable organizations are working together to eradicate this terrible disease.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

President Reagan	D	His administration stayed silent on AIDS until 1987 for political reasons even after thousands of people had died.
Robert Gallo	F	Gallo's ego and desire for credit in discovering the AIDS virus delayed scientific progress for years and no doubt cost lives.

Gay Community	A	The gay community endured and still endures terrible bigotry made much worse by the AIDS crisis.
George W Bush	A	For his commitment of funds to eradicate AIDS he deserves an A. Other decisions during his presidency, not so much.

Aid To The Contras



Around 1985 I got really fired up for the first time about a political issue. The issue was whether Congress was going to appropriate money to this group of essentially terrorists who were trying to overthrow the government of Nicaragua.

It all started with the revolution in 1979 when the Sandinistas came to power in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas were, dare I say it, oh no --- socialists, or even worse communists. Our right wing government led by Reagan was intent on getting rid of the Sandinistas by any means necessary.- just as they had with Salvadore Allende's Chili in 1973. Aiding the Contras became the way for the administration to accomplish their goals without sending American soldiers. So money was funneled covertly through the CIA to the Nicaraguan Contras. But when Congress found out, they banned the covert funding and Reagan had to go to Congress and overtly ask for funding.

A Human Rights Watch report found that the Contras were guilty of targeting health care clinics and health care workers for assassination; kidnapping civilians; torturing and executing civilians,

including children, who were captured in combat; raping women; indiscriminately attacking civilians and civilian homes; seizing civilian property; and burning civilian houses in captured towns.^{[191](#)}

The Contras turned out to be a disorganized untrained band of losers who never succeeded in taking any territory inside Nicaragua. However, there were many documented cases of the Contras killing, maiming, or torturing innocent people. But it mattered not to the administration, whose anti-communist cold war ideology trumped all other considerations. They manipulated the public by referring to the Contras as “freedom fighters” and conjuring up images of the Soviet Union having a foothold in our own back yard. Pretty soon every country south of Texas would be Communist red if we don’t send aid to the Contras.

This was the first time in my adult life I’d seen a government completely try to manipulate public opinion by using Communist fear mongering. To me, it was a case of right and wrong, good and evil. It’s not our business to be overthrowing governments just because we don’t like their politics. But especially not with a band of terrorists who are conveniently renamed “freedom fighters” but turn out to be most repugnant to our American values.

Aid to the contras in 1985 and 1986 had its twists and turns. I think the sequence went like this:

Congress says no the \$14 million for the Contras
Ortega visits New York and gets expensive new glasses.
Ortega goes to Moscow to beg for aid from his friends, the evil empire
Congress approves \$27 million for the Contras, because Ortega went to Moscow

Iran/Contra gets exposed. Oops, now the people know they traded arms for hostages to Iran, and diverted the proceeds of the arms sale to the Contras. You can’t make this stuff up. More later ...

Nicaragua did get rid of the Sandinistas – by having an opposition candidate win an election. What a concept! And the collapse of the Soviet Union a few years later made the Nicaragua story seem so foolish – that we should fear a tiny little country of peasants who are desperately poor just because their political ideology is different from ours.

Moral Compass Scorecard

Ronald Reagan	D	Blinded by his anti-Communist ideology and probably shielded from the truth about the Contras, Reagan still felt he was staking the moral high ground.
The Contras	F	The “freedom fighters” were essentially terrorists murdering and torturing Nicaraguans in the quest for territory and American dollars.
Congress	D-	Both Democrats and Republicans knew aid to the Contras was wrong, but were

		so afraid of being branded “soft on Communism” they voted yes
The Public	B-	I think the public was ahead of the politicians as they saw through the “freedom fighters” smoke screen. Still many were caught up in the Cold War fear of Communism.

Iran Contra Affair

I'll never forget first hearing about Iran-Contra. Within a short time we had a revelation that Reagan had traded arms for hostages to Iran, then in an unbelievable twist, they'd sent money from the arms sale to the Contras in Nicaragua. Reagan had won 49 states in the 1984 election, and was now running a foreign policy based on misinformation, disinformation, half-truths, and outright lies. And he was getting away with it. The revelations about Iran-Contra brought the whole deception operation down to earth.

Ronald Reagan was one of the most popular presidents in our history. His ability to go on the television and persuade Americans that his conservative, anti-communist policies were right was unmatched. He could argue for supporting any thug in a faraway place as long as they were fighting communism. At the same time, he could argue for "constructive engagement" with the morally bankrupt Apartheid system in South Africa. However, two problems still existed early in Reagan's 2nd term which no progress was being made – we had hostages held in Lebanon with no end in sight, and the Nicaraguan Contras were making no progress with overthrowing the Nicaraguan government.

Reagan had personal meetings with family members of the hostages, and being a human being he felt he had to do something. The stated policy was that there would be no negotiations with terrorists. This makes sense as a policy, but can you imagine looking into the eyes of a hostage family member and saying "there's nothing we can do?" Reagan must have been so anguished that he felt it was worth risking a break with the policy to try to do something. When the offer came from Iran for a "strategic opening" i.e. sell arms to Iran, and they'll do something about the hostages, Reagan went for it. I'm sure he hoped it would never become public.

Meanwhile, things weren't going well for the Nicaraguan Contras, and Reagan let it be known in his administration that the Contras should be funded by any means necessary. In the deep corner of the White House was Oliver North, the can-do military guy whose job it was to carry out the orders of the Commander-in-chief, even if the orders were completely illegal. When money became available since they had overcharged Iran for the arms, Oliver North thought diverting this extra money to the Contras was "a neat idea". They kept this from the President so Reagan could deny it if it ever came out.

Well, oops, the whole thing did come out. First, the arms for hostages deal then the diverting of money to the Contras. Embarrassing! Just like Watergate, a President can abuse power as long as it never comes out. Reagan's power of persuasion was powerless against the onslaught of media scrutiny after it came out. First he said he didn't trade arms for hostages, then he said "mistakes were made". Many speeches later, Reagan looked like the boy at the principle's office saying "but I didn't mean to..."

The moral compass rating on the "arms for hostages" deal with Iran is a real brain twister. The policy said no deals with terrorists, plus there was an active arms embargo against Iran. However, Reagan felt the anguish of the hostage family members and

wanted to do anything to help. How many of us would have made the same decision, hoping the contradiction in policy would never come out. Reagan was then caught in a bind when it came out. Naturally it would have been easier if he'd come clean in his first speech and said it was a mistake, but I think it's human nature to try to lie and cover up when you make a mistake.

As for the Contra part of Iran-Contra, I still believe the President didn't know. North and Poindexter admitted the President had to be kept out of the loop to avoid bringing down the presidency if it ever came out. As for North's blind obedience to the Commander-in-chief, I'm sorry. The military code says you are bound to obey all "lawful" orders from your superior officer. Funneling money to the Contras in a secret shadow government outside of Congressional oversight cannot be justified. That's why we have checks and balances in our government. One branch cannot go too far without oversight of another branch of government. That's in our constitution last time I checked, the same constitution that people like Oliver North say they will defend with their life. And we should mention again the lack of morality in aiding the Contras in the first place. The Contras were called by Reagan the "moral equivalent of our founding fathers", yet were among the most notorious human rights abusers in history. People look back at Reagan today as one of the great Presidents, who lowered taxes and ended the Cold War. Obviously I see his eight years as less than great. The Iran arms for hostages part of the affair was truly a brain twister in its moral justification. The Contra part and aid to the Contras in general was one of the most morally bankrupt policies ever put over on the American people.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Ronald Reagan	C	The Iran arms deal for freeing of hostages – that's a real twister. Because of his compassion for the wellbeing of the hostages, Reagan made a deal with the devil in selling arms to Iran. On the contra part I believe he was out of the loop.
Oliver North	F	North made the case he was fighting for the moral high ground, but so swept up in his America first anti-Communist doctrine he fell in to the moral bankruptcy of supporting the Contras.
Congress	B-	Congress did its best to bring out the truth, but many of the blowhards in Congress preferred to promote themselves as opposed to finding out what happened in Iran/Contra.

Stoning In Iran

The practice of stoning women in countries like Iran certainly compares with the Nazis. One such example was dramatized in the movie “The Stoning of Soraya M”. Here a woman was accused of cheating on her husband, and she is tried, convicted, and sentenced to death by stoning by a tribunal of all men including her husband who just wanted to be with another woman.

If you’ve ever thought about death by stoning, it could be the most brutal death imaginable. The woman is put in a hole, and all of the town’s people (who’ve been worked up into a frenzy by the accusations against this woman) throw stones at her until she dies by bleeding to death. According to Iranian law, the stones must be big enough to inflict injury and cause maximum pain, but not so large that they would cause the victim to die immediately.

What kind of value system is this to allow for execution of women by stoning? I realize Iranian culture is much different than what Westerners are familiar with, but I cannot imagine what drives this. It says that someone who commits adultery or is even accused of adultery, because that sin is so great, can be sentenced to the most brutal death imaginable. Human rights groups have denounced that practice of death by stoning, but the practice continues to this day.

Needs a rewrite. Also use

<http://www.politicsdaily.com/2009/05/13/he-who-casts-the-first-stone/>

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Soraya M		
Freidoune Sahebjam (journalist)		
Ghorban-Ali (husband)		
Iranian Rule of Law		
Zahra Khanum (Soraya’s aunt)		
Local Mulas		
Townpeople		

McMartin Trial

The story of the McMartin preschool abuse trial is one that touches every raw nerve. On one hand, it is a story about children being sexually abused and the hysteria those accusations create. On the other hand it is about how the legal system can start a train running and go so far off the rails that all of the facts cannot bring it back.

Virginia McMartin ran a preschool center in Manhattan Beach, California. She hired members of her family and church to run the center, and the school had a wonderful reputation in the town. In August of 1983 one of the students at the center came home with redness on his rectal area, and his mother, Judy Johnson, concluded that it must be from sexual abuse that occurred at the preschool.

Johnson reported to the police her suspicions that her son Matthew had been sexually abused by McMartin's grandson Ray Buckey, who worked at the daycare center. It's not clear what Matthew admitted to his mother. The facts were that Matthew had irritation in his rectal area, that Ray Buckey sometimes photographed the children, and that Buckey sometimes didn't wear underwear so his genitals were visible. Johnson's story to the police was that her son had been photographed naked, tied up, and this was done to other children as well. Johnson was told to take her son to specialists in child abuse at the Children's Institute International (CII) at UCLA. From that point on, the facts and reality were completely abandoned in order to publicly try and convict the McMartin family of the most heinous crime.

Kee McFarlane was the lead specialist at CII who interviewed Matthew and later on the rest of the children at the McMartin school. She was a so-called expert in the techniques of getting children to talk about abuse. She used games with dolls to try to get children to talk about what was hard for them to talk about. Only McFarlane took these games to the extreme, introducing naked dolls with their genitals exposed. All the children denied that there was any abuse at the day care center, but McFarlane essentially coerced the children to invent the abuse that went on at the daycare center. She's praise the children who eventually said the McMartin staff would play games with their genitals. She called them stupid if they denied that it went on. And so built the case.

The entire McMartin staff was put into jail in what started one of the longest trials in US history. At the same time, a number of special reports from TV reporter Wayne Satz gave the accounts of over 60 children at the McMartin daycare who'd been abused. He reported in great detail the children's accounts of what occurred at the school, and the public was in a frenzy. Meanwhile the D.A.s office aggressively pursued charges on all of the McMartins without any evidence other than the children's accounts, which had been coerced by MacFarlane's techniques. But the DA was running for re-election and nailing those awful child abusers the McMartins would go a long way. The DA's office was led by the passionate Lael Rubin who aggressively pursued more cases, and they had a total of 208 counts of child abuse against the staff at McMartin. The McMartins received death threats while their school building was vandalized and set on fire.

At this point you'd have to ask why no one raised their voice and asked "what if the children's stories weren't true and nothing had happened at the McMartin school?" But no one did and the story goes even further off the rails after that. Judy Johnson, the original accuser and the one who the whole thing began with, turns out is a paranoid schizophrenic and Matthew was sodomized likely by his father. This information and a rambling incoherent letter from Judy Johnson are withheld from defense attorney Danny Davis and the public defender Dean Gitz. Then as more stories come out from the TV reporter Wayne Satz, it turns out that Satz and Kee MacFarlane are carrying on an intimate relationship (hence all of the inside details from the children). You can't make this stuff up!

All of the McMartin staff including 78 year old Virginia McMartin were put in jail. Eventually after years of pretrial all but Ray Buckey and his mother 57 year old Peggy McMartin Buckey were released. There still was no hard evidence other than the children's accounts to Kee MacFarlane. They too were inconsistent. Some accused Ray Buckey of things that happened when Ray Buckey didn't work at the school. Plus the children's stories got more bizarre and fanciful. There were stories of going to churches and going to cemeteries to dig up graves. Still no one questioned if the stories were true.

In 1987 the trial finally began, after all the charges had to be dropped for everyone but Ray and Peggy due to lack of evidence. Defense attorneys Davis and Gits petitioned to have a change of venue, based on a survey that found 97.5% of the people in the area believed the McMartins were guilty. This was denied. By this time Judy Johnson had committed suicide so the whole first-hand account (and her lack of credibility) of the first case of child abuse was gone. Two of the lawyers in the DAs office resigned their jobs as they no longer believed in the case. But Lael Rubin pressed on. There had to be a smoking gun. And the state of California had already spent \$15 million prosecuting the case. Even when it came out the prosecution had withheld the incriminating letters from Judy Johnson, the trial pressed on.

The prosecution's case rested on the children's accounts of events at the McMartin school. The defense was not allowed access to the videotaped interviews with the children, where it showed clearly that the children first denied that anything had happened but were called stupid until they admitted that sodomy, oral, and anal sex was going on, based on what the children were coerced to say happened when playing games with dolls that had exposed genitals. There was conflicting accounts from doctors who examined the children for evidence of any genital penetration. The prosecution brought in a fellow inmate of Ray Buckey's, who claimed that Buckey had admitted these things to him. But the inmate was so transparently looking for a lighter sentence deal he had no credibility.

By 1990, 7 years after the initial accusation by Judy Johnson, the trial finally went to the jury. Of the 52 counts of child abuse, the jury hung on 13 counts against Ray, and acquitted the McMartins on the rest. After 7 years the state had no convictions against the McMartins. But undeterred, Lael Rubin retried Ray Buckey on the remaining counts in a trials that began 5 months later. That trial also ended up in a hung jury.

None of the McMartin family was convicted of child abuse, but their lives were completely ruined. They lost their daycare center. They had to endure jail time and constant abuse from the public who had tried, convicted, and sentenced these people for a non-existent crime. Why are we so willing to go into a mob mentality and publicly convict these people? Or was this a perfect storm of a crazy woman, an overzealous prosecutor, a psychologist using questionable techniques with young children, and an aggressive TV reporter whipping the public into a frenzy. I guess the truth becomes irrelevant when a good witchhunt is going on.

Moral Compass Scorecard

Virginia McMartin	A	
Ray Buckey	A	
Judy Johnson	D	
Kee Macfarlane	F	
Wayne Satz	F	
Danny Davis	B+	
Lael Rubin	F	
The Public	D-	

Willie Horton Ads

The year was 1988. After 8 years of Reagan, his Vice President George H.W. Bush had won the nomination but was 17 points behind in the polls to Democrat Michael Dukakis. That was until the Willie Horton attack ads began to air. The first one read like this:

Bush and Dukakis on crime.

Bush supports the death penalty for first degree murderers.

Dukakis not only opposed the death penalty, he allowed first degree murderers to have weekend passes from prison

One was Willie Horton who murdered a boy in a robbery, stabbing him 19 times

Despite a life sentence, Horton received 10 weekend passes from prison

Horton fled, kidnapped a young couple, stabbing the man, and repeatedly raping his girlfriend

Weekend prison passes. Dukakis on crime.

A second ad, known as the revolving door ad, read like this:

As governor Michael Dukakis vetoed mandatory sentences for drug dealers.

He vetoed the death penalty.

His revolving door prison policy gave weekend furloughs to first degree murderers not eligible for parole

While out, many committed other crimes like kidnapping and rape, and many are still at large

Now Michael Dukakis wants to do for America what he's done for Massachusetts

America can't afford that risk

In both cases, the text of the ad does not do justice to the impact these ads had. On the surface reading the text, it looks like the Bush campaign had a disagreement with the policy of allowing criminals to have weekend passes. They were trying to say "we're tougher on criminals" etc. However, there's no way these ads could have erased a 17 point lead in the polls based on a difference in prison policy.

These ads cut right to the heart of the most racist fears Americans have. The first ad showed Willie Horton's angry, scowling face with the narrator saying the words kidnapped, stabbing, and raping. Willie Horton, of course, is a black man. The second ad didn't mention Willie Horton by name, but cleverly shows a line of prisoners walking out of prison, and the only prisoner that looks up at the camera is a black man. Just like the daisy girl ad in 1964, people had a visceral reaction as the ads were repeated over and over by the news media giving them way more free air time than the Bush campaign could ever have hoped for. In 1964, the reaction was a vote for Goldwater meant we'd be in a nuclear war. In 1988, a vote for Dukakis meant black killers and rapists would be running rampant on the streets of my home town.

Although the Bush campaign denied responsibility for these ads, it was clear campaign manager Lee Atwater was behind the Willie Horton ads. Atwater had a reputation for dirty politics and this was the dirtiest trick of all. It didn't matter that the ads were criticized for the racism they brought out. People reacted to it out of fear and it didn't matter who would make a better president. Dukakis didn't do himself any favors. As the ads were played over and over, Dukakis tried to stay above the fray and ignored the ads until his 17 point lead had turned into a deficit. Bush was elected rather easily.

This type of dirty manipulative campaign ads have now become the norm. The public hates negative ads. They deplore candidates twisting facts and lying about their opponents. They especially hate when one candidate uses a particularly emotional issue to twist the facts and scar their opponent. But it works.

Moral Compass Scorecard

George H W Bush	D	I'm sure it wasn't his idea to run the Willie Horton ads, but he went along with it.
Michael Dukakis	B	Perhaps Dukakis should get a better grade for taking the high road.
Lee Atwater	F	Atwater would do anything to win an election for his candidate, and with the Willie Horton ads he found a way to appeal to the public's worst racist qualities.
Willie Horton	F	Horton was a violent criminal who no doubt had no morals whatsoever. Is it even relevant to the issue? Atwater would have found another violent black criminal to hang on Dukakis.
American Public	D	Shame on the public for falling for this racist manipulation.

Charles Stuart Case

On October 23, 1989 Charles and Carol Stuart left their childbirth class in Boston. Carol Stuart was murdered that night, and the terrible events that followed were like something out of a Hitchcock mystery. Unfortunately racial tensions still present in our society caused the investigation to veer so far from the truth that a black man was nearly framed for the perfect murder.

Charles Stuart never wanted a child and by the night of the murder he'd taken out a large amount of life insurance for his wife. What really happened that night is that Charles fatally shot his wife. He also shot himself and made it look like the couple had been robbed and then shot by a common criminal. It was the perfect crime if Charles could get away with it. He no longer had the wife and child he didn't want, and would get a boatload of insurance money.

The events that followed spiraled out of control, and had to make everyone take a good hard look at their own attitudes towards race. Stuart described the perpetrator as a black man with about 5'5" 160 pounds with a raspy voice. The story became a national story and an everyday story in the Boston area. A white suburban couple expecting a child was attacked by a black thug. Finding the suspect and convicting him became an obsession. We were all rooting for the police even if they had to question every black man in the city. And they did stop and search every black man within a 10 mile radius of the crime who somewhat met the description given by Stuart. Who cared if their civil liberties were violated. The eyes of the nation were watching. Eventually police settled on a man named Willie Bennett as their criminal suspect, and Stuart picked him out of a lineup. The perfect crime was now set up perfectly with Bennett being charged as the villain. Calls for reinstatement of the death penalty were heard as the case moved towards what everyone wanted to see and believe – a black thug convicted for the brutal murder of Carol Stuart. The only problem was it wasn't true.

The perfect crime finally fell apart when Charles' brother Matthew went to the police on January 3, 1990 with the story of what he knew was the truth. Charles had shot his wife and himself, and Matthew had taken the gun and other valuables and thrown them in the river. The next day Charles, now the prime suspect, committed suicide by jumping off the Tobin Bridge in Chelsea.

I remember the events unfolding in 1989. How quickly the local news and the newspapers fed the frenzy of finding the black man who committed this awful crime. No one thought anything was wrong with the police stopping and questioning every black man in the area with no evidence whatsoever. No one except the black residents of the neighborhood that is. Everyone was ready to fry Willie Bennett in the electric chair after he became the suspect, long before a trial and even though Massachusetts does not have the death penalty. Convict the guy today, and reinstate the death penalty just for him. This was how we the public would get vindication. I have to think the racially charged climate of Boston fed this frenzy. What if Stuart had fingered a white man? Would the

police have been so willing to search every white man in the area. Would the public have cried for the death penalty?

The aftermath of the Stuart case was a mixed bag. The family of Carol Stuart established a foundation to provide scholarships to Mission Hill residents. However, police nor mayor ever formally apologized to residents for their brutal violations of civil liberties in trying to find the black suspect.

Last time I checked, we live in a land where our constitution protects us against unreasonable searches, and we're innocent until proven guilty. Why is it we can abandon our principles in a minute when we're presented with what looks like a suspect to a heinous crime? Why were we so willing to believe everything about Stuart's story when he accused a black guy? Even though we'd made progress on race relations since the civil rights movement, a black guy murdering a white suburban pregnant woman fits right into our framework of racial prejudice. We've got to hope that years later we're not so quick to abandon our principles and that we the public and the press examine everything before we draw conclusions about high profile cases like the Stuart case.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Charles Stuart		
Matthew Stuard		
Woodward and Bernstein		
John Dean		
Elliot Richardson		
Gerald Ford		

Clarence Thomas Anita Hill Hearings

The year was 1991. Supreme Court justice Thurgood Marshall had announced his retirement, and President George H.W. Bush had announced his nominee would be 43 year old Clarence Thomas. Thomas' confirmation to the Supreme Court would maintain the racial makeup of the court, being that both he and Marshall were African American. However, Thomas would decidedly move the court to the right. Marshall led the legal fights for civil rights in the 50s and 60s and was a dependable liberal vote on the court since his appointment in 1967. Thomas clearly would vote with the conservatives on issues like affirmative action and abortion. This is how our system works. We had a Republican President who has the right to appoint whomever he likes, and it's the Senate's job to determine if the nominee is suitable to sit on the highest court in the land for a lifetime appointment.

Anita Hill had worked with Thomas 10 years prior to his nomination to the court. She was an aide to Thomas at the Department of Education and the Equal Opportunity Commission. Hill provided testimony behind closed doors to the Senate committee considering Thomas' nomination, and Hill's testimony included charges that Thomas had sexually harassed her. These charges were investigated by the FBI and apparently concluded that the charges were inconclusive. The public would never have known about the sexual harassment charges, and Thomas' appointment would have sailed through the Senate. Except that Hill's statement was leaked to reporters 2 days before the Senate was to vote on Thomas' confirmation.

At this point, everything went crazy. The news on every channel turned to Anita Hill's charges, and the Senate had no choice but to bring her to Washington for public hearings. The 3 days of hearings from Oct. 11-13 in 1991 were televised from start to finish and riveted the nation. This was the largest case of "he said she said" our country has ever known.

Hill testified calmly and articulately, detailing how Thomas had repeatedly asked her out on dates, and had spoken in detail about sexual matters and pornography.

I declined the invitation to go out socially with him and explained to him that I thought it would jeopardize what at the time I considered to be a very good working relationship. I had a normal social life with other men outside of the office. I believed then, as now, that having a social relationship with a person who was supervising my work would be ill-advised. I was very uncomfortable with the idea and told him so.

His conversations were very vivid. He spoke about acts that he had seen in pornographic films involving such matters as women having sex with animals and films showing group sex or rape scenes. He talked about pornographic materials depicting individuals with large penises or large breasts involved in various sex acts. On several occasions, Thomas told me graphically of his own sexual prowess.

Source: <http://gos.sbc.edu/h/hill.html>

Thomas took the approach of deny, deny, and he accused the press, the Senate, and the public of going after him in an old fashioned lynching.

This is not an opportunity to talk about difficult matters privately or in a closed environment. This is a circus. It's a national disgrace. And from my standpoint, as a black American, it is a high-tech lynching for uppity blacks who in any way deign to think for themselves, to do for themselves, to have different ideas, and it is a message that unless you kowtow to an old order, this is what will happen to you. You will be lynched, destroyed, caricatured by a committee of the U.S. Senate rather than hung from a tree.

Source: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2010/10/20/national/main6975679.shtml>

The Senate hearings were characterized by tough grilling of Anita Hill by partisan Republican Senators, particularly Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania. Specter repeatedly questioned Hill on why she didn't file charges and why she continued to have contact with Thomas years later. Thomas had a number of witnesses testify on his behalf that they saw no evidence of any improper behavior on Thomas' part. Curiously, another employee of Thomas' Angela Wright made statements to Senate staffers about being harassed in much the same way that Hill did, but she was not allowed to testify.

After the 3 crazy days of public hearings, the full Senate voted on Thomas' nomination to the Supreme Court, and it was the closest vote in history. 52 Senators believed Thomas and voted yes, while 48 Senators believed Hill and voted no. Thomas, despite who you believed, now held one of the 9 seats on the Supreme Court for life.

The story of Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill through the lens of the moral compass is not clear. It totally depends on who you believe. The moral outrage of one of these individuals lying to America while millions looked on is clear. Who was the truth-teller, sticking their neck out in front of the TV lights? Who was the liar? Clearly the 100 Senators chose who to believe as they cast their votes for Thomas' confirmation. The millions of people watching no doubt chose who they believed. Isn't it interesting that the Senators voted almost completely on party lines. 41 of 43 Republicans voted for Thomas, essentially saying they believed Hill to be the liar. 46 of 57 Democrats voted against Thomas, essentially saying they believed Thomas to be the liar. In fact, the nearly party line vote isn't surprising at all. In today's even more politically charged environment, a person looking back at this vote would be struck not by party line vote but by the fact that 11 Democrats voted for Thomas! What were they thinking? In a case of he said she said like Thomas-Hill, the 100 Senators and most of the rest of us believe who we want to believe.

I've thought long and hard about the Thomas Hill hearings when it happened and in the years since. I've always come down on the side of Anita Hill telling the truth, not only because I'm a liberal and didn't want to see arch-Conservative Thomas on the Supreme Court for life. Why would Anita Hill bring these charges if they weren't true? Was it a racist thing as Thomas charged? Anita Hill is African American just like Thomas. Anita Hill was a conservative Republican so from her point of view there was no political vendetta. She didn't choose to make the charges public. If her private testimony wasn't

leaked to the press, Hill wouldn't have been asked to publically testify and the story would never have been public. What did Hill have to gain by telling lies about Thomas' sexual harassment in secret, then telling the same story in public after being required to come to Washington when the story became public? Many of the Republican Senators tried to link up a conspiracy theory of liberals using Hill and her story to bring down Thomas, a Supreme Court nominee they didn't like. Where's the evidence of that?

Thomas on the other hand had every reason to deny and lie. He was a nominee for a lifetime appointment to the Supreme Court. If he could deny and lie through the hearings and get enough Senators to believe him, he'd be on the Supreme Court for life. Talk about motivation to lie! Thomas for his part evoked the dark days of the lynch mobs to equate what was done to him. If you believe Hill was sexually harassed, Thomas' evoking of the lynch mobs is an insult to all the black people who suffered racial persecution.

The Senators on the judiciary committee behaved outrageously. All white men, they attempted to bury Hill's story and not make it public. Only when the story was leaked did they decide to invite Hill in for public hearings. Once the hearings started, the Republican Senators, especially Arlen Specter, treated Hill like a liar from the start. Why did she not file sexual harassment charges? Why did she continue to have contact with Thomas after they ceased working together? It was as if Specter knew exactly what it was like to be a woman in Hill's position. None of these white men could ever know how they'd react being in Hill's situation.

Sexual harassment in the workplace was brought to the forefront of the country's awareness by these hearings. Anita Hill became a role model for thousands of women who'd suffered similar harassment. It was now ok to speak up and not tolerate this type of outrageous behavior. Anita Hill faced up to her tormenter and to a tribunal of Senators, all men, who sought to discredit her. After the Anita Hill hearings, many more cases of sexual harassment were brought by women. Women's groups gained tremendous notoriety in their fight to make the workplace safe for women and to make the workplace an equal playing field for women. This is a good thing and we can thank Anita Hill for paving the way.

The last footnote of the Anita Hill Clarence Thomas story is the ridiculous phone call from Thomas' wife Ginni to Hill in 2010.

"Good morning Anita Hill, it's Ginni Thomas," it said. "I just wanted to reach across the airwaves and the years and ask you to consider something. I would love you to consider an apology sometime and some full explanation of why you did what you did with my husband."

Source: <http://abovethelaw.com/2010/10/ginny-thomas-sets-bar-for-the-most-bizarre-thing-ever-done-by-spouse-of-a-sitting-supreme-court-justice/>

Ginni Thomas is a right-wing tea party activist whose views on woman's rights are likely more conservative than Atilla the Hun. Of course she believes her husband, but to expect Hill to apologize? That's chutzbah!

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Clarence Thomas		
Anita Hill		
Senators		
Ginny Thomas		

Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky

President Bill Clinton is remembered as the man who beat George Bush in 1992, presided over a booming economy in the 1990s, and nearly was impeached and removed from office in 1998. The documents for impeachment no doubt spelled out their many reasons but it came down to Clinton having an affair with a young intern in the White House named Monica Lewinsky.

The story of Bill Clinton getting caught literally with his pants down is one that is stranger than fiction. A few times in the book I've used the term "you can't make this stuff up" and this is one of them. Bill Clinton was a known womanizer his entire political life. As the 1992 presidential campaign heated up, so did the story of Paula Jones, a woman who accused Clinton of sexual harassment and who brought a law suit against Clinton that dogged him throughout his presidency. Then there was Kathleen Willey who accused Clinton of groping her sexually in a private meeting while he was President. Clinton's enemies tried their best to use these womanizing stories to bring him down but somehow he got elected in 1992 and re-elected in 1996 rather easily. Perhaps private affairs of a man who is President simply don't matter to the public if he's doing a good job as President.

Clinton's affair with 25 year old intern Monica Lewinsky began in 1995 and continued on and off through 1997. Did they actually have sex in the oval office? Does it matter? It was an extra-marital affair right in the White House. It would have remained secret from the American public had it not been for the special prosecutor Kenneth Starr who was spending millions of taxpayer money trying to find dirt from Whitewater, a real-estate deal gone bad way back in Clinton's past. Enter Linda Tripp, which hated Clinton, knew about the Lewinsky affair, and wanted nothing more than to bring Clinton down. She managed to befriend Monica Lewinsky and get her to admit details of the Clinton affair while wearing a wire. Soon the Whitewater investigation which was going nowhere turned into an investigation of Clinton's affair with Lewinsky. Unbelievably, Monica Lewinsky took Linda Tripp's advice and saved the semen stains on a dress she wore, which became hard evidence for the affair. Long story short, they impeached Clinton but the Senate voted down removing Clinton from office. Votes to impeach went almost completely on party lines (no surprise), while 80% of the public was against impeaching the President for having an affair.

The whole tawdry affair brings into question what our morals are and what constitutes a crime that a President should be removed from office for. Clearly Clinton's behavior was wrong. The bible and virtually every measure of moral compass says adultery is wrong. Clinton had nowhere to run even if his statement "I did not have sex with that woman" is technically accurate. He had an extra-marital affair by anyone's definition and it's wrong. The question is, does a private personal affair qualify as something he should have been impeached for? Others would say Clinton lied and obstructed justice during the whole affair. But did the whole investigation have anything to do with Clinton's acts as President? Or was the whole thing a partisan attempt of Clinton's enemies to bring him down which had nothing to do with his acts as President? When Nixon resigned

before he would have been impeached because of Watergate, the impeachment would have been because of Nixon's abuse of power as President to bring down his enemies. How do you compare Nixon's abuse of Presidential powers with Clinton's having an affair? One is an abuse of the powers provided the President written into the Constitution. The other is a private failing. Clinton should have faced scorn and ridicule but the only one who can rightfully judge Clinton is his wife Hillary. No one knows how Hillary tolerated his behavior.

Late night comedy had a field day with the Clinton-Lewinsky affair, as did the internet which was just starting to heat up as part of our regular lives in 1998. I recall visiting a site call firstpenis.com as one of the many sites lampooning the President (of course firstpenis.com is now a porn site!).

The bottom line is Clinton's affair was a moral failure of his marriage vows and he is answerable to Hillary as this is a private affair. He should not have been impeached based on the definition of what constitutes impeachment. Clearly the whole impeachment effort was driven by Clinton's political enemies (how many of them had extra-marital affairs in their past?). Furthermore clearly the American people could have cared less and didn't want him impeached either.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Bill Clinton		
Monica Lewinsky		
Republican Congressmen		
American Public		
Hillary Clinton		

The Confessions

What happens when someone confesses to a crime? If a man confesses to a crime because he did it, right? The confessions of the “Norfolk four” in Virginia show that everything we assume about confessions has to be questioned, and reaching the truth in our criminal justice system can be very elusive.

On July 7, 1997, Michelle Moore-Bosko is raped and murdered in her apartment. The first suspect in this crime quickly becomes apartment neighbor and Navy sailor Daniel Williams. Williams is brought in by the police for what he believes will be routine questioning, but the questioning really is an interrogation whose sole purpose is to extract a confession from Williams. Williams denies having committed the crime over and over, but never asks for a lawyer to be present. Williams is given a polygraph test which he passes, but the detectives tell him he failed. Detectives Maureen Evans and Robert Glen Ford interrogate Williams in a small room, berating him constantly that they know the truth and they can help him if he confesses. Finally after 11 hours he confesses that he committed the crime.

The story then spirals out of control because the confession Williams gave does not match the physical evidence. Williams’ DNA does not match the evidence at the crime scene so there must be another attacker. On January 12, 1998 police arrest another Navy sailor Joe Dick and Detective Ford interrogates Dick until he confesses. Still there is no DNA match with Dick and two more sailors are implicated – Eric Wilson and Derek Tice – each who confess after hours of interrogation from Ford. The confession stories vary wildly and still none of the 4 have DNA that match the sample found at the crime scene. 3 other men are implicated in the crime, however the 3 do not confess. Still there is no DNA match.

A year later on March 4, 1999 convicted criminal Omar Ballard confesses to the rape and murder of Michelle Moore-Bosko. He confesses after 20 minutes of questioning. He claims to have acted alone, and later it is found that his DNA DOES MATCH the sample found at the crime scene.

At this point you might say we know the truth so why continue prosecuting the four sailors who confessed. It’s obvious to anyone that the confessions were coerced and the four had nothing to do with the crime. But no, somehow prosecutors are able to concoct the story that the four sailors met Ballard in the parking lot and he joined them in the crime. Ballard’s claim that he acted alone is considered unreliable, and prosecution of the four sailors marches on until each is convicted. Though the stories vary and there’s no physical evidence, the confessions each gave becomes the main piece of evidence that convicts each of the men.

Years later in 2004 after the four men have been in prison 3 major Washington, DC law firms get involved in the cases as pro bono advocates for the men. However, undoing the wrongful convictions is a painfully slow process. The lawyers hired sociologist Richard Ofshe who concluded:

All of the evidence I have reviewed and all of my years of study of interrogations and false confession leads me to conclude that Danial Williams, Joseph Dick and Derek Tice are innocent beyond any reasonable doubt.

Other experts are brought in and come to the same conclusion that there could only be one perpetrator, Omar Ballard. Finally, appeals through the legal system and appeals to the governor of Virginia succeeded in freeing all of the Norfolk four from prison. However each are not cleared of their convictions and have to register as sex offenders. Their lives are still not their own. The confessions to a crime they did not commit follow them every day.

This whole affair of the Norfolk four goes back to the confessions each of the four men made after hours of interrogation. Law enforcement would have us believe that this type of lengthy interrogation is necessary to get to the truth. What this situation shows us is that a person can be psychologically broken down after hours of questioning that they'll say anything to end it. After 9, 10, 11 hours of questioning in a small room with no food and no sleep, the person just wants it to be over. This is Derek Tice recounting the interrogation by Robert Glenn Ford.

Ford, he postured like a bulldog. He leaned towards me, calling me a liar, telling me I was going to die. And this went on for 8 hours. I keep telling him I didn't know anything about the crime. I wasn't there, but he had in his mind what he thought was the truth. Until I said what he wanted me to say, I wasn't getting out of that room.

We always think that someone would never confess to a crime that they didn't commit. In this case it happened 4 times. 4 men told the truth for hours and hours until the pressure got to them so much that they lied and confessed to a crime. The psychological pressure must have been incredible. Can we make a moral judgment on those 4 for cracking under the pressure? I don't think so. It just tells us that a good interrogator can extract a confession from an innocent man.

The real moral low ground goes to the detectives and prosecutors who convicted these four men. First it was Robert Glenn Ford, the detective who carried out these interrogations. He had no physical evidence and no witnesses. These men were not allowed a lawyer. All of this goes against our constitution and everything we know about right and wrong. Then once the confessions were made and Omar Ballard confessed to the crime and he acted alone, the nonsense that went on to concoct the stories so the 4 men remained guilty was unconscionable. Why couldn't someone stand up and say "Stop – the confessions were coerced. These men are innocent."

In the aftermath, Derek Tice was exonerated in 2011 but the other 3 men's cases are still under appeal. Robert Glenn Ford was convicted of extortion and lying to the FBI and is now in jail, though his crime is unrelated to the Norfolk Four. Clearly Ford has a low regard for the moral compass. Law enforcement and our legal system is supposed to protect us from crime and uphold the moral values laid out in the constitution. When they lie and cheat and use coercion they are just as wrong as the criminals they are protecting us from.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

4 Sailors		
Robert Glenn Ford		
Omar Ballard		

Enron

The first I ever heard of Enron was as the sponsor of Enron Field where the Houston Astros play. One year they were at the top of their game the next year they ceased to exist.

Enron was into some sort of energy trading. They made money by speculating on the price of energy. I can't imagine a less productive way to make money. Instead of trying to develop alternative energy to get us out of this fossil fuel global warming mess, these guys are in the casino gambling millions of dollars on the price of energy.

Ken Lay and Jeff Skilling were Enron. Jeff Skilling was the architect of this incredibly cutthroat culture that created these energy traders that would step over anyone to make more money. Skilling devised a self-rating system where bottom 10-20% of the employees were fired.

Enron made money all right. But they lost money too. Lots of money. Their stock price was constantly inflated by accounting tricks and manipulation, but for the most part all of their divisions were losing money.

Enron reached its peak right near the end of the dot-com craze in 1999 and 2000. This was a time when all these new technology companies had soaring stock prices when they were losing money. Enron took this to a new level. They used this trick mark to market accounting which allowed them to (legally) state as earnings money they will/may/possibly/probably never actually earn. CFO Andy Fastow used a brilliant dummy company scheme to artificially inflate profits when the company was losing millions. With the "Kalifornia" (you can hear Arnold saying it) energy crisis, Enron mercilessly manipulated the California deregulated energy market so they made money while Californians had rolling blackouts and skyrocketing energy prices.

The leaders of the company knew when it was going to crash so they sold all of the inflated stock while thousands of employees had their entire 401Ks dissolve into nothing when the stock dropped to being a penny stock. It was the classic case of greed for the wealthy while hard working average Americans get screwed. In one poof Enron was gone to be a footnote of history. It was a company of greed and cutthroat pure capitalism that produced nothing for us, not unlike thousands of these financial firms that manipulate money just to earn more money without producing anything. If we could only compensate our best and brightest trying to find the cure for cancer and the next alternative energy instead of those who are just gambling in money markets ...

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Jeff Skilling and Ken Lay		
Enron Employees		
Andy Fastow		

9/11 and the Imperial Presidency

There's no question 9/11 changed everything. No one can say their life was not changed seeing the planes slam into the World Trade Center. Much of the world had lived with the threat of terrorism which until 9/11 Americans felt secure being protected by the oceans. In an instant on September 11, 2001 our security ended. For many years, our fear was the threat of an enemy country somehow delivering a nuclear weapon. 9/11 showed us that a small group of terrorists could blow themselves up and present a greater threat than any established country.

The days after 9/11 were some of the scariest in our lives. It felt like everything in the news was another scare from terrorists. No matter what our political stripes were, we wanted the government to protect us. President Bush had something like a 90% approval rating. However, soon after our government was using 9/11 as an excuse for taking away the very freedoms our country was founded on

Most people will never know the dynamics of what went on in the White House, but we do know that Dick Cheney had so much influence it's a wonder we didn't elect him President. Cheney I believe has a very dark, paranoid view of the world and 9/11 fed this monster. Cheney also has the view that the President, not Congress or the Supreme Court, has absolute power to essentially do what he wants or feels is necessary. Cheney is not a lawyer, but as Vice President he brought along lawyer David Addington who shared his views on expanded presidential power.

Right after 9/11 Cheney and Addington, with the help of John Yoo from the Justice department, drafted legislation that grant the president expanded powers to fight terrorism anywhere in the world, including in America. The Senate, controlled by Democrats and knowing they'd been burned by overzealous presidents in the past during wartime, rejects this legislation. Undeterred, the administration drafts another document with John Yoo's help, this time in secret that grants the same power to the President that Congress rejected. So much for the balance of power in the constitution. The first power that Cheney railroaded through had to do with prisoners captured who were suspected terrorists. These people would be held in military prisons outside the US and they could be interrogated using any means necessary. They could be tortured. They'd never get near a court. Torture would be cleaned up to be called "harsh interrogation techniques." Thus began Guantanamo.

The next freedom that went away was privacy. With another series of secret documents and legal maneuvering, the administration authorized warrantless wiretaps, or essentially spying on American citizens. In both the cases of authorizing torture and spying on Americans there would be no due process and no "innocent until proven guilty". These policies were shaped in secret by a small inner circle of men led by Cheney.

After the start of the Iraq war (a whole other story) lawyers in the Justice Department begin to raise questions about the secret policies. Attorney General John Ashcroft must

re-authorize the eavesdropping on Americans act and he refuses after hearing arguments from the lawyers. He then falls ill and needs to be hospitalized, and in an unbelievable show ofchutzpah, the president sends his White House Council Alberto Gonzalez to the hospital to get Ashcroft to sign off on re-authorizing from his hospital bed. Ashcroft, whose conservative credentials can rival anyone's, refuses. The President, likely with Cheney backing him, decides to sign off on the order anyway, and many in the Justice Department threaten to resign right away. If the Attorney General and the Justice Department have no say in interpreting the legal implications of presidential policy, why have them at all? We're not talking about Congress or the Supreme Court, but part of the executive branch, people the President appointed himself. Bush finally backs down and they make changes in the language of the order to make it acceptable to the Justice Department.

After Bush is re-elected in 2004, which is unbelievable in its own right, news about treatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib in Iraq wakes up Congress. Conservatives like John McCain and Lindsay Graham speak out against torture, and legislation is drafted outlawing these harsh interrogation techniques. Bush threatens to veto the legislation, but it passes the Senate 90-9 despite heavy lobbying by Cheney of usual reliable conservatives. Bush is forced to sign it, but the all-knowing legal expert David Addington adds on what is called a "signing statement." In plain English, the signing statement states that the President is signing this into law but he doesn't have to obey it, because he is Commander-in-chief. If he doesn't like what is in the law, he can forget about it. Let the torture continue. It comes out after this signing statement that Addington has added on dozens of signing statements to legislation Bush has signed, essentially making it ok for the President to disobey any law he chooses.

This is not ok. Let's remember why Bush, Cheney, and company are doing this. Terrorists attacked us on 9/11 threatening our freedom and our democracy. In response, our government secretly seizes the right to eavesdrop on us and the right to torture among other things, in order to protect us from these terrorists. In doing so, they circumvent the other branches of government and even their own administration because many of their own appointees didn't agree with the policies. The framers of the constitution built in checks and balances just so we wouldn't turn into a dictatorship or an imperial state. With Bush and Cheney, we came very close.

-- Add little nugget about the book that came out and how author shows that enhanced interrogation didn't work.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

9/11 Terrorists		
George W Bush		
Dick Cheney		
John Ashcroft		
Alberto Gonzalez		

The Dixie Chicks



The Dixie Chicks are a country music band that began playing in 1989, achieved country music and pop success by 1998. However, they are best known for the controversy they caused at a 2003 concert in London 10 days before the onset of the war in Iraq.

First, the backdrop. On September 11, 2001 everything changed for Americans. We lived in fear of another terrorist attack. We were vulnerable and were willing to do anything to help our government protect us. But by 2003 the Bush/Cheney crowd had convinced us that the focus of evil was Iraq through their lies about Iraq's tie to 9/11 and their weapons of mass destruction. So by _____ 2003 it was obvious we were going to war with Iraq.

At this concert, lead singer Natalie Maines told the audience:

"Just so you know, we're on the good side with y'all. We do not want this war, this violence, and we're ashamed that the President of the United States is from Texas."

Maines' remarks set off a firestorm of criticism in the conservative heartland – where country music is king. Radio stations boycotted their music. They set up stations where people could bring Dixie Chicks CDs to be destroyed. Where have I written this before? Oh yeah the Beatles, John Lennon said the wrong thing about Jesus ... Oh right, the Dixie Chicks had death threats too, just like the Beatles in 1966

Is this the way we treat people who say something we don't agree with? Natalie Maines expressed a view that the war in Iraq was wrong, and at least ½ the country agreed with her at that time. But the conservatives ginned up the venom against the Dixie Chicks to the point where they were ex-communicated from the country music scene. They used that whole patriotic nonsense – you should never say anything against your president, especially during war time. To me, it's just as patriotic to stand up and express your point of view, and to fight for that right.

Eventually they re-invented themselves as more of a pop music band, and in 2006 released the single "I'm Not Ready To Make Nice" which is Maines' response to the whole controversy.

Forgive, sounds good
Forget, I'm not sure I could
They say time heals everything
But I'm still waiting

I'm through with doubt
There's nothing left for me to figure out
I've paid a price
And I'll keep paying

I'm not ready to make nice
I'm not ready to back down
I'm still mad as hell and
I don't have time to go round and round and round
It's too late to make it right
I probably wouldn't if I could
'Cause I'm mad as hell
Can't bring myself to do what it is you think I should

I know you said
Can't you just get over it
It turned my whole world around
And I kind of like it

I made my bed and I sleep like a baby
With no regrets and I don't mind sayin'
It's a sad sad story when a mother will teach her
Daughter that she ought to hate a perfect stranger
And how in the world can the words that I said
Send somebody so over the edge
That they'd write me a letter

Sayin' that I better shut up and sing
Or my life will be over

It's a very powerful song when you know what the Dixie Chicks went through. This whole incident was like the fear mongering that went on with the blacklistings in the 1950s. There needs to be a better way for people to disagree with each other. To me, having public debate and being able to freely criticize your government is a right we should have.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Natalie Maines		
Other Dixie Chicks		
Country Music Establishment		
Originators of Death Threat		

The Iraq War

Everyone knows we invaded Iraq to get rid of Saddam Hussein. Many people know there was a CIA agent named Valerie Plame whose identity was revealed by the Bush administration. And finally, there's a general consensus that Bush was less than truthful in his arguments to the American people in the run up to the Iraq war. Perhaps the ends justify the means. Saddam was a bad guy and we had to get rid of him. I for one am not buying it. Whether you accept the idea that our government has the right to do anything to get rid of dictators it doesn't like, let's look at the lengths this government went to in selling the Iraq war.

Right after 9/11 the talk within Bush circles was about how to blame 9/11 on Iraq. There were reports in the earliest days after 9/11 of Cheney, Rumsfeld, and other high administration officials looking for evidence that Iraq was behind the terror attacks. However, the facts would not cooperate. Within a very short time, it was obvious that Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, based in Afghanistan, were responsible. Thus began the search for Iraq and Saddam were somehow affiliated with Al Qaeda. Why at this point did no one ask about the obvious contradiction – Osama is a Muslim fanatic allied with the Taliban who is driven by religious extremism. Saddam is essentially secular. Even though Saddam is a Muslim, all of his motivation for killing is based on greed and narcissism with no religious component at. I'm just saying Osama and Saddam really would have nothing in common. But I digress. Bush and Cheney would have no use for such logic. They were in the classic "kill 2 birds with 1 stone" mode in their search to retaliate for 9/11 and get rid of Saddam with 1 war.

The CIA, frequently no favorite of mine, refused to cooperate with the blame 9/11 on Iraq thing. Their intelligence turned up nothing on Iraq and they focused on Al Qaeda in Afghanistan as they should have. The administration then turned to making up the whole narrative of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, or WMDs. Again, the CIA fails to cooperate. With their best efforts, the CIA is able to turn up no evidence of any nuclear weapons program in Iraq. All of the facilities were destroyed in the first Iraq war in 1991. Iraq has nothing except a dictator with a lot of bluster and a lot of oil. The facts weren't cooperating with the Iraq story, so why not start making up the facts. This is where the story gets interesting.

From the months after 9/11 and through 2002 administration officials frequently went on TV spouting claims that Iraq was linked to 9/11 and/or they were close to building a nuclear weapon.

We don't want the smoking gun to become a mushroom cloud.

This quote National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice could be heard over and over as the news media played it over and over. Talk about a powerful sound bite to ratchet up the public's fear! Given the public's fear of another terror attack, the rationale for going to war with Iraq seemed reasonable, but behind the scenes none of the claims were turning out to be true. The Vice President's men pressured the CIA analysts to report out

anything that would incriminate Iraq and WMDs. First, there was the story about the aluminum tubes. On September 8, 2002, a story was written in the New York Times

Iraq has sought to buy thousands of specially designed aluminum tubes, which American officials believe were intended as components of centrifuges to enrich uranium.

The story quotes as its source an unnamed official in the administration. Then Cheney goes on a Sunday talk show and quotes the New York Times as reporting the story about the aluminum tubes, as if to legitimize the story. They planted the story themselves. It turns out that the CIA didn't believe the aluminum tubes had anything to do with nuclear weapons, but the administration went with it anyway and did a masterful job of making the public believe it and fear it.

Then there was the story of Valerie Plame Wilson, Joe Wilson, and yellowcake. This story does get complicated but it's worth understanding how it contributed to the run up to the Iraq war. It begins in 2001 when intelligence reports from Italy and the UK claim that Iraq has been attempting to buy yellowcake uranium, a nuclear material used for making a weapon, from the African country Niger. The CIA looks at this claim dubiously and decides to send Joe Wilson to Niger to investigate this claim. Joe Wilson is married to CIA agent Valerie Plame Wilson (keep that in mind) and was a State Department diplomat who had many contacts in Niger so he was well positioned to find out if there was any truth to the yellowcake to Iraq story. He returned from Niger to report that there was no way the sale of uranium yellowcake could have happened or been attempted. No one knows what kind of internal debate may have gone on within the CIA after Wilson's report, because the CIA was receiving enormous pressure to substantiate the White House's claims that Iraq had WMD programs. Somehow the National Intelligence Estimate, the CIA's official assessment of the Iraq threat claimed

A foreign government service reported that as early as 2001, Niger planned to send several tons of "pure uranium" (probably yellowcake) to Iraq.

How did a claim which was blatantly false by the CIA's own assessment, find its way into an official CIA document? It gets worse from there. The President, in his state of the union address in early 2003, states

The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.

This was a speech that was the final argument to the American people to justify the upcoming war with Iraq, and Bush states as fact a claim that his own CIA thinks is dubious or blatantly false. This statement later became known as "the 16 words" that brought us to war with Iraq.

How did we get here? Why was this whole campaign to go to war with Iraq allowed to work? The mechanics of this assault on facts and reason began with the stated policy after 9/11 – get rid of Saddam Hussein. This is as opposed to finding out who was responsible for 9/11 and going after them. This was create a policy and gather so-called facts to support the policy, rather than gather real facts and shape a well-founded policy

around those facts. Bush and Cheney and the rest of the group around them were so driven by ideology and pre-conceived conclusions they could not accept any evidence that contradicted it. What's worse, they were able to assault the public with half-truths and outright lies and prey on the public's fear to push their policy through. How many in Congress, reporters, or anyone else had the resources to uncover that the aluminum tubes claim and the yellowcake claim were dubious or just plain false? The news media blitz and the atmosphere of fear would have drowned out any claims to the contrary. They formed the policy before the facts were known, selected the shreds of evidence that fit their policy, and preyed on everyone's fear. How many Americans and Iraqis lost their lives in the Iraq War because of this policy?

The arrogance gets even worse as the Iraq War gets started in 2003. In July of 2003 Joe Wilson wrote a series of articles in the New York Times claiming that Bush had misrepresented the intelligence in his claims about Iraq buying uranium from Africa. Eight days after the article comes out, columnist Robert Novak published a column which states that Wilson's wife Valerie Plame is a CIA agency operative. This essentially blows her cover. In the world of spies, Valerie Plame's identity is secret. She cannot do her work if her identity is known. Needless to say, Plame's career as a spy in the CIA is abruptly over after the Novak article. No one at the time knows who in the administration leaked Valerie Plame's name to Novak, but the word from Bush's team is that after Wilson's article criticizing the administration was published, it was perfectly ok to retaliate against Wilson's wife. Valerie Plame was essentially "Fair Game" was a quote from Karl Rove. This story of Valerie Plame became the subject of the movie "Fair Game" which shows how 2 people Valerie Plame and Joe Wilson doing their jobs as honestly as they could were caught up in the Bush administration's lies and deception. It shows how the "outing" of Plame as a CIA agent nearly tore their family apart, but also probably cost lives of the people who were abandoned when Plame was abruptly terminated as a CIA agent. Plame and Wilson see the movie as accurate. This is just one more in a series of unconscionable acts by the administration to support their flawed policy.

The war in Iraq now has disappeared from the front pages. Bush and Cheney are no longer in power. The lasting lesson here is how they used questionable facts and the public's fear to lie us into the war with Iraq. This war cost thousands of deaths and has traumatized thousands of families of war veterans who are still living with the horrors. It worked because we were afraid and we didn't want to believe that our government could lie to us. It worked because no one looked closely enough to uncover the real facts.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

George W Bush		
Dick Cheney		
Condoleezza Rice		
Valerie Plame Wilson		
Joe Wilson		
Karl Rove		

Katrina



Hurricane Katrina was one of the worst natural disasters in our history. On August 29, 2005 Katrina hit the coast of Louisiana as well as Texas and Mississippi. The city of New Orleans was the hardest hit. Much of New Orleans lies below sea level and was protected by a levee system which kept the low lying areas from being flooded. The sheer force of Katrina caused the levee system to fail and most of New Orleans was under water right after the storm. A natural disaster is out of our control, however our government's response to the needs of the people affected by Katrina was totally inadequate and incompetent. It's the government's response to Katrina and frankly our response as American people that can be looked at under the microscope of the moral compass.

First of all, after Katrina hit it is the federal government that has the most resources to bring. The federal government's agency for dealing with an emergency of this sort is the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The head of this agency should be experienced in dealing with large scale disaster situations, however the head of the agency Michael Brown had little such experience. Within 2 weeks of Katrina hitting, Brown was replaced as head of the agency. The question is why did President Bush

appoint him in the first place? Perhaps Brown was a loyal conservative Republican who was well connected. A lot of good that does us when we need an expert in disaster services.

The real tragedy of Katrina was the feeble response to help New Orleans. Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco sent President Bush a plea for help two days before Katrina hit. She received no response. After the hurricane hit and the levees failed, the city was completely under water. It was like a 3rd world country in a war zone. Most of the city's residents had to be evacuated and needed shelter and food to survive. By January 30, 2006 the confirmed death toll from Katrina was 1322. This is nearly half of the death toll from 9/11, where the country was mobilized and resources came pouring into New York City and the other sites where the planes hit. Famous people held telethons to raise money for victims of 9/11, and the news media was non-stop in reporting the on the victims and heroes of 9/11. By contrast, President Bush did not even mention Katrina in the State of the Union address in early 2006. There were no telethons, and many Americans wished they'd donated more to Katrina victims but they didn't know how bad it was.

There were many heroes in the Katrina story. New Orleans police, firefighters, and National Guardsmen worked tirelessly with inadequate resources to save as many lives as they could. These people should be praised for having the courage and commitment for doing the right thing amidst an impossible situation.

Why did our national government and America as a whole respond so poorly to Katrina, when they responded to 9/11 with such force? 9/11 was a terrorist attack whereas Katrina was a natural disaster. So what? 9/11 had a common enemy – the terrorists. We could mobilize with the energy of a pure moral slam dunk. 9/11 was about good and evil. Katrina on the other hand, had no such common enemy. Are you going to mobilize against the common enemy of ... Mother Nature? Katrina's victims in New Orleans were largely poor people of color. Victims on the 9/11 planes and in the World Trade Center were ... largely not poor people of color. I'm not sure I buy the theory that we didn't respond to Katrina because of racism. I think it had more to do with it being a natural disaster. Everyone's juices were flowing after 9/11 from the government on down. The Bush administration could push its conservative agenda of fighting the bad guys with military power, and from the start 9/11 was all about making Iraq the villain. With Katrina, what was needed was a strong response and more resources from a government agency, FEMA, which runs counter to that conservative agenda of less government and budget cuts. It's a shame New Orleans got such a raw deal in their time of need. We can only hope that we don't need terrorists to mobilize in a time of need, and can act and do the right thing in the future when Mother Nature strikes.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

Bush Administration		
Michael Brown		
People of New Orleans		

Health Care Debate

I'm not going to rehash the 2009-2010 debate that went on in Washington. The nuances of health insurance coverage, pre-existing conditions, and prescription drug donut holes can be mind-numbing. We now have a health care system that ½ the country thinks probably is a step in the right direction, and the other ½ hates it, or has been convinced to hate it.

What is health care really about? Health care should be a right, not a privilege. Especially in the richest country in the world where we have the most advanced techniques, health care is a right. We have the resources to make and keep everyone healthy, or at least provide everyone with the best care available. However, greed within our capitalist for profit system is what drives our health care. It will continue to drive it into oblivion at this rate. I'm sorry, but in the fee for service model, the drive for profits create perverse incentives. A doctor has the incentive to order more and more tests, expensive procedures, and expensive drugs to maximize his/her profits. Insurance companies have incentive to deny coverage and deny treatment to keep costs down. No one has the incentive to make and keep a person healthy.

I've felt for a long time that the only system that will work is single payer. Ugh! There it is - socialized medicine. Health care can only be universal if it isn't about who can afford insurance, and you've got to take the profit motivation out of health care. You can't have insurance companies denying coverage and denying treatment to protect their profits. You can't have doctors with incentive to treat with expensive procedures to generate their profits. Doctors should be compensated for healthy outcomes, not more treatment. We know this can work because of the single-payer systems in Canada and in Europe. I would contend that only a single payer system is capable of taking the profit motivation out of health care, but this country gags on ideas that look like socialism. Clearly the fear factor enters in, because we have Social Security and Medicare. Medicare is essentially a system of socialized medicine for senior citizens. By and large, the country loves socialized medicine for seniors, but can't imagine socialized medicine for all. I love the refrain from the wacko Tea Party senior citizens who say "Keep the government's hands off my Medicare!" The government runs Medicare, you idiot.

I hope Americans finally get over their fear of socialized medicine and do the right thing. I hope it happens in my lifetime but I'm not optimistic. In this debate it seems that capitalist values and greed are in the way of creating a health care system that treats health care as a right, not a privilege.

Moral Compass Scorecard:

President Obama		
Democrats in Congress		
Republicans in Congress		
Tea Party		

Conclusion

I am not the first to use the term “The Moral Compass” to evaluate human behavior. The Moral Compass is not a new concept but rather a reoccurring theme throughout our history. Everyone grows up with the teachings of right and wrong and once we are old enough to make decisions for ourselves we have learned the value system of right and wrong. Some of us live by these values every day. Others not so much.

As we look back to these events in our history, it's easy to say that politicians, journalists, and everyone around them acted immorally and should have known better. In the 1950s the fear of Communism was so great that we had no problem blacklisting thousands of people, ruining their lives for having once gone to a meeting of the Communist party. Fear and follow-the-mob mentality drove politicians and others to sell out their friends. Did any of the members of the House Un-American Activities Committee have the courage to step back and ask why they were doing it? Or was the wave of fear too strong? Some like Pete Seeger had the courage to tell the truth and had to tolerate over a decade of being blacklisted.

Other situations did not have the national prominence but still the wave of fear and the temptation to follow the mob drove people off on the wrong track. The prosecutors, press and people of the Manhattan Beach, California where the McMartin trial occurred were so convinced that these people were child abusers they couldn't step back and look at the facts. The McMartin family stood on their principles and had their lives ruined and their livelihood taken away. Two members of the prosecuting team had the courage to walk away from the runaway train after it was clear it was on the wrong track.

These stories are about taking a hard look at the decisions we make and the moral judgments we use to guide our decisions. It's an old cliché to say those who don't learn from history are condemned to repeat it. Each new event that happens looks different but the same greed and fear and follow-the-mob mentality takes hold whenever we find ourselves in a new situation. We've evolved from the dark days of segregation and Jim Crow laws in the south. Why were the victims of Katrina in New Orleans left abandoned when their city was under water in 2005? We've evolved from the days we feared Communism and we'd blacklist anyone with Communist ties. Why after 9/11 were we ok to suspend our principles and let the Bush administration spy on its own people and torture prisoners?

We truly can evolve as a people by recognizing the motivations of fear, greed, following-the-mob, and blind obedience to authority and have the courage to stand up and do the right thing when we are faced with a situation that requires it.