



“I think it's much more interesting to live not knowing than to have answers which might be wrong.” *Richard P. Feynman*

This week, three short videos, none longer than 5 minutes, but all utterly fascinating!



Insult response

Now, this is masterful. Watch [Steve Jobs](#) respond to a blatant insult from an audience member at a developer conference. Jobs is up there, in the glare of the spotlight, with thousands watching him.



Did you notice the following things that Jobs said?

1. He's right, but only partly
2. There's a bigger picture
3. We are working hard
4. I want everyone here to commit to my vision

Question: What ways do you have to neutralise critics, while valuing their input?"

Slavery is the reason the US is so strange today

I was surprised by a proposition that many of the things I've always found perplexing about the USA all originated because of [slavery](#). The love of guns. The lack of universal healthcare. The tipping. Even the [US electoral college](#) (which we're [about to see in action](#)) is a relic of the need for Southern slave-owning states to have enough representation in Washington. Watch [Melissa Harris-Lacewell](#) from Princeton University explain it.



But what about tipping? Well, freed slaves were not allowed to earn a wage as porters and could only earn tips. That practice then expanded into all hospitality and service sectors, many of whom employed African-Americans at first. Guns? The second amendment permits “a well regulated militia”.

Why do you need a civilian militia? To guard against slave uprisings, of course. And because of a large underclass it was threatened by, the culture of guns persisted amongst white Americans especially. And health insurance? Jim Crow laws persisted until the 1960s which prevented freed slaves and their descendants from voting, or going to the same schools as white people, or living in the same neighbourhoods. Naturally, they weren't going to get the same healthcare, paid for by white Americans.

Yes, it's perhaps a long bow to draw, but students of history know well that the ['butterfly effect'](#) persists in strange ways, and these anomalous US practices are among them.

Question: What decisions are you making today that may have far reaching, perhaps unintended, consequences?

Octopus teachers

There's two words that you never expect to find next to each other. Yet, South African film maker, [Craig Foster](#), literally falls in love with one of these cephalopods and his 'affair' is the subject of the Netflix doco [“My Octopus Teacher”](#), which I highly recommend.



I didn't know that an octopus carries the bulk of its brain in its arms and, without a skeleton, it can render itself solid — and even walk on two legs. Foster snorkels every day for a year and gently coaxes the octopus so she eventually allows him to enter her world, and he gets to know every detail of her perilous existence. I came away awe-struck by the sheer adaptability of this creature, and teary from the emotional bond Foster forms and which was inevitably broken.

Questions: How closely do you observe others who are completely unlike you? What do you learn from them?

As always, please send me your feedback by email to ww@workwell.com.au. What would you like me to write about next time? Let me know!

Have a wonderful weekend, all.

Andrew



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