

# WEDNESDAY: DUMB

## DUMB [UPDATE]

Let's change the pace today with some K-pop – a little hyper-upbeat Korean pop music influenced by hip hop. You may already be familiar with K-pop if you are familiar with insanely popular tune Gagnam Style by the artist Psy, released in 2012. But K-pop isn't just male artists like GOT7, Shinhwa, and BIGBANG. There are quite a few all-female groups like Red Velvet featured here, Girls' Generation, Orange Caramel, and Girls' Day. Americans may find a retro feel to female K-pop artists' work, not only in content and performance, but production and presentation. They make hard work look like joy. For all the visual and audio effects, there are simple, unifying messages – love is everything, and girls just want to have fun.

So much that. We could really use some love and some fun.

### THREE DAYS

\*head-desk\* Including today, that's all the House will spend in session this month. Flint's 8000 lead-poisoned kids still wait.

Carla Hayden, nominee for Librarian of Congress also waits. Some ~~chickenshit~~ anonymous Republican senator(s) have placed a hold on her confirmation. Why? Because she's black. Swear to gods the GOP wants to become an irrelevant footnote in history; they certainly won't win over minority voters this way, and they're pissing off the publishing industry at the same time. **UPDATE 5:00 P.M. EST – HAYDEN CONFIRMED** Huh. Wonder what clued in the ~~chickenshit~~ anonymous Republican senator(s) who'd placed her on hold? Whatever, now the GOP can go back to focusing their normal obstructive intransigence on SCOTUS' nominee Merrick Garland.

### Don't forget about China

▪ The Hague ruled in

Philippines' favor yesterday on South China Sea territorial dispute (video, SCMP) – China said it will ignore the ruling (0:30 in video).

- Economic boycotts of Philippine products called for by Chinese social media (BBC) – Mangoes in particular could be affected.
- But anti-ruling protests haven't manifested in the streets (Bloomberg View) – Unlike 2012, China's leadership may be tamping down nationalism due to recent economic volatility.
- Taiwanese patrol ship sets sail for disputed territory (IndiaTVNews) – Taiwan isn't happy about the ruling, claiming its opinion wasn't solicited on the matter.
- US bank regulator says China hacked FDIC's computers, including chairwoman's (Reuters) – Digital territorial waters encroached upon in 2010, 2011, 2013 according to Congressional report. Odd how 2012 is missing. Equally odd the timing of this report. (*Hi blueba!*)

## Civil rights wronged

- Cruel and unusual punishment continues on Rikers Island after four extensions granted for reforms (Village Voice) – Youths 18-21-years-old including some who are mentally ill remain locked up in solitary confinement. The glacial pace of reforms is repugnant, maintaining worse than third-world treatment. Fix this horror and quit dragging your feet, New York. You're making this entire country look bad and worse.
- Black ex-cop offers detailed analysis of race and policing (Vox) – One key problem is the propensity for 70% of police to cave into pressure from the 15% of cops who are outrageous racists – like the Milgram experiment run amok. Racists should be identified and removed from leadership positions; police departments must have open dialog about social pressure and expectations of ethical behavior in policing.

## Breakit

- Theresa May now UK's prime minister (Press Association) – Kissed Hands and all, but without a true democratic mandate. Thank goodness we fought a revolution for a representative democracy (that's snark, son).
- May's new role greeted with muted welcome and skepticism (Reuters) – Like the response from Lithuania, something-something-lemons-lemonade.
- May names Boris Johnson UK's foreign secretary (Press Association) – Oh. My. God. What. The. Fudge. Skepticism was more than warranted.
- Lengthy wash list of topics to be negotiated should new PM trigger Article 50 to effect Brexit (OpenEurope) – And she'll have to allow immigrant negotiators to work through this list because the UK doesn't have enough of their own negotiators. Certainly can't leave it all to that chucklehead Boris Johnson.

#### Cyber-oddments

- Bird drone dropped out of the sky over Somalia (Atlas Obscura) – Probably not one of ours, more likely belongs

to Somalia's intelligence agency.

- FCC evaluating expansion of mobile phone service into weather service bandwidth (Nature) – This has awful written all over it. Read the article; telecom signal has already interfered with critical weather information. Just, no. Telecoms can either develop new technology to work around this, or they can buy bandwidth which won't conflict with the public's need for timely and accurate weather information.
- Self-driving feature will not be shut off on Tesla cars says Musk (InformationWeek) – In spite of several accidents known so far, self-driving application will remain on Tesla vehicles. The company will increase education outreach (which I think means teaching drivers, "Don't trust the robot driver all the damned time.")
- Sheep doing the heavy lifting for Google on Faroe Islands (Guardian) – The Faroese were unhappy with the lack of vehicle-based

scanning for Google Street View. They slapped the requisite equipment on sheep to fill the gap, proving where there's a wool, there's a way. Baaad joke.

Okay, that's quite enough self-abuse for one day. It's downhill from here, see you tomorrow!