

**Your on the  
Street Reporter**



**Uyless Black**

**Human Devolution**

## Reverse-Engineering Humans' Hierarchy of Needs: An Example of Human Devolution<sup>1</sup>

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Hello from Your on the Street Reporter. While absorbing the news of the recent mayhem in the Middle East, it occurred to me that a significant segment of the population in this part of the world considers the intake of religion more important to their survival than the intake of food---a reverse effect to humans' hierarchy of needs for survival.

Consider Figure 1. It symbolizes the manner in which humans strive to survive and have done so successfully for millions of years.<sup>2</sup> The bottom of the hierarchy represents the fundamental, basic needs of a human, such as food, water, shelter, and clothing. After these requirements are satisfied, the human needs sex to insure his/her genes are passed to subsequent generations. Sex is placed above some of the other basic needs. After all, copulation is not very high on a person's list of needs if that person is starving or freezing to death.

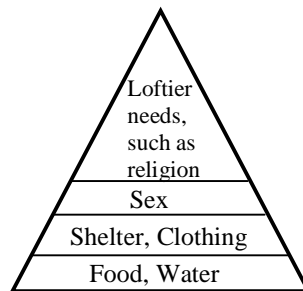


Figure 1. Humans' hierarchy of needs.

The "Loftier needs" shown at the top of the hierarchy become important after the basic needs are satisfied. As examples, many humans strive for self-fulfillment by creating works of art or by gaining an understanding of science. Others wish to engage in politics, perhaps write and play music. Others engage in the practice of religion.

To meet the basic needs shown in Figure 1, humans have a long list of battles under their belts. Even before they wore belts, they were killing one another for physical survival. The acquisition of food, water, turf, and shelter drove our ancestors to plunder and if necessary, to kill one another to survive.

As the humans evolved, they acquired other reasons for raiding their neighbors' larders. Pride entered the picture. Later on, religion provided a motive. *However, pride and religion had nothing to do with physical survival, or with staying alive.* A person could be humiliated or shamed, but these indignities did not lead to death. The lack of pride did not kill. The lack of food did.

The same idea held true for religion. A person could go without religion and still make it through life. The person might feel dead, but he was still breathing. Nature determined---regardless of the person's religious desires---that physical survival was more important than spiritual survival.

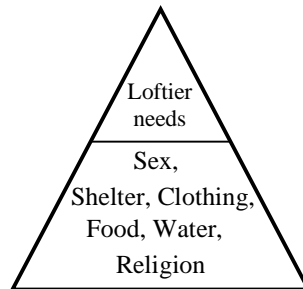
<sup>1</sup> Image in thought cloud is courtesy of Google.

<sup>2</sup> Derived from Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs," which I modified for *2084 and Beyond*, a draft manuscript at this time. The text in this section of the article is sourced from this manuscript.

After all, if one were spiritually dead, the Darwinian drive for propagating the species was still possible. If one were physically dead, all bets were off. The most important mission in life, procreation, would reach a dead-end.

### **Standing the Human Hierarchy of Needs on Its Head**

A substantial number of people in the Middle East have reordered the age-old hierarchy shown in figure 1 to resemble the hierarchy shown in Figure 2. Religion is no longer considered to be an ancillary loftier need. It is held to be a primary need, a basic need for survival.



**Figure 2. A re-ordered hierarchy.**

Taking it to base levels, “I’d rather kill for Allah than eat!” ... “I’d rather rape the infidel, then kill them, than drink.” ... “Religion is my staff of life.”

Am I engaging in exaggeration? I am, but purposefully to make the point that the Islamic militants currently rampaging Syria and Iraq are proclaiming the embracement of Sunni Islam to be *the* fundamental requirement for the survival of anyone who crosses their path.

Consider the scope of their illogical depravity. They wish to create a formal state, one in which (like Hamas) they govern. By governing, they assume the responsibility for caring for the people under their wing. Caring, as in providing the means for their helpless, hapless subjects to have the basic needs of life: food, water, and shelter.

In order for these powerless people---little more than slaves---to gain a morsel of nourishment for their physical survival, they are required by their slave masters to place religion as the most important basic need in the human tribal hierarchy of needs. Otherwise, not only do they not eat or drink, their religious benefactors assure the avenue of sustenance from their mouths to their stomachs (that would be their necks) is a dead-end street.

The human hierarchy of needs reflected in Figure 1 has stood the test of time. Its revision, shown in Figure 2, could be seen as a caricature, one of mockery to be lampooned on late-night talk shows. All true, but for the late-night talk show hosts, their jokes attack some peoples’ most basic need.

You can muck around with their food and drink, but tread lightly on mucking around with their even more primal need, their religion. They may take offense and take to the offensive on your hierarchy of needs, especially the most fundamental need in the hierarchy: your life.