

KISS: Keep It Simple, Stop Struggling

Written by Alex Baer
Monday, 12 May 2014 15:31

Time to add another "S" to that old acronym, about *Keeping It Simple, Stupid*: The updated version is *Keep It Simple, Stop Struggling*.

It's advice that the Brazilian police are handing around to European and American tourists who are in town for the World Cup. The actual tip is closer to "do not react, scream, or argue," and is meant to help newbies to the country avoid a popular kind of robbery in which being murdered is the farewell thank-you gift from muggers.

The police are being realistic. Brazil has one of the highest murder rates in the world, so says the United Nations, at more than 25 per 100,000. (This number, obviously, does not include the hectares of rain forest in Brazil routinely strangled, bulldozed, and cremated, nor does it include the amount of oxygen-producing capacity murdered daily.)

Police are concerned tourists from abroad do not usually experience the joys of robbery, and so, need to be counseled on their manners, in order to avoid *latrocinios* -- the aforementioned keepsake memento of death following one's souvenir stick-up.

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Now, before we start getting cute with this thing, we should first consider the police's motivation here: They are realists. They are just trying to save lives. They know they are outnumbered and outgunned. They also realize that the crack, militarized throngs of special-weapons assault teams will be at the stadium, protecting grown men playing with a ball, and will not be available for mugger mop-up operations and other trivialities.

All understood.

Thing is, I cannot help but suspect an incredible number of worldwide resources was consulted

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in cobbling such a novel, paternally-protective, safety-first guidance of "do not react, scream, or argue."

Some of those who were likely involved in suggesting and creating this policy -- *please know this is only a top-of-mind suspects list* -- were probably the Supreme Court of the United States, the GOP, the NRA, the NSA, the One Percent, all vulture capitalists, the entire financial services and banking industry, the oil industry, the chemical industry, the weapons industry, the pharmaceutical industry, and the GMO food industry, to finger only a few.

(That I would dearly love to *finger* all of them, and permanently, is somewhat beside the point here, but I no longer have available to me the vast reserves of patience I was privvy to in my misspent youth, and so, the thought escapes my control and intrudes at this point. Perhaps, for this offense, I should offer the standard, modern, *non-apology* *apology* perfected by old-goat politicians playfully trying to recapture their youth after being caught attempting to sport-boink various mistresses, but, unlike them, I have no religions, public offices, or wives to protect or be hypocritical about or toward. I am merely a civilian, and a recovering Catholic, and a liberal with '60s-wannabe roots and lifelong longings for the sanity and prosperity offered by social democracy -- so, whatever shame I feel tends to be earnest and all too real, dang it. Talk about your *Crystal Blue Persuasion*.
..)

Yes, anyway: I think all those fine clusters of groups and people would dearly love it if we were to, *please*, just stop reacting, screaming, and/or arguing with them on all their positions and policies because, as it should be plainly obvious, *they know best*. Plus, *they* are in charge, no matter what that *silly* piece of paper, the Constitution, says.

We should also add to that list of policy wonks all the many college campuses and military services reluctant to significantly address, and stop, sexual harassment and euphemistically-spun-up nonconsensual sex, *aka* rape. Undoubtedly, in the words of that fine GOP specimen of manliness and political virtue, Clayton Williams, who gifted us all with pointers about rape: *"... if it's inevitable, why not just sit back and enjoy it?"*

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Stop struggling and screaming: This is also feels unquestionably true, given what all those fine clusters of groups and people are actually *doing* to us, and to that silly piece of paper, the Constitution. Yes, undoubtedly, according to Power, we should just relax and enjoy it. Any complaints will just be seen as *unsporting* conduct, tantamount to our being picky, complaining about having to pluck splinters out of our butts after being taken to a nice, hardwood-floored arena for our special, um, *welcoming* ceremonies.

For the moment, we are probably safe in ignoring all the other sage GOP advice on rape: Ron Paul's "honest rape," and Roger Rivard's "some girls rape easy," and Rick Santorum's notion of accepting "what God has given to you," and, like Todd Akins, just try to "...shut the whole thing down."

Well, ladies and gentlemen, despite what you might think, Republicans actually adore women, regardless how they actually treat half of the world's population, especially at home. That deep level of respect must be what's driving the GOP's new campaign to woo women to *their* side of the force.

No idea why there must be hierarchies in life, but, there you are. There's *drugs*, then there's *insanity*, then there's *strokes*, then there's being brain-dead, then there's that whole zombie-vampire-ghost business, and then, batting clean-up, there's *Republicans*
...

* * * * *

I see the GOP is off on another one of their famous -- and famously *unreported* and *under-repo*rted -- tax-and-spend sprees. This time around, yet another tax credit for business was made permanent, adding almost \$156 billion to the deficit.

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Every single Republican in the House of Representative -- except one -- voted in favor of the move. There were absolutely *NO* reports of enraged Teabaggers threatening to bulldoze the U.S. Capitol. There was a *total absence* of scarlet-faced Republicans in mid-meltdown at the idea of adding to the national deficit.

Zero

reports --

none whatsoever

-- were filed on outraged members of the so-called conservative right regarding their grave concerns on what this may mean for the debt ceiling.

There was *a complete lack* of damp hand-wringing and exercised, sweaty *speechifying* on the dangers of feeding the mounting federal deficit. There was, however, *a vast amount*

of mirroring agreement and spiritual consensus demonstrated so ably by Republicans during the mounting and waging of two wars while simultaneously slashing taxes, forever, for corporations and the rich -- both of whom continued to show record-breaking profits and vast shoals of stashed cash offshore.

Unsurprisingly, Republican politicians wangled another opportunity here -- one in a countless string, going back to President Reagan -- to feed-and-water their own political steeds at the public trough, and invite a few million of their best, and richest, friends to join them at the all-you-can-eat public gouge-a-thon.

And, like Cliven Bundy, they don't believe in *gummint*, and sure as hell don't believe in *payin'*, so the taxpayers get to pick up the tab, *again*

,
forever

, for Republicans.

Our ol' pal Hypocrisy, when it rears its head and jaws out of the Community Chest long enough to holler a GOP quorum call, always manages an easy majority. This time, for some reason, one member fell out of robotic lock-step and did not vote for *Bidniz as yooz'yal*. Remedial dance lessons will no doubt be forthcoming for that one failed vote-caster, right after that member's ceremonial kneecapping, courtesy hamstringing, and permanent political hobbling.

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Speaking of lethal robotic systems, such as Republicans, **killer robots** will be considered by the United Nations as a new point of order in the worldwide manifesto on legal warfare. It will mark the first time the U.N. has mulled over the notion of lethal autonomous weapons systems cut loose into the calm serenity of our world.

In the hyper-sterilized parlance of polite weaponry, such entities are those which can *select and engage targets without human intervention*. □ (Sounds about as harmless as an automated napkin dispenser, wouldn't you agree? And, not at all like something that would collide with an airliner, like that harmless drone in Florida, right?)

Although killer 'bots do not yet exist, you can bet your last defense dollar that such things are already on the drafting table, if not already marching off some hush-hush production line during any momentary lulls in filling drone-death-bomb orders.

Those who oppose such advances in death merchandizing say, simply enough, that killer robots are **a threat to humanity**. Based on the sheer volume of sci-fi and follow-on technological development in the real world from the 50s forward, opponents have a very strong, laser-sighted, self-guided, automatically-actuated, trip-wire, fail-safe case.

Cheerleaders of semi-aware, fully-autonomous, self-engaging armaments say that such devices may be better equipped than humans in determining when *not* to engage targets, possibly exercising greater care in doing so. Killer robots, in other words, may well be able to apply mercy, compassion, and the rules of legal warfare better than human beings.

If you buy this argument, you also believe that your TeeVee knows better than you do what you should watch -- and that you are ready for your Teevee to not only control *all* the programming, but to forcibly frog-march you to the couch at gunpoint and force you to consume its favorite barrage of will-breaking advertising, brainless mind-drool sitcoms, spin-doctored and propaganda-washed news broadcasts -- not to mention all the sappy, moronic death dramas, or the mouth-watering cooking shows that make you want a

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killer
cooking 'bot
instead.

Now, admittedly, discussing *humane rules of warfare* is sheer satirical farce, utter madness, and crushing human reality, all at once. Now, then -- shaking
that
off and pausing for oxygen for a moment....

[sound of deep inhaling]

Firstly, let me say I am not an expert in killer robots, but that I have personally initiated plenty of home mechanical projects and can tell you first-hand how easily good intentions and thorough planning can accidentally slide right to hell and elicit near-fatal consequences. (I'm especially thinking about that whole *rotisserie-barbecue-tanning-bed-jacuzzi* fiasco, out on the narrow ledge balcony, last summer.)

Secondly, allow me to say that I have, in my own lifetime, heard a roaring flood of ***very true lies*** from
professional
liars: from advertisers, from Republicans, from religionists, and, at maximum red-line settings on the Crazy-O-Meter, from the so-called Religious Right and all their spiral-eyed players. All those lies, however painful and outlandish and ear-bleeding, now seem as mere playful warm-up tosses before the hardball
Play Ball!
signal from the mace-wielding Rollerball officials.

Killer robots whimsically deciding their own targets on any given day is the stuff that keeps the *Depends-now-with-Valium!*
people in business. After all, a couple of small points spring to mind here: humans are imperfect, and human-made devices are imperfect. Imagine if you will, the necessity of recalling a fleet of killer robots after a series of unscheduled massacres; now, imagine what happens when the killer robots pause, consider the recall, and then refuse to report for fine-tuning, flipping you a passable imitation of a fleshy bird. And, a grenade.

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Yes, well...

Thirdly, I would like to offer a compromise solution: Any world leader or political member voting in favor of allowing killer robots on the world's battlefields under any conditions -- be they psychotically dream-fogged Teabaggers, starry-eyed weapons manufacturers and stock holders, drone-enamored politicians, or fantasy role-playing game geeks -- should be allowed to vote in that manner if so desired...

... provided he or she is then also ready to leap into the ring and fight a killer robot or three, and to the death, for the right to instruct us all in the safe operational advantages of a weapons system with a blood-red, death-wish glare in its eyes to rival any loose-wired, equally lunatic Republican's.

Oh, and, while we're at it?

Let's get everybody else already mentioned earlier, on the duly *fingered* list made previously, in the ring for a few rounds with these killer 'bots, too --
including
the Brazilian muggers.

Then we'll all get a Round One *demo* and a *helluva* test drive -- of how this robot-gladiator stuff might actually work, and *really* see how the
World Cup *ru*
neth over
.

-- *talk about your blood, sweat, and tears.*

Brazil: <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-27373457>

Florida drone: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/10/drones-near-collision-airliner-florida>

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GOP wooing women:

<http://talkingpointsmemo.com/livewire/gop-volunteer-initiative-wooing-women-voters>

GOP lip service to rape:

<http://www.policymic.com/articles/50813/7-most-ignorant-things-gop-politicians-have-said-about-rape>

Military rape: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/soraya-chemaly/military-sexual-assault-facts_b_4281704.html

Campus rape:

<http://www.npr.org/2014/04/30/308276181/campus-rape-reports-are-up-and-there-might-be-some-good-in-that>

Campus "nonconsensual sex":

<http://america.aljazeera.com/watch/shows/america-tonight/articles/2014/4/17/nonconsensual-sex-when-rape-is-reworded.html>

Another GOP tax-and-spend policy: <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/05/09/227006/gop-run-house-votes-274-to-131.html>

Cliven: <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/05/02/226393/cattle-rancher-cliven-bundys-sons.html>

and: <http://www.latimes.com/changebrowser?url=/%23section/-1/article/p2p-79996344/>

Robots: <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-27343076>

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Rollerball: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rollerball_\(1975_film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rollerball_(1975_film))

Today's Bonuses:

Rollerball: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtkvGfJbmQA>

What, me, worry? Heck, no -- with modern local TeeBee, I'm all caught up and all up to date!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZ1mA1NeUmU>

Flashback Theater, *now starring* Blood, Sweat, and Tears:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XS-gwb8eSc0>

and, Tommy James & The Shondells: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDI8ZPm3GrU>