

Weekend reading and listening: water wars, improving services, ISIS, Libya today, AIDS activism

by Terence Wood
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For those of you who don't want to spend your weekend deprived of matters development, here are some interesting podcasts and articles to absorb.

In the *New Yorker*, Michael Specter has an [interesting take](#) on what he argues is the coming crisis of fresh water. He's mostly convincing, although at times he skirts close to hyperbole.

On the subject of crises, if you've been wondering what we are to make of, and to do about, the rise of ISIS, Graeme Wood has a [superb article](#) in *The Atlantic* which ranges from theology, to political economy and geopolitics. A great primer.

Likewise, if you've been wondering what ever happened to Libya after our attention turned elsewhere, Jon Lee Anderson has a [good update](#) on the country's ongoing travails.

And, if you want to listen to a debate on what could and should happen in Iraq, [this episode](#) of bloggingheads.tv in which Robert Wright and Eli Lake slug it out is interesting (if one can tolerate the sound quality, and near descent into shouting; note that you can click on the MP3 link below the video to listen to it as audio, or right click to download the audio).

Away from conflict, [this](#) LSE podcast is a fascinating discussion of the (qualified) success of decentralised service delivery in Ethiopia. And [this](#) (pay-walled unfortunately) ethnography of the experiences of HIV/AIDS activists in Pakistan and their interaction with aid donors is interesting. My quick skim read of it left me partially vexed (the sweeping claims of post-development thinkers, the meaningless use of the word neo-liberalism) and partially unsure (are the claims about the World Bank correct?) but fascinated nonetheless by the descriptions of the lived experience of the local activist and his interactions with the world of aid.

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Link:

<https://devpolicy.org/weekend-reading-and-listening-water-wars-improving-services-isis-libya-today-aids-activism/>