

## Let's Play 'Real or Surreal'!

Written by Alex Baer

Friday, 24 February 2012 18:09 - Last Updated Friday, 24 February 2012 19:12

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In keeping with ongoing court decisions and legal probes checking the depths to which liars may legally go as individuals and industries, we present the following *Scratch-and-Sniff Test* to help you more finely hone your truth-detecting skills.

These sharpened abilities may come in handy someday, down the line, at a teevee game show in which you are a contestant guessing the *truthiness* levels of politicians' fact-bending whoppers, or, at the new and used car lot, when the latest price offer you made has to get trotted back for the manager's look-see. In the first case, good luck, you might still win on a technicality or default; in the second, not to worry, your salesperson is pulling for you, going toe-to-toe with the boss on your behalf!

It could come in handy, this talent for separating wheat from *what-the-hell's-that!* Whether for fun or for profit, it can be rewarding on many levels, snatching truth out of the jaws of routine, knee-jerk, down-home, home-spun storytelling, and plain-old lying.

To test your skill, read the sample statements below, and attempt to answer after each one this key question -- the name of our game: *Is It Real or Surreal?* You'll be playing against professional prevaricators, folks who spin lies at the highest levels, and for astronomical power and pay, so best of luck to you!

Oh -- the "Sniff" part of the process is to test your olfactory capacity for inhaling, and then tolerating, the scent of sour rubbish and fouler stuff, too, in these statements. The "Scratch" portion of the self-knowledge quiz comes in as this stuff is bound to make you feel itchy all over, so feel free to scratch anywhere that gets tingly or fidgety. *If it helps any, we understand -- had this same reaction ourselves, and, all day, too.*

**Ready? □ Begin!**

\* "The Simpsons" teevee show recently had its 500th program. Meanwhile, Iran has banned dolls from that show, along with giving Barbie the K-O; but Superman and ol' Spidey have in turn been OK'd.

\* The real cost of a gallon of gas is north of 15 bucks a gallon, after including tax subsidies, but

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not including trillions for war, nor veteran care to keep it flowing our way.

- \* House Republicans held a panel on women's health -- but had no women on the panel, nor would they allow Democrats to put forth any witnesses.
  
- \* The size of the bank bailouts could reach 29 trillion dollars in cumulative costs.
  
- \* There's arsenic in our food; scientists are unsure of safe levels in food versus water.
  
- \* A U.S. senator has used six cows he does not own to avoid paying \$43,000 in taxes on land he does not live on.
  
- \* A member of the military was given a general discharge under honorable conditions after conviction in the deaths of Iraqi civilians. Elsewhere, military members have variously burned copies of the Koran, urinated on Taliban forces they killed, and posed in front of a joint display including both the U.S. flag and a same-sized flag of Hitler's SS unit.
  
- \* GM chair and CEO Dan Akerson reluctantly admitted President Obama had saved GM's bacon by stating, "At the risk of alienating a whole lot of potential customers, I would say [yes]..."
  
- \* For every dollar the five biggest oil companies spend on lobbying, they effectively receive 30 bucks in subsidies.
  
- \* The U.S. government had a program in the 40s injecting Americans with plutonium -- without participants' knowledge.
  
- \* HSBC recently discovered 15 trillion dollars in money transfers on its books, yet is unsure of

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the source of the funds, and have no idea what it's about.

\* Dow Chemical and Monsanto have teamed up to reintroduce use on farmers' fields of part of the "Agent Orange" defoliant cocktail used in Vietnam.

\* BP's 2011 profits are up 114 percent, to 26 billion bucks, working out to 3 million bucks an hour. They are sitting on 14 billion bucks in cash. Lives of victims of the Gulf oil spill are still shattered, many still waiting for help they were promised.

\* The USDA is planning on greasing the skids for faster approval for Monsanto's GMO crops, which many instead call "Frankenfood."

\* In 1984, Pope John Paul II said the following in a speech: "... the needs of the poor must take priority over the desires of the rich; the rights of workers over the maximization of profits; the preservation of the environment over uncontrolled industrial expansion; production to meet social needs over production for military purposes..."

**SCORING:** If you listen to Republicans or Wrong Wing media in any way, shape, or form, you will know everything noted above is false, that it's all lies, and that it's part of that latest plot that's been uncovered. *Have a nice day. ☐ Thanks for playing. ☐ Please take your meds.*

**Everyone else:** Items listed above are all true, and just the sad tip of an even sadder iceberg, too. And: *Sorry about all that itching and scratching. ☐ On behalf of Truth, we sincerely apologize for the discomfort caused -- but, Truth will do that to you, cause some discomfort.*

You want to know the real, unadulterated Truth right now and forever? You can confirm it for yourself, anytime you like. *Look where the money goes. ☐ Trust your nose. ☐ Listen to what your heart already knows.*

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*You don't need to be a meteorologist to know which way the wind blows.*