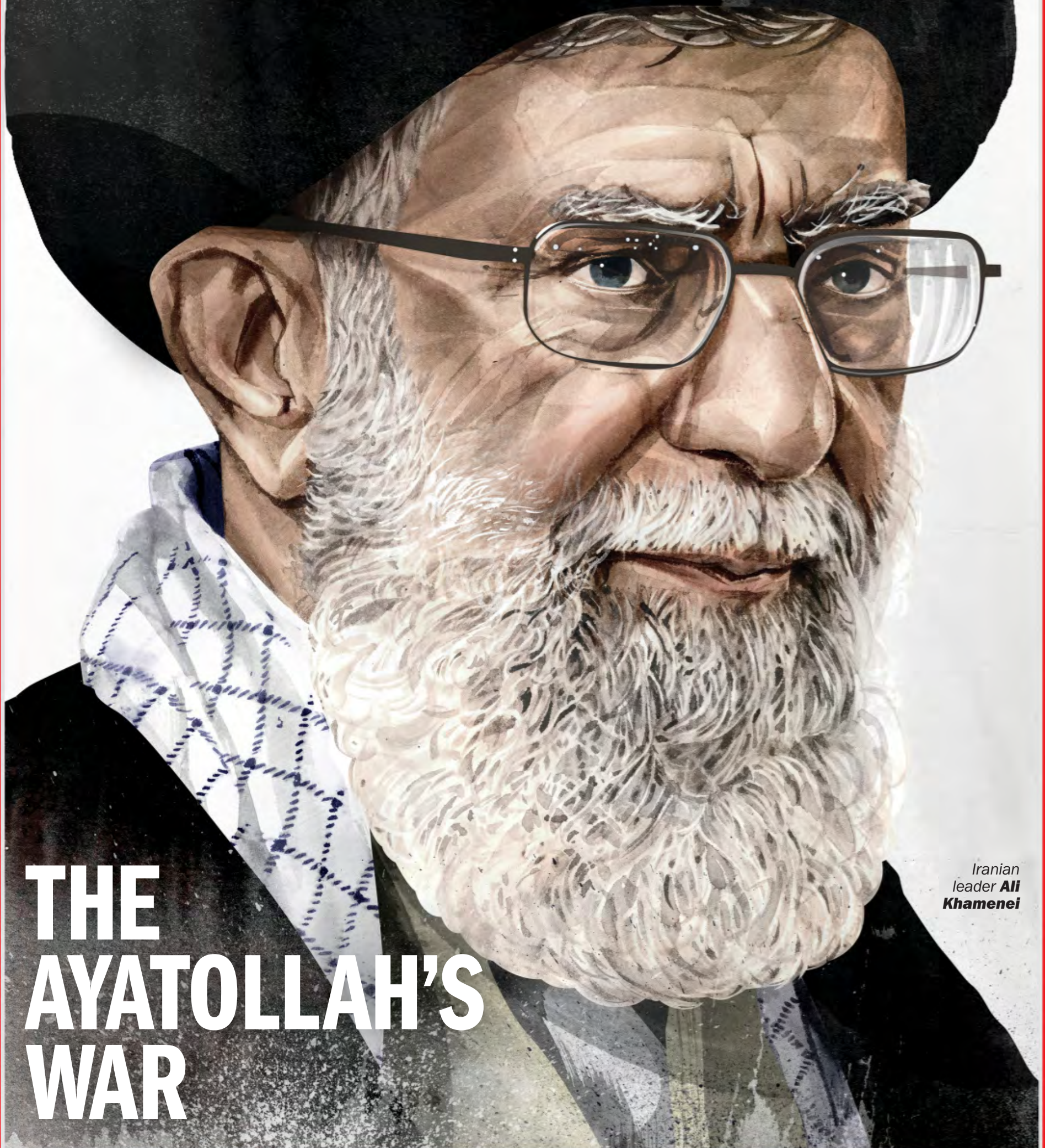


# TIME



## THE AYATOLLAH'S WAR

Iranian  
leader **Ali  
Khamenei**

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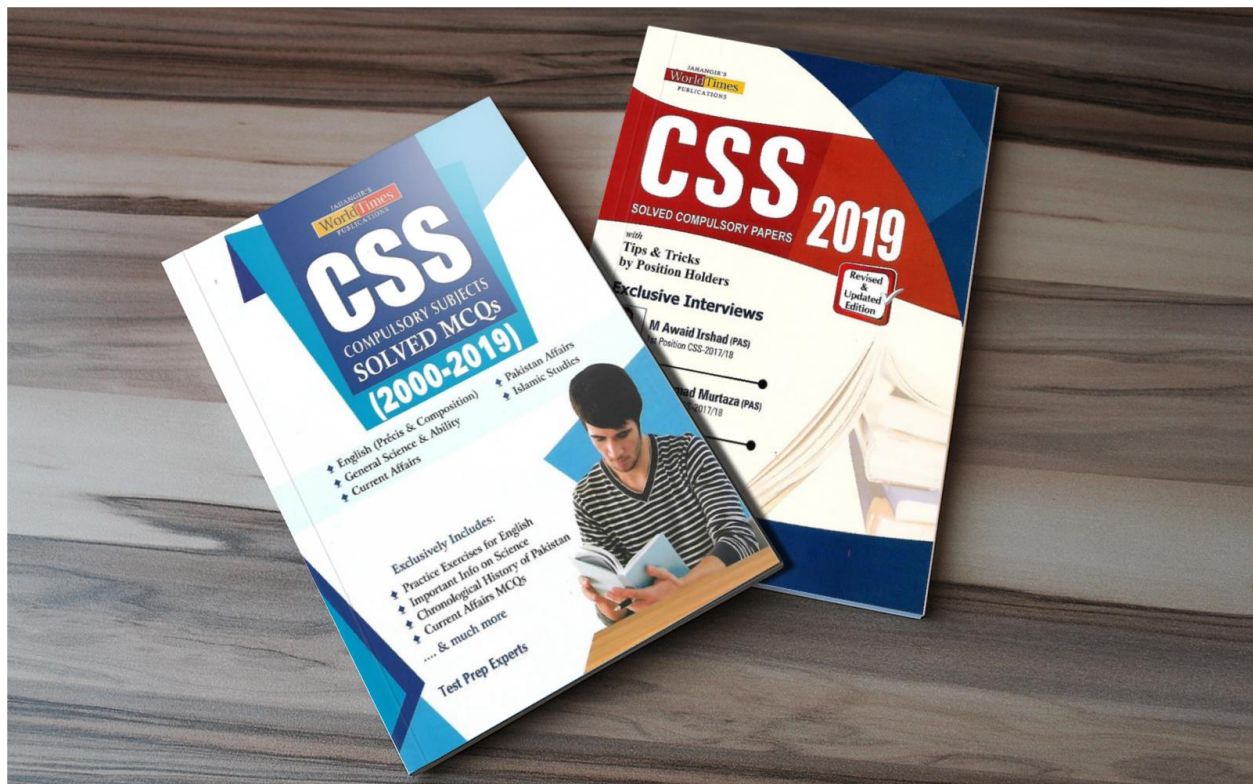
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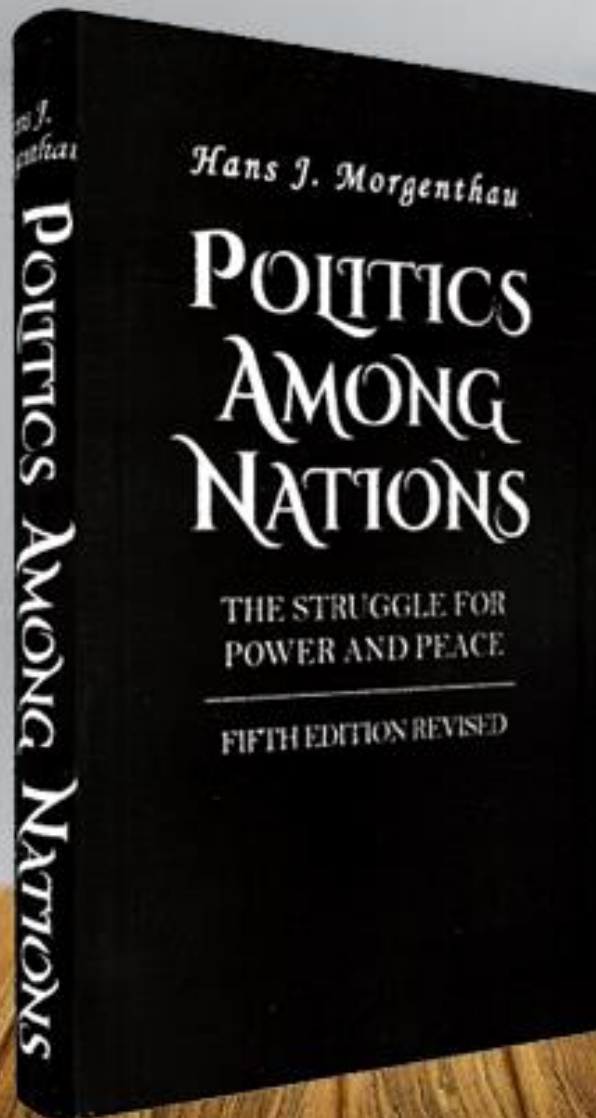


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**Harris with the  
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on Sept. 21

Photograph by  
September Dawn  
Bottoms for TIME

**ON THE COVER:**  
Illustration by  
Hellovon for TIME

# Conversation

## THE CLIMATE ISSUE

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SPECIAL issue highlighting the need to act now against climate change [Sept. 23]. Politicians and governments generally prefer setting long-term climate goals instead of focusing on what should be accomplished by the end of next year. By postponing difficult decisions like banning or heavily taxing fossil fuels to a time when they are no longer in power, they are failing us, future generations and our planet.

*Martin Trafoier,*  
SCHLANDERS, ITALY

IF OUR CLIMATE COLLAPSES, no other problem is important. If voters continue to elect men like Trump and Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro, there is no hope. Not only because those men refuse to see the problem but because voters apparently don't see it either. And the chance that all nations on earth will get together to solve climate problems is an illusion. I won't live to see 2050, but I'm not sure I would want to. The painful and costly changes that should be made are not attractive. It's like the *Titanic*: we see the iceberg, but it's too late to change the direction.

*William Schaefer,*  
DENZLINGEN, GERMANY

POLLUTION DAMAGES THE environment. Human beings

cause pollution. So it follows that lots of humans cause lots of pollution, which does lots of environmental damage. What, then, is the real cause of this climate change that we exacerbate at our peril? Overpopulation! Gee, overpopulation used to be a hot topic for global debate. I wonder what happened to our critical-thinking capacity. What is the obvious solution? Depopulation.

*David Stevens,*  
WENTWORTH FALLS,  
AUSTRALIA

THE SCIENCE IS SOUND, THE argument won. It is time to stop wasting energy trying to convince those who, as they sink beneath rising sea, will deny climate change until their very last breath. Change the message to a simpler one that is easy to understand and act upon: If you make a mess, clean it up. We all learned that as children. Be it land, sea or air, clean up after yourself. Now get to work!

*Ian MacLennan,*  
QUEENSTOWN,  
NEW ZEALAND

"THE TIPPING POINT" ARTICLE about the Amazon rain forest says it all. I would like to hope that I am too pessimistic, but it is so clear that the whole problem is about greed—whether in the Amazon or in some obscure coal-mining area—and about poli-



ticians who care only about staying in power. I will continue switching off the lights, lowering the heating, and taking the bus instead of the car, but for me it's game over.

*Christina Parvaz,*  
CALUIRE-ET-CUIRE, FRANCE

I COULDN'T HELP FEELING disappointed that my TIME copy still arrives in a single-use plastic wrapper, whereas others I subscribe to now arrive in a compostable wrapper made of potato-starch film. Please switch from single-use plastic as soon as possible, which—having read the Climate Issue—is now!

*Jo Redman,*  
SALISBURY, ENGLAND

**PROPPING UP PARLIAMENT** RE "VENERABLE AND VULNERABLE" [Sept. 16]: As Clerk of the House of Commons, I initiated the original condition survey because I felt that

we could not be yet another generation of stewards who passed by on our responsibilities for this amazing building. And as Corporate Officer, bearing the legal responsibility if anything went wrong, I was during my time in office in a constant state of worry about a catastrophic failure of services, fire, or structural problems, despite everything that my wonderful Estates staff could do. We are proceeding in the right direction but, as your article makes abundantly clear, much too slowly. As I said in a debate in the Lords recently, if it takes seven years before we get started on the work (as it may, alas), seven years is a very long time to keep on being lucky. Well done—it is great to have this issue kept in the public eye as you have done.

*Robert Lisvane,*  
HOUSE OF LORDS

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FEED Founder, Lauren Bush Lauren, carrying the **Leather FEED 1 Bag**, which provides **185 school meals**.

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**‘This means being a neighbor to all those who are mistreated and abandoned on the streets of our world.’**

**POPE FRANCIS**, unveiling a sculpture representing migrants and refugees, at the Vatican on Sept. 29

*‘I lost my mother and now I watch my wife falling victim to the same powerful forces.’*

**PRINCE HARRY**, announcing a lawsuit after a U.K. media company published a private letter of Meghan Markle’s

**‘TODAY IS NOT A CELEBRATION FOR US IN HONG KONG. TODAY, WE ARE MOURNING.’**

**ALFRED**, a protester in Hong Kong, on Oct. 1, the 70th anniversary of China’s Communist Party rule

**‘I think the gutsiest thing I’ve ever done, well, personally, [is] make the decision to stay in my marriage.’**

**HILLARY CLINTON**, promoting *The Book of Gutsy Women*, which she co-wrote with daughter Chelsea, on *Good Morning America* on Oct. 1

*‘It is hard for the West to accept seeing its centuries-long dominance in world affairs diminishing.’*

**SERGEI LAVROV**, Russian Foreign Minister, in a speech at the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 27

**U.S. INCOME INEQUALITY**



**The Gini index, a measure of income inequality, for the U.S. in 2018—its highest level since tracking began**

**Smelling**  
Officials investigated a mysterious rotten-fish odor in two New Jersey cities



**Tasting**  
Domino’s Pizza in Australia posted a job for “chief garlic bread taste tester”

**300,000**

Number of customers Dunkin’ Donuts allegedly failed to properly warn after a 2018 cyberattack, per a lawsuit by New York State; the chain says it made sure customers were safe



ILLUSTRATION BY BROWN BIRD DESIGN FOR TIME

# The Brief

**HIS PEOPLE**  
Even amid scandal, Boris Johnson was hailed by many at the U.K.'s Conservative Party conference on Oct. 2



## INSIDE

*FOREVER 21'S BANKRUPTCY SUGGESTS SHIFTING TASTES*

*A NEW CALIFORNIA LAW IS CHANGING COLLEGE SPORTS*

*REMEMBERING JESSYE NORMAN'S DISTINCTIVE VOICE*

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES VEYSEY

WORLD

## Johnson rallies base as scandals loom

By Billy Perrigo/Manchester, U.K.

**A** LONG STANDING OVATION GREETED U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson as he appeared onstage in Manchester on the final day of the annual Conservative Party conference on Oct. 2. It was his first speech to his party membership as Prime Minister, and he brought the gusto his right-wing base has come to expect, pledging to deliver Brexit, reinvigorate the national economy and fire the leader of the opposition into orbit.

But despite the adulation of loyal supporters here, Johnson's future looks less certain than ever. He not only looks increasingly unable to make good on his promise to deliver Brexit by the Oct. 31 deadline, but also is in danger of losing political standing ahead of a seemingly inevitable early election because of two emerging scandals about his personal conduct while in positions of power.

One dates from his time as mayor of London in the early 2010s and involves his relationship with former model Jennifer Arcuri, who allegedly told friends she had a sexual affair with Johnson while he was married. Officials are investigating reports Arcuri improperly received government money, including two grants totaling £11,500 (\$14,000) from a public fund managed by Johnson at the time. Both he and Arcuri deny any impropriety.

The second scandal stems from new allegations, published on the eve of the conference, that in 1999, when he was editor of *Spectator* magazine, Johnson groped the upper thigh of journalist Charlotte Edwardes under a table at a dinner. Johnson's office said the incident never happened, but his Health Minister said he felt Edwardes was "trustworthy." The allegation has also renewed attention on the Prime Minister's past indiscretions, which include a number of extramarital affairs and at least one child born out of wedlock.

On the conference floor, Johnson's party faithful were happy to ignore the new allegations, so long as he could deliver Brexit. "My honest view is: Who cares?" responded one delegate. "The only reason it's coming up now is people who are trying to stop Boris Johnson in his tracks." Established members of the party also smelled a conspiracy. "He's under attack from all sides from people who wish to prevent Brexit," Geoffrey Van Orden, a senior Conservative lawmaker in the European Parliament, told TIME. "The sources of these

accusations are people who want to destabilize Boris' government and distract people from his main task."

In his speech, Johnson suggested dark machinations were at work. "[People] are beginning to suspect that there are forces in their country that don't want Brexit delivered at all," he told the crowd, to a thunderous response. "Within the Conservative Party it's clear he's their champion," says Tim Bale, professor of politics at Queen Mary University of London, "partly because he's been offering them everything they've ever wanted on Brexit. In spite of all the allegations about his personal life, he still remains very popular. In the same way they do with Trump, people dismiss the sexual-impropriety allegations as either unbelievable or unimportant."

Yet polls show Johnson's popularity in the country as a whole is waning. A majority (55%) is now dissatisfied with him as Prime Minister, up 17 points from July, according to a poll by Ipsos Mori published on Sept. 30. Women, in particular, are turning against him. According to a YouGov poll published on Sept. 27, 47% think he is "dislikable," a 7-point increase from late August. The more recent allegations may drive that figure even higher.

**SUCH A CHANGE** will matter if, as widely expected, a general election takes place in the U.K. this winter. Although Johnson pledged onstage to ensure Brexit happens on Oct. 31 "come what may," he is legally unable to do so unless he manages to strike a new, last-minute deal with European leaders. If he fails and Parliament forces him to seek another extension to the deadline, an election may follow that Johnson's advisers believe he could win by casting himself as the victim of a cabal that wishes to stop Brexit at all costs.

His die-hard supporters may demand a greater sacrifice. Fifty percent of Conservative voters would prefer he break the law to force a "no deal" Brexit rather than ask for a further delay, according to a YouGov poll from Sept. 9. That might leave him in a jail cell or worse, said Dominic Grieve, a lawmaker Johnson expelled from the parliamentary party for rebelling against the government. "Ultimately, the Queen would dismiss him... She's not going to have a Prime Minister who breaks the law. This is fundamental."

Just two months into his premiership, Johnson's grip on the keys to 10 Downing Street seems more tenuous than ever. But in his conference speech he betrayed barely a hint of concern, tossing out jokes and red-meat slogans to rapturous applause. Yet for all the bellicose rhetoric, there were hints of conciliation too. "This is not an anti-European party, and it is not an anti-European country," he told the crowd. "We love Europe. We are European."

In Johnson's whole speech, they were virtually the only sentences greeted by silence. □

**'She's not going to have a Prime Minister who breaks the law. This is fundamental.'**

DOMINIC GRIEVE,  
U.K. Member of  
Parliament, on Queen  
Elizabeth







**HONG KONG CHAOS** Riot police pin down a young antigovernment protester in Hong Kong on Sept. 29, two days before China's National Day drew tens of thousands of demonstrators into the streets to march for demands including universal suffrage. An 18-year-old protester was shot in the chest, and law enforcement responded to gasoline bombs and homemade weapons with tear gas and rubber bullets. According to official figures, 25 police officers and 66 protesters were injured.

#### THE BULLETIN

## As Forever 21 files for bankruptcy, the 'retail apocalypse' marches on

**AMERICAN MALL BEHEMOTH** FOREVER 21 achieved massive success in the 2000s by selling inexpensive variations on the latest styles, and now its decline is a window into a different kind of trend. The chain, founded in 1984 by a couple who had immigrated to the U.S. from South Korea, declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy on Sept. 29. Forever 21 has said that it will terminate operations in 40 countries and close up to 350 stores worldwide, and that up to 178 of its 549 U.S. outlets will be liquidated.

**OUT OF STYLE** Industry analysts see the store closings as a sign of shifting tastes on both sides of Forever 21's business model. Some consumers have become less inclined toward the cheap, disposable clothing for which the retailer is known, turning instead to brands that claim more sustainable or ethical business models; others among Forever 21's young clientele are opting for more nimble brands like Fashion Nova and Shein, which lean even harder on trendiness. "There's a bit of a battle emerging between the rise of conscious consumption and the rise of ultrafast fashion," explains Elizabeth Cline, author of *The Conscious Closet*.

**CHANGING ROOMS** From a business perspective, Forever 21's crisis may have been caused more by management mistakes than consumer forces. The brand got in trouble by moving into overlarge spaces abandoned by former retail anchors like Sears, and into categories in which it lacked expertise, like consumer electronics, argues Mark Cohen, a professor of retail studies at Columbia University. The company also generated additional burdens with aggressive international ventures. "Mindless expansion has been Forever 21's downfall," Cohen says.

**NOT BUYING IT** Facing declining foot traffic and rising online competition, retailers from Payless ShoeSource to Toys "R" Us to Barneys New York have also filed for bankruptcy in recent years. In what's been called the "retail apocalypse," individual workers have been hit the hardest; Forever 21's announcement has put the future of its more than 30,000 employees at risk. And they won't be the last: consultants at the firm Coresight Research have projected that 12,000 American brick-and-mortar stores could close before the end of 2019.

—ALEJANDRO DE LA GARZA

#### NEWS TICKER

## Major floods devastate India

Unusually late monsoon rains caused devastating floods in northern India, **leading to the deaths of at least 100 people**, officials said on Sept. 30. The monsoon—the most severe since 1994—left large areas underwater, forcing people to use lifeboats to escape their homes.

## Trump Admin cuts refugee quota

President Trump on Sept. 26 limited the number of refugees who will be allowed to settle in the U.S. in the coming year to 18,000, down from 30,000 last year, **prompting condemnation from human-rights advocates**. The Obama Administration allowed up to 110,000 refugees to resettle in the U.S. in 2017.

## Morocco judgment sparks outrage

A Moroccan judge on Sept. 30 sentenced journalist Hajar Rais-souni and her fiancé to a year in prison, after they were **found guilty of premarital sex and getting an abortion**. They deny an abortion happened, and rights groups see the case, which sparked protests, as part of a crackdown on critical coverage of the government.

## NEWS TICKER

### Judge rules for Harvard on admissions

A federal judge sided with Harvard University in a high-profile affirmative-action case on Oct. 1, saying the institution **has the right to consider race in making admissions decisions.**

The plaintiffs, who alleged the school discriminates against Asian Americans, say they'll appeal all the way to the Supreme Court if necessary.

### Far right sees losses in Austria vote

Austria's center-right People's Party (ÖVP)—led by former Chancellor Sebastian Kurz—won a snap national election on Sept. 29, taking 37% of the vote. The poll was triggered by a corruption scandal involving the **far-right Freedom Party, whose support fell by a third, to 16%.**

### Sanders has heart procedure

After feeling chest discomfort on Oct. 1, Vermont Senator and 2020 Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders had **two stents inserted to address a blocked artery.** He canceled campaign events to rest, but his team said he was “in good spirits.”

## GOOD QUESTION

### Will a law permitting player payments ruin college sports?

ON SEPT. 30, AFTER CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR Gavin Newsom signed into law SB 206—a bill that allows the state's college athletes to profit from their names, images and likenesses and to sign endorsement deals despite NCAA rules forbidding them—state lawmakers across America followed California's lead. The Democratic leader of Florida's house filed a bill mimicking California's first-of-its-kind law, which goes into effect in 2023. So did a legislator in Illinois. Not even five hours after the California news broke, two Pennsylvania house members, Dan Miller and Ed Gainey, circulated a “Fair Pay to Play Act” of their own. “The future is starting in California,” Miller says. “It's time to roll.”

So far, the NCAA is refusing to embrace this sea change. The organization argues that a patchwork of state laws will bring chaos to college sports and “make unattainable the goal of providing a fair and level playing field.” But inequality is already rampant in college sports. Football powers such as Alabama, Clemson and Georgia consistently sit atop coaches' polls and have resources, like gleaming facilities and reputations for churning out pros, that the lower rungs of Division 1 can't offer. If Alabama starts losing recruits to UCLA because players can sign endorsements in California, Alabama can change its state laws to keep up.

College sports officials fear a player-payment movement will spread, but schools and their athletics programs aren't actually likely to be hurt by such laws. First, under the California model, they aren't on the hook for compensation: third parties, whether sneaker companies or local car dealerships, are the ones making payments. Second, allowing players to profit shouldn't damage the supposed purity of “amateur” college athletics and turn off fans. Critics made similar arguments about the Olympics when more professionals began competing in the 1980s. But Michael Phelps and Usain Bolt seemed to do O.K.; the Games attract multibillion-dollar TV deals. Plus, college sports will always be a fun spectacle: the 11 a.m. tailgate sausage and beer will still taste good, even if the starting linebacker is a Tuscaloosa Toyota pitchman.

Most important, these laws promote basic fairness—and not just for future NFL stars. Female athletes, for example, will be able to promote themselves and secure sponsorships while thriving in college—a key allowance as professional opportunities remain sparse in women's sports. And for the many athletes from disadvantaged backgrounds who don't end up making the NFL or NBA, their monetary value soars while they compete in college. Why shouldn't they seize it? “California gives us hope that there's a level of justice we can get to,” says Gainey, the Pennsylvania lawmaker co-sponsoring a bill. “At the same time college athletes are helping schools make millions, let them help themselves. Let them make some money.”

—SEAN GREGORY



## POLITICS

### Spin-doctored images

Canada's Green Party leader, Elizabeth May, apologized after staffers edited a photo of her so **the disposable cup** she held looked reusable. Here, other electoral collages. —Ciara Nugent

#### FACE-OFF

During the 2014 Texas GOP primary for Senate, former Representative Steve Stockman's team pasted rival Senator John Cornyn's face onto a photo of Florida's then governor Charlie Crist smiling with President Obama.

#### WINDOW DRESSING

In 2015, India's state information agency shared a doctored photo of Prime Minister Narendra Modi surveying flood damage in Chennai (formerly Madras) from a plane, crudely pasting a closeup of a neighborhood over the window.

#### SHOE SHAME

Staff for Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison wanted to remove his scruffy sneakers from an official family portrait in January 2019. Social-media users were quick to point out they had given him two left feet.

# Milestones

## DIED

U.S. diplomat **Joseph Wilson**, who in 2003 publicly countered the George W. Bush Administration's claims that Iraq was attempting to acquire nuclear weapons, on Sept. 27, at 69.

## ANNOUNCED

That **nuclear-disarmament talks** will resume between the U.S. and North Korea, by officials in both countries on Oct. 1, shortly before North Korea launched a missile test.

## RESIGNED

GOP Congressman Chris Collins of New York, on Sept. 30, a day before pleading guilty to **federal securities-fraud charges**.

## CONVICTED

Former Dallas police officer **Amber Guyger**, of murder, on Oct. 1. In September 2018, Guyger fatally shot her neighbor Botham Jean, who was black and unarmed, after she mistakenly went into his apartment instead of her own.

## PULLED

**Heartburn drug Zantac**, from shelves in several major pharmacy chains, after the FDA said earlier in September it had detected small amounts of a possibly cancer-causing chemical in the medication. The company that makes Zantac says it meets all safety requirements.

## TESTED

A new Facebook policy that would **hide the number of likes** on posts, with Australian users, on Sept. 27.



*Norman in Ariadne auf Naxos at the Metropolitan Opera in 1993*

## DIED

### Jessye Norman

*Opera goddess*

By Denyce Graves

WHEN I WAS A STUDENT AT THE NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY, Jessye Norman gave a recital in Boston, and afterward I stood in line with all the other admirers to tell her how much she had impacted me. I said to her, “Ms. Norman, what could I possibly say to you that you haven’t already heard a thousand times?” And she said, “My dear, I’m sure you can think of something.”

Onstage, Norman—who died on Sept. 30 at 74—portrayed a lot of mythological characters and Greek goddesses, and for me, coming up in the early ’80s, she really was an absolute goddess. She was a tremendous source of pride for a young African-American singer. When we look through the lens of classical music, we don’t often see someone with brown skin. But to see someone like her, who was a master at what she did, who carried herself with such majesty, you’d be encouraged to say to yourself, “If she can do that, then that’s something that I can aspire toward.”

And then the voice—the voice was one in a million, rich and colorful with so much texture from the bottom to the top. It washed over you, but it also felt like an embrace. She possessed an incredible instrument, and she was a scholar in her approach to singing. She was a real grande dame in every sense of the word and called us to be our best selves as human beings and as artists. Just because of who she was, she made us rise in her presence.

*Graves is an operatic mezzo-soprano who appears this season in the Metropolitan Opera’s Porgy and Bess*

## DIED

### Jacques Chirac

*France’s stalwart*

JACQUES CHIRAC—WHO DIED on Sept. 26 at 86—towered over French politics for nearly four decades, as mayor of Paris, Prime Minister and finally President for 12 years. To some, he seemed to lack strong views or convictions. But to others, he now seems to encapsulate a less troubled time in France. “He had a really deep understanding of the people, and at the same time he thought that France had something special to say to the world,” says Dominique de Villepin, a former Prime Minister who served as Chirac’s chief of staff.

Indeed, Chirac was France’s first leader to acknowledge its role in the Holocaust. He was also the first world leader to rush to New York after 9/11 to show unity. “He felt very strongly the solidarity with the American people,” de Villepin says. “He understood very deeply how the world was going to change.” But Chirac broke with the U.S. in 2003 over its invasion of Iraq, a schism that took years to heal.

In his beloved France, something else will likely shape his legacy: his flair for connection. “He had huge pleasure in meeting people,” de Villepin says. “He was really in politics because he loved it.”

—VIVIENNE WALT



*Chirac in Paris in 1996*

## After 25 years of interviewing misfits, **Louis Theroux** turns the spotlight on himself

By **Suyin Haynes/London**

WITHIN MINUTES OF OUR MEETING IN A CENTRAL London coffee shop, Louis Theroux starts peppering me with questions. How I am, how I came to be in this job and where I've traveled from to meet him. He's friendly yet persistent, the approach he's built a career on. Within a matter of minutes, and without meaning to, I find I've revealed to him my abridged autobiography.

Such is the award-winning technique of Theroux, 49, widely regarded as the face of modern British documentary filmmaking. For the past 25 years, he has been making and presenting television programs featuring quirky subjects, ranging from UFO investigators to committed Nazis, Miami megajail inmates to big-game trophy hunters. Persuasive but not pushy, challenging but not judgmental, his knack for convincing his interviewees to (often unwittingly) reveal more of their psyches has endeared him to millions of viewers around the world. Whether speaking to a transgender woman and her cellmate about their relationship inside San Quentin prison, or asking a member of the Phelps family why she exiled herself from the incendiary Westboro Baptist Church, Theroux elicits poignant, genuine responses.

Now Theroux has become his own subject. His new book, *Gotta Get Theroux This*, is a memoir of his life and career on camera, from his early days in 1994 as a fresh-faced correspondent for Michael Moore's satirical NBC news show *TV Nation*. Putting himself in the hot seat does not come naturally, he says. "I've made it my habit to be slightly invisible in my programs. Although I'm on camera, I don't really give that much of myself. I think that's what's needed, because of the nature of the programs. I'm a straight man in a world that is somewhat weird, mysterious, dangerous or just emotionally charged in one way or another."

**THEROUX WAS BORN** in Singapore in 1970 to an American father (the writer Paul Theroux) and British mother, and eventually settled in London. He and his brother Marcel, now a writer, were encouraged to be interested in the world, and grew up spending summers in Cape Cod with their American family. "That was a big thing growing up: you weren't tribal. [My parents'] outlook was very much cosmopolitan, striving to be open-minded, unblinkered as to how other countries

### **THEROUX QUICK FACTS**

#### **Family connections**

His first cousin is actor Justin Theroux. "Coolness came to him as though it was his first language," Louis writes.

#### **Odd jobs**

Uncertain about his future after graduating from Oxford, Theroux moved to the U.S. and worked in a glass-blowing studio.

#### **Film favorites**

Theroux cites directors Joshua Oppenheimer, the Maysles brothers and D.A. Pennebaker as influences.

and other cultures see the world."

Those themes run clear through Theroux's films, in which he is often a slightly bemused bespectacled British observer interacting with people living in unusual worlds or subcultures. "I think we have a tendency to settle in certain ways of thinking, or select data sets that confirm prejudices we have on a given subject," he says. To upend these assumptions, several of his programs bring dimensions to subjects that a viewer might not expect. One program focusing on convicted sex offenders showed a woman welcoming Theroux into her home with a crumb cake while wearing an ankle monitor, telling him the hardest part about being on parole is being separated from her children. "I'm interested in those inconvenient bits of data, or those points at which you are forced to acknowledge that something does not fit the template or the paradigm."

In 1998, the BBC aired *Louis Theroux's Weird Weekends*, in which he spent time with people on the extreme fringes of American society—right-wing militia members, UFO enthusiasts and porn stars. Four years later, *When Louis Met ...*, a series of interviews with high-profile British personalities, would follow. One of these was *When Louis Met ... Jimmy*, in which Theroux spent time with then popular entertainer and television presenter Jimmy Savile. Two years after Savile died in October 2011, U.K. police investigations uncovered that he had been guilty of hundreds of criminal sex-abuse offenses, targeting mostly children. That revelation has had a lasting impact on Theroux—who had formed a "quasi-friendship" with Savile after filming together—and was partially the impetus for writing the memoir.

The lighthearted nature of Theroux's questioning of Savile led to retrospective criticism of his interview style, best described as "faux naive." In an early segment on *TV Nation*, for example, Theroux interviewed neo-Nazis in Montana and earnestly discussed their theories of different races being banished to different planets after an impending apocalypse. Is it all an act? He says that is in the top three questions he is ever asked. "Am I exactly the same person on camera as off camera? Well, evidently no because I'm doing a job on camera, and part of that is asking questions to which I know the answer sometimes." That statement circles back to his immersive approach, talking to subjects in the languages of their own worlds. "Maybe it's my sense of humor to ask something really obvious ... I don't know if that's a helpful answer or not, but basically I think me saying stupid things sometimes is funny. I plead guilty to that."

Still, his approach risks seeming like he is letting his subjects off the hook—something survivors of Savile's abuse charged him with when he



met with them for a follow-up documentary in 2016. At one point, Theroux is called “gullible and silly,” and confronted with accusations of failing to recognize evil in plain sight. “I needed to hear that, actually,” he says now.

**SOME OF THE “WEIRD” IDEAS** Theroux helped introduce to viewing audiences have since become more widely accepted. In a 1998 edition of *Weird Weekends*, for example, he traveled to Idaho to meet survivalists preparing for the apocalypse. Theroux says the story hasn’t really changed. “Most of those guys or guys like them are still doing similar sorts of things, with the slight difference that sometimes they’re being retweeted by Donald Trump Jr. or President Trump himself,” he says. “In other words, the fever swamps of conspiracy have a hold over mainstream discourse now.”

Theroux’s early films—which have won a new generation of fans after being added to Netflix—frequently involved partial integration into the world he was in: stripping for a Polaroid photo on an L.A. pornography shoot, or getting

**‘The fever swamps of conspiracy have a hold over mainstream discourse now.’**

LOUIS THEROUX

liposuction at a Beverly Hills clinic. While these kinds of stunts were what he calls “the price of admission” for making programs that would keep people entertained, today he keeps the antics to a minimum. Instead, in recent years Theroux has turned his attention to more serious matters. Recent films include 2016’s *Drinking to Oblivion*, an unsparing look at alcohol addiction, and this year’s *Mothers on the Edge*, in which he met sufferers of postpartum depression. He made his first feature-length documentary, *My Scientology Movie*, in 2016—once again shedding light on an outlier community. The linking factor, he says, is human beings themselves. “What all the films entail is a certain level of psychological angst, or complexity, or contradictoriness. I want to go deeper into why people behave the way that they do.”

As we stand up to leave, a woman approaches, seemingly keen to take a selfie with Theroux. Instead she hands him her phone and asks him to take a photo of her, standing in front of the park’s colorful flower beds. Theroux smiles politely and fulfills her request, at ease again behind the camera. □



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# LightBox

## Holding tight

A man carries a boy through a cloud of tear gas during a clash with police that began after fires broke out at a crowded migrant camp on the Greek island of Lesbos on Sept. 29. One woman died in the blazes. Human-rights groups have long criticized conditions at the Moria camp, which was built for 3,000 people but houses four times that number after a surge of arrivals over the summer. Following the protest, the Greek government said it would speed up plans to move or deport thousands of asylum seekers off islands like Lesbos.

Photograph by Angelos Tzortzinis—AFP/Getty Images  
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# HELP SAVE THE FRIDGE

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The fridge needs help. Because much of the energy we need to power it produces waste, pollutes the atmosphere and changes the climate. We can transition the way we produce and use energy in a way that will contribute to a sustainable future. We're campaigning in countries all around the world to provide the solutions for governments, for companies and for all members of society to make the right choices about energy conservation and use. And you, as an individual, can help just by the choices you make. Help us look after the world where you live at [panda.org](http://panda.org)



Spitsbergen, Norway.

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# The View

THE GUARDIANS

## **WE STILL NEED JUSTICE FOR JAMAL**

By Hatice Cengiz

Oct. 2, 2018, was the last day I would wake up to a normal life like everyone else, full of hopes and desires. Who would have known that it would be the last day I saw my fiancé, Jamal Khashoggi? Who would have known that when I left the house, I would become a real-life answer to the question: “Can someone’s life change in a day?” ▶

# TheView Opener

I wasn't supposed to be with Jamal that day when he went to the Saudi consulate to get the necessary documents for our marriage. He knew I was busy with my Ph.D. work and had told me to carry on with my studying. But in the end, I offered to go with him. Apart from being a person I loved, Jamal was a person I profoundly respected, whose life, status, experience and values I admired. I was always happy to know where he was going and to help him out, especially when he was in Istanbul, where we spent a lot of time together. It made him happy too.

Who would have known that as we were finalizing preparations for our marriage, others were moving in for his murder? As the hours passed by in deep silence, I waited for him and stared at the gates of the consulate in fear and hope. By the time I realized something was wrong, the damage was already done. Jamal's blood had already been spilled, his body cut up into pieces.

I still had no idea of the dark nights to come. In the days that followed, my phone rang constantly for hours. Were the calls from journalists? I could not answer most of them. Although it took a long time for the news to emerge, Jamal's death in the consulate that day was eventually confirmed to the public on Oct. 19. Turkey was saved from being the host to an anonymous murder. That is hardly enough to ease the enormous loss of Jamal.

After the news of the atrocity, I felt detached from life for a long time. I did not read the news; I did not follow what was written during the period. Articles or phone calls would not be able to bring Jamal back. But journalists and rights groups managed to keep the issue on the international agenda for a long time, with sheer loyalty to Jamal and what he stood for. For this I am grateful, and I hope they will uphold their moral responsibility and continue to pursue justice for this brave man.

But Jamal was murdered. I will never see or have the chance to meet with him again in the earthly realm. All my dreams have been profoundly shaken. Before this, I had my own struggles in

**Jamal's murder was a blow to everyone fighting for democracy in the region**



life like everyone else. Now, Jamal's fight for justice has been added to them. Because world leaders claim to represent justice but lack morality, I have been left with the burden of carrying this feeling. I am not just the woman going after her partner's cause in his absence but also the one left to hold to account those who took his life.

**A YEAR LATER**, the first thing that comes to my mind is shame, an immense disappointment that the systems of the world are built on economic interests rather than ethical values. As a researcher of the Middle East and a future academic, I can see that the killing of Jamal was not simply the murder of a journalist. It was also

the murder of fundamental values: human rights, the international rule of law, the norms of diplomacy. The situation reminded me of the words of the wise Alija Izetbegovic during the Bosnian War: "What is being defended in Bosnia today is not just Bosnia itself;

*A candlelight vigil for Khashoggi outside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Oct. 25, 2018*

what is being defended is Europe. For in Bosnia today, the values vowed to be upheld by Europe are being defended."

Jamal supported the fight for democracy in the Middle East after the Arab Spring. "It is time for concepts like freedom of thought and democracy to arrive in Arab states as well," he would say. It was statements like these that so provoked the current leaders of Saudi Arabia, afraid of their own shadows, their rage growing into such animosity that they carved up a human being because of his words.

Jamal only wanted to practice journalism. He acted as a journalist should. But in the minds of those who only saw journalists as spies giving intelligence to the public, he was extremely dangerous.

From this perspective, Jamal's murder shows how our part of the world—the Middle East—is being left in the dark ages. Most of Jamal's friends were either in prison or did not have a strong enough voice to speak

to the whole world. But Jamal found comfort in knowing that so many like-minded people were with him and supported him. This is what he meant every time he said he was not alone with these beliefs.

What happened to Jamal showed how far human rights have been abandoned in the Arab world. Jamal's name now represents all the nameless people in this region who would like to speak but can't articulate what they want to say and have to remain anonymous on social media.

The murder of Jamal, a rare man of his generation, was a blow to everyone fighting for democracy in the region. It wasn't just people who knew him who cried at his death; it was everyone crying for the fate of the people from this region. Muslims around the world performed a funeral prayer without a body. In getting rid of his body, his killers had dealt yet another blow to those who loved Jamal.

But at the same time, they sowed the seeds of a new enlightenment and a movement to fight for freedom around the world and, above all, in the Middle East. While I was traveling recently, a man came to help me with my suitcase, walking with me until passport control without looking at me. When we paused, I thanked him for his kind gesture. "May Jamal rest in peace," he replied. "I wish I could do more for you. I am Iranian; I recognized you as we were boarding the plane. I am so sorry for what happened. I was very much affected by it all." Then he said goodbye and left, and I stood there watching him walk away.

The savagery of Jamal's killing pained anyone with a conscience. By helping me that day, that Iranian man tried to relieve his own suffering. Days later, I saw a middle-aged lady approaching me. Her eyes brimming with tears, she asked me if I was Jamal's partner; I said yes. "Please, let me hug you," she said, wanting to prove how sincere she was. I learned this mother was from Iraq and was suffering too, sharing in the pain of Jamal's brutal killing. They tried to silence Jamal forever. But instead he has become the symbol of our collective moral conscience, the voice for the voiceless in the Middle East. □

#### THE RISK REPORT

## If only the Japan–South Korea trade war were about trade

By Ian Bremmer



THE U.S.-CHINA trade war is inflicting the most damage to the global economy, but it's the trade spat between Japan and South Korea that signals the larger troubles ahead for the world.

South Korea's Supreme Court ruled in late 2018 that a number of Japanese companies must compensate a group of South Koreans (or their descendants) who were forced to work for them during Japan's occupation of the Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945. Japan argues that all such claims were settled by a 1965 treaty between the two sides.

South Korea's Supreme Court disagrees, and President Moon Jae-in's administration insists that it has no authority to tell the country's independent judiciary to reverse the ruling. Frustrated with the proceedings and determined to put pressure on Moon's government to intervene in some way, Japan strengthened restrictions on several high-tech exports to South Korea in July and downgraded South Korea's status as a trusted trading partner in August. South Korea returned the trade fire, and suddenly two of Asia's largest economies were locked in a trade war.

There is not much love lost between Japan and South Korea. Nearly 75 years after World War II ended, the two sides continue to argue over the issue of how much, how often and in what form Japan should appropriately atone for its past transgressions. But what makes this recent round of historical finger-pointing worrisome is the speed with which trade was roped into this fight and how effective it has been in satisfying public outcry. Boycotts

have already erupted; in South Korea, sales of Japanese beer and cars have tumbled precipitously. At the end of the summer, nearly 7 in 10 Japanese supported the tech trade restrictions slapped on Seoul; more than half of South Koreans approved of how Moon's administration was dealing with Japan.

**WITH NUMBERS LIKE THESE**, it's unlikely that either Moon or Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will make the first move toward reconciliation (as each is demanding of the other). On Oct. 1, Seoul accused Tokyo of sitting on the approval of a Japanese firm's request to send a shipment of liquid hydrogen fluoride—critical in

**Trade has become an acceptable weapon in a country's diplomatic arsenal**

building semiconductors—to South Korea, fueling worries over tech supply chains. In August, the trade war even spilled over into security as Seoul announced that it would not renew an intelligence-sharing pact with Tokyo, to the dismay of the U.S.

Not that Washington can say much about it these days. After all, it was the U.S. that decided to bundle a host of other disputes it had with the Chinese into a trade fight—not to mention threatening to increase tariffs on Mexico unless it beefed up border security—setting a troubling precedent for those once wary of doing the same. Trade has become an acceptable weapon in a country's diplomatic arsenal; in August, French President Emmanuel Macron threatened to upend the E.U.-Mercosur trade agreement over Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's refusal to deal with fires in the Amazon rain forest. With the U.S. decision to stop playing a global leadership role and mediating disputes, the world will face more grievances between countries that roil economies and trade. □



*Trump at the White House on Sept. 26 after the House launched an impeachment inquiry*

PHOTOGRAPH BY GABRIELLA DEMCZUK FOR TIME



Nation

# TRUMP'S CONSPIRACY COPS

How a murky theory fueled a global hunt  
and consumed the presidency

**By Simon Shuster/Kiev and  
Vera Bergengruen/Washington**

THE WARNING SIGNS WERE THERE. IN A tweet or offhand remark, President Donald Trump would touch on what he said Ukraine had done to him during the 2016 election. Top Administration officials got an earful. Foreign leaders were treated to the stories. Occasionally his rants would unspool on live TV. “And Ukraine!” Trump shouted down the line to a Fox News host on June 19, the night after he formally announced his re-election bid. “Take a look at Ukraine!” he went on, as the host tried to move to other subjects.

Few people, even those closest to him in the White House, grasped exactly what the President of the United States seemed to believe: that Ukraine, a nation consumed over the past five years by a crippling armed conflict with Russia, had found a way to conspire against him during the 2016 election, and to collude with his rival, Hillary Clinton, by hiding the Democratic National Committee’s email

server and feeding her allies dirt about Trump. It was an idea Tom Bossert, his first homeland-security adviser, described as a “completely debunked” conspiracy theory. Few saw in his Ukraine outbursts anything more than the effusions of a cable-news showman.

It took a complaint from an intelligence-community whistle-blower, released late last month, to reveal the weight of Trump’s Ukraine conspiracy theory and just how far the President has gone to support the notion that a vast network of enemies inside and outside his own government has been working against him. Trump has tried to mobilize the vast resources of his presidency—from Attorney General William Barr and the U.S. Justice Department to America’s national-security apparatus—and a team of investigative irregulars, led by his personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani. This band of conspiracy cops has traveled the globe in a disorderly hunt for proof of the conspiracy Trump says is arrayed against him.

In the past, many of his advisers tried to redirect Trump. They urged the President to accept the consensus of U.S. intelligence agencies: the true conspiracy of the 2016 election was that Russia interfered on his side. But those voices are long gone. In their place is a network of far-right Internet denizens, conservative media and members of Trump’s inner circle, advancing theories that have taken shape over the past two years. Those seeds have fallen on fertile ground.

Trump tells aides he is held to a double standard, a White House official tells TIME. Trump sees Joe Biden on tape saying the Obama Administration withheld aid until Ukraine fired its prosecutor, and then feels unfairly criticized for asking Ukraine to help investigate Biden and the origins of the Russia probe. To Trump, the official says, “It feels like people are coming at him over a bunch of bullsh-t while letting all this other stuff slide.” That sense of grievance has helped lead Trump into what Democrats and a handful of Republicans say are potentially impeachable offenses, first among them, using the power of the presidency to try and stay in office.

Trump’s focus on Ukraine turned into an invitation, an open call for a cast of sleuths to deliver the thing he craves: evidence, no matter how thin in substance

or dubious in provenance, that he is right about his enemies, that he is the victim of a grand conspiracy and not in fact the purveyor of one. Tracing the origins of the Ukraine conspiracy theory and the President’s efforts to pursue it is central to understanding the political crisis consuming Washington.

TIME journalists, from Washington to Ukraine, have found a tangled mix of fact and fiction. Barr has launched a formal Justice Department investigation of the origins of the Mueller probe. Meanwhile, Giuliani has drawn on a

up for an impeachment trial. And the nation is struggling to understand where the truth actually lies.

**IT IS PERHAPS** not surprising that one of the first sources of the Ukraine conspiracy theory that has so captured the President’s imagination was the Russian Foreign Ministry in Moscow. As questions mounted over Kremlin interference in the 2016 presidential race, a ministry spokesperson suggested that Ukraine had “seriously complicated the work of Trump’s election-campaign headquarters

## IN SEARCH OF A CONSPIRACY

Fed by the far-right fringes of the Internet, conservative media and members of Trump’s inner circle, conspiracy theories took shape in the last two years, alleging that Ukraine and others tried to sabotage the Trump campaign:



**RUDY GIULIANI**

From Kiev to Florida, Trump’s personal lawyer contacted an unlikely cast of characters in pursuit of Trump’s suspicions about Biden, Clinton and Ukraine



**JOSEPH DIGENOVA  
VICTORIA TOENSING**

The husband-and-wife Trump loyalists and Fox News regulars say they were asked by Giuliani to work on the Ukraine matter

network of sources, including a former prosecutor in Kiev, a wanted fugitive in Vienna and a pair of Russian-speaking businessmen in Miami in pursuit of Trump’s theories.

Trump and Giuliani—egged on by supporters chanting “Investigate the investigators!”—may still believe they will find enough proof to chasten their enemies. But so far their efforts have mostly hurt Trump, his Administration and the country. Barr is frustrated with Giuliani’s role in the unorthodox investigation. The White House counsel’s office is at loggerheads with some more politically minded White House aides over how to respond to the whistle-blower’s revelations. Democrats on the Hill are licking their lips at the opportunity to put Trump

by planting information” about its chairman, Paul Manafort. “All of you have heard this remarkable story,” the spokesperson, Maria Zakharova, told reporters in November 2016.

Like any good conspiracy theory, this one contained a sliver of truth. The leak that forced Manafort to leave the Trump campaign did come from Ukraine, and one of the people who publicized it was a lawmaker named Serhiy Leshchenko. Before he went into politics, Leshchenko worked as an investigative journalist and an activist against corruption. One focus of his research had been Manafort’s work for a Kremlin ally in Ukraine accused of siphoning at least \$37 billion in government money into offshore bank accounts. “I’ve never made a secret of my

anger at Manafort,” Leshchenko says. “He helped bring a regime to power that robbed my country.”

In August 2016, the *New York Times* revealed that Manafort had received more than \$12 million in payments from that regime, and he was forced to resign from the Trump campaign. Days later, Leshchenko held a press conference in Kiev calling for Manafort to be investigated. That kindling—a wounded Trump campaign, the *New York Times* and an obscure Ukrainian

in Sunnyvale, Calif., with no known ties to Ukraine. Three months later, he cryptically tweeted about “Ukrainian efforts to sabotage Trump campaign” that had been “quietly working to boost Clinton.”

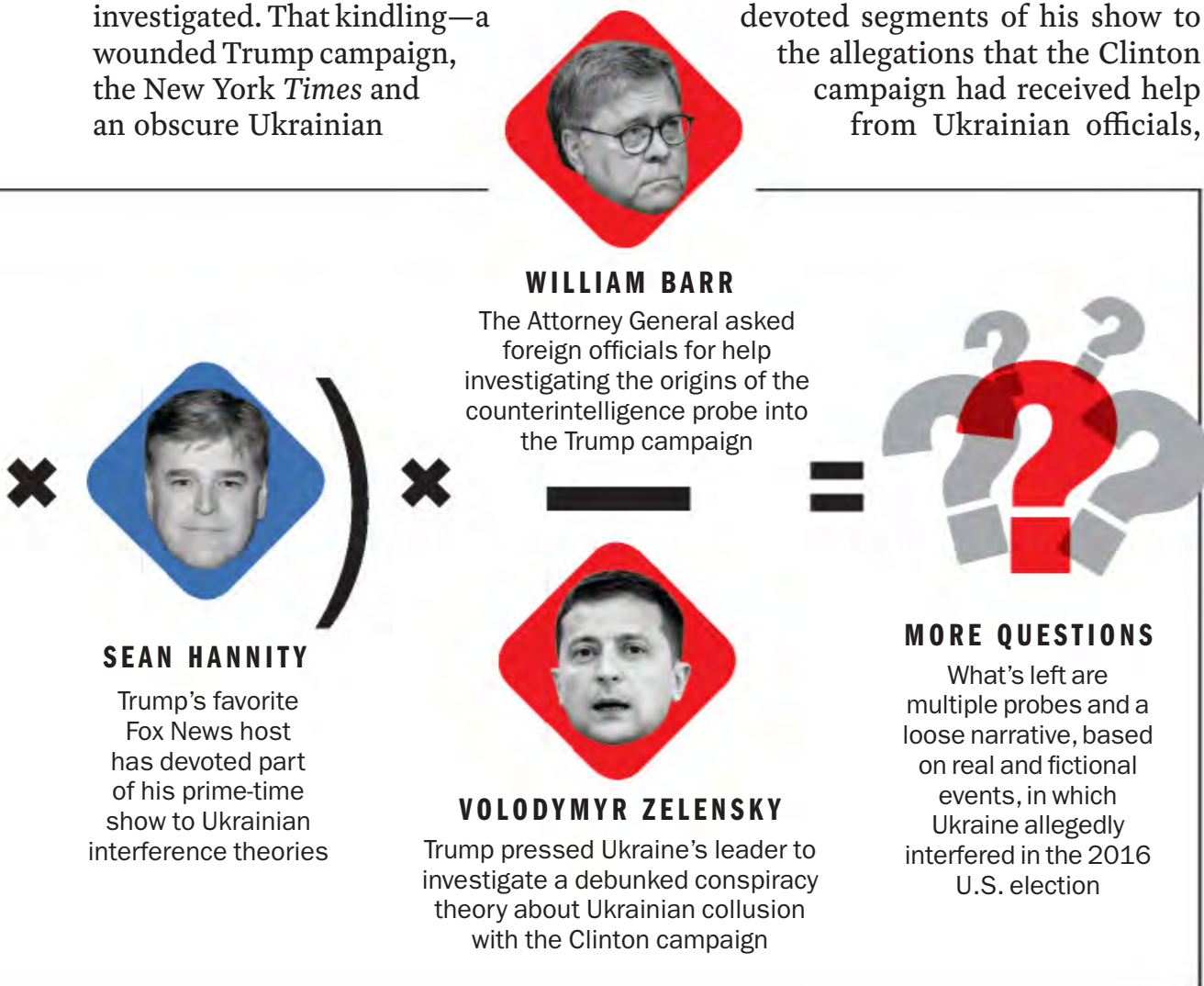
Whenever new allegations of Trump’s Russia ties emerged, his allies would revive the Ukraine theory. As the Mueller probe gained steam in the summer of 2017, Fox News host Sean Hannity devoted segments of his show to the allegations that the Clinton campaign had received help from Ukrainian officials,

information about Manafort’s work in Ukraine with reporters and the DNC.

As the Mueller probe drew to a close in the spring of this year, the President and Giuliani began to speak out more frequently about these theories. “As Russia Collusion fades, Ukrainian plot to help Clinton emerges,” Trump tweeted on March 20, two days before Mueller delivered his final report to the Attorney General.

All along, the pied piper of the Ukraine narrative was Giuliani. On the morning of May 11, a few days after a Senate committee called Trump’s eldest son to testify, Ukraine’s new government awoke to news footage of Giuliani declaring that there were “enemies of the United States” among them. Raising his voice over the anchor’s attempts to interrupt him, Trump’s lawyer even name-checked Leshchenko, the former journalist. He had been in line to join the Cabinet of President Volodymyr Zelensky, but Trump’s lawyer got in the way. “We knew Giuliani is the hand of Trump,” Leshchenko tells *TIME*. “Once he called me an enemy, it was clear I had to step aside.”

Trump soon took the theories about Ukraine straight to the country’s President. In a phone call on July 25—the day after Mueller’s testimony before Congress—Trump urged Zelensky to do him a favor. “I would like to have the Attorney General call you or your people” about this alleged collusion, Trump said. “And I would like you to get to the bottom of it.”



lawmaker—would soon start a fire on the Internet, conflating events both real and imagined.

Leshchenko’s calls to investigate Manafort became part of a Ukrainian scheme with Democrats to smear the chairman of the Trump campaign. CrowdStrike, the security firm hired to investigate the hacking of emails from the DNC, was said to have covered up Ukraine’s role and framed Russia instead. And starting soon after his Inauguration, Trump piled on. “I heard [CrowdStrike is] owned by a very rich Ukrainian, that’s what I heard,” Trump told the Associated Press in April 2017. He would continue to repeat in other interviews that the firm was owned by Ukrainians or based there, despite the fact that it is a U.S. company based

with a banner of the country’s blue-and-yellow flag reading in all-caps UKRAINIAN ELECTION INTERFERENCE? Trump’s son Donald Jr. amplified the Ukraine theories after his infamous Trump Tower meeting with a Kremlin-linked lawyer became public in July 2017, retweeting that “DNC operatives actively worked with Ukrainian government officials to dig up oppo research,” asking, “No outrage???” Trump’s attorney Jay Sekulow ran with this message on CNN a few days later, referring to “the situation with the Ukrainians and the DNC and the Clinton campaign, where information actually was shared.” Trump’s allies pointed to reporting by Politico and the *New York Times* that a DNC outreach coordinator had met with Ukrainian officials in Washington and shared

**WHEN THE WHITE HOUSE** released a declassified summary of that call on Sept. 25, it showed just how aggressive Trump had been in pursuit of the matter, and just how varied a team he had enlisted in the effort. While Giuliani is a central player, Barr is second only to Trump in the power he wields in its execution. But when he first learned that Trump had raised his name on the call with Zelensky, the Attorney General was “angry and surprised to be lumped in together with the President’s personal attorney,” not least because Barr has never spoken about Ukraine to Giuliani, a person familiar with Barr’s thinking tells *TIME*.

But Barr’s role in this story has drawn plenty of attention, and criticism. While Trump publicly mused that Barr’s predecessor, Jeff Sessions, should

investigate Ukraine's role in the events that led to the Mueller probe, one former official who worked under Sessions does not recall the topic ever coming up inside the Justice Department. Barr, by contrast, dived right in.

Shortly after being confirmed to the job in February, Barr instructed the U.S. Attorney for Connecticut, John Durham, to look at "the extent to which a number of countries, including Ukraine, played a role in the counterintelligence investigation directed at the Trump campaign during the 2016 election," according to a Justice Department statement in September. Asked what the basis for the investigation was, a Justice Department official says, "the Attorney General just saw enough things that weren't adding up that he knew he needed to look into it."

Barr himself has taken up the task of digging into the matter. In London this summer, he asked British authorities how much credence they gave former British spy Christopher Steele and a dossier he compiled on Trump's alleged ties to Russia, two British officials briefed on Barr's visit tell TIME. British intelligence officials found Barr's request for information in the probe "rather unusual, coming as it did from the Attorney General instead of the usual channels," one of the officials tells TIME.

Barr has also enlisted Trump. "At Attorney General Barr's request, the President has contacted other countries to ask them to introduce the Attorney General and Mr. Durham to appropriate officials," Justice Department spokesperson Kerri Kupec said in a statement on Sept. 30. Trump has spoken to Australia and possibly other leaders at Barr's behest.

**ONE TROUBLING QUESTION** is whether Barr, like Trump, crossed a line from pursuing a suspected conspiracy perpetrated during the last election into investigating Trump's political rivals in the coming one. The whistle-blower alleged Barr appeared to be "involved" in the effort to "solicit interference from a foreign country in the 2020 U.S. election." Pressed on whether Barr and Trump had discussed former Vice President Biden in connection with Ukraine, the Justice Department official reported no awareness of any conversations between the Attorney General and the President about Biden and Ukraine.

If Barr is trying to be discreet, Giuliani has been anything but. His pursuit of parallel investigations has triggered alarm at the highest levels of the White House. "The most dangerous stuff is Rudy flying around the world fixing sh-t," a person close to Trump told TIME.

From Vienna and Kiev to Florida, Giuliani has recruited a cast of helpers in his effort to confirm Trump's suspicions about Biden, Clinton and Ukraine. Among them was a pair of businessmen from Miami, Igor Fruman and Lev Parnas, who volunteered to be his eyes and ears in Kiev, they have said. Born in the Soviet Union and still connected in Ukraine to businessmen and politicians, the duo have made generous donations to Republican causes since 2016. With their assistance, Giuliani spoke to three politicians in Ukraine who had overseen

## 'THE MOST DANGEROUS STUFF IS RUDY FLYING AROUND THE WORLD FIXING SH-T.'

—A PERSON CLOSE TO TRUMP

investigations related to the Biden family. Parnas, Fruman and Giuliani have all spoken publicly about their efforts. "I was doing it because I felt as a U.S. citizen it was my patriotic duty," Parnas told NPR in September.

So far, the most valuable source for Giuliani in Ukraine has been Viktor Shokin, a former prosecutor general, who spoke to Giuliani over Skype in late 2018. Shokin later wrote a damning 12-page statement accusing Biden of abuse of power during his tenure as Vice President. "I was forced to leave office, under direct and intense pressure from Joe Biden and the U.S. Administration," in order to stop an investigation of the company where Hunter Biden worked, Shokin wrote.

That account has not stood up to scrutiny. Top officials in the U.S. and Ukraine, as well as independent experts and investigative journalists, have confirmed

that Shokin was fired for his alleged corruption, and the investigation of Hunter Biden's company was dormant at the time.

A parallel track in Giuliani's efforts has been entrusted to a pair of American lawyers and Fox News regulars, Victoria Toensing and Joe DiGenova, who have worked with Giuliani for years and, according to a recent profile of them in Politico, "enjoy an open line to Trump." This summer, they went to work for Dmitry Firtash, a Ukrainian tycoon who is wanted in Chicago for alleged corruption. In a legal filing in 2017, the DOJ referred to Firtash as an "upper-echelon associate of Russian organized crime." He has strongly denied having links to the mafia and is fighting extradition to the U.S. on the bribery charges, which he also denies.

But the Firtash case has become a rich pool of material for Giuliani's effort to discredit the Mueller investigation. In a legal filing in Vienna in July, lawyers for Firtash claimed that one of Mueller's top investigators had offered to drop the bribery case against Firtash in exchange for damning testimony on Trump, Toensing and DiGenova tell TIME. "The oligarch," Giuliani told Fox News on July 22, "basically said, 'I'm not going to lie to get out of the case.'" (Mueller's prosecutors have denied ever inappropriately pressuring witnesses to testify against Trump.)

For Trump's critics, the scariest thing about his efforts to discredit the Mueller probe is the impact it will have on the 2020 election. U.S. intelligence agencies have warned repeatedly that Russia has again set out to influence the vote. "They're doing it as we sit here," Mueller told Congress in July.

Trump's refusal to credit such warnings, and his attempts to cast them as a plot against his presidency, is going to make the Kremlin's work much easier this time around, says Michael McFaul, a former U.S. ambassador to Moscow. "That is my prediction for what is going to happen in electoral politics in America moving forward," McFaul tells TIME. Thanks to Trump's "disinformation campaign," he says, "Ukraine is going to become the focus of the 2020 elections. And that means Russia is off the hook." —*With reporting by* BRIAN BENNETT, TESSA BERENSON, MASSIMO CALABRESI, ABBY VESOULIS and JOHN WALCOTT/WASHINGTON □




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A photograph of Kamala Harris backstage. She is wearing a blue blazer over a white top and a dark skirt. She is looking to her right with a serious expression. Her right hand is raised, palm facing forward, as if gesturing or speaking. A person in a red shirt is partially visible in the foreground, reaching towards her. In the background, several men are visible, some holding cameras, suggesting a media event. The setting is a backstage area with dark curtains.

*Harris backstage  
before her  
town hall in  
Waterloo, Iowa,  
on Sept. 20*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
SEPTEMBER DAWN  
BOTTOMS FOR TIME

# Finding Kamala Harris

Emphatic but elusive, the  
candidate searches for her place  
in the Democratic field

BY MOLLY BALL

# Sometimes Kamala Harris wakes up in the middle of the night

because there's something on her mind. Did anybody get back to so-and-so? How is my stepdaughter adjusting to her apartment in New York City? Sometimes those early-morning moments are her only chance, as the junior Senator from California and a top Democratic presidential candidate, to think through the events of the past day.

"Oh, I worry," she says, "I worry." Sitting at a table upstairs from the stage where she's just held a town hall in Waterloo, Iowa, Harris begins to laugh, that deep, body-shaking laugh of hers. "Let me just tell you, I was born worrying. I had a mother who worried, I had a grandmother who worried. It's kind of in my blood."

That jolt awake at 3 a.m. has become Harris' campaign theme, the crux of her wandering stump speech. What wakes the American people at 3 a.m., she says, is not ideological mudslinging but practical concerns: holding down a job, getting through a health crisis, weathering hurricanes and tornadoes. Harris' "3 a.m. agenda," as she calls it, is the backbone of her campaign's policy approach, a road map of solutions for the middle class. But so far it has failed to get much traction. At a time when the electorate is looking for sharp definitions and ambitious visions, her emphasis strikes some Democrats as vague and noncommittal.

And so Harris is here, in Iowa, trying to regain her footing in the race. After a promising start in January, her campaign has stalled. While she is in the competition for the nomination, she's stuck in

the mid-single digits in most national and early-state polls and draws modest crowds. Perhaps three dozen people showed up to see her in Waterloo, where they were packed into a few rows in front of the stage so that the large room—an ornate century-old former department store—wouldn't look so empty.

In mid-September, Harris said she'd be focusing on the first-to-vote caucus state. It was something of an unwitting announcement: she was overheard in Washington joking to a colleague, "I'm f-cking moving to Iowa." (At least, a staffer quipped, "she didn't say, 'I'm moving to f-cking Iowa.'") Her campaign is doubling its staff in the state, to more than 130 people, and she has pledged to visit every week for the foreseeable future. "I'm really excited about it," she tells me, saying the opportunity to engage in "old-school retail politics" reminds her of her San Francisco political roots. "I like people."

People like Harris too; they just can't quite place her. Like the acquaintance you recognize but can't recall how you met, she seems both familiar and yet mysterious. Is she a liberal or a moderate, establishment or populist, reformer or radical? Critics point out that she has flip-flopped or obfuscated her positions on important policy issues, like health care and immigration, and the speeches she could use to define herself often devolve into paeans to unity.

For all that, however, Harris remains in the hunt. She consistently polls among the top five candidates in the jumbled Democratic field, and she has the financial



resources to remain viable. Her campaign raised \$11.6 million in the quarter ending Sept. 30—a respectable haul, although far short of what some other front runners pulled in. As more long-shot candidates bow out of the race, campaign officials expect Harris to benefit from voters' renewed focus. With a little luck, they say, she still has a fairly clear path to the nomination.

Among the top-polling Democrats, some churn seems inevitable. Former Vice President Joe Biden remains the apparent front runner, but his unsteady debate performances and shambling campaign have many insiders convinced he's on the brink of collapse. When and if that happens, the next leading candidates, Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders, could face a rebellion from mainstream Democrats who see them as too left-wing. In such a world, Harris would be well



positioned as the alternative: a practical idealist with undeniable political skills and a respected track record of problem-solving rather than grandstanding. As a 54-year-old black woman, she also offers a compelling profile for Democrats hungry for diversity and fresh faces. Among the top-tier candidates, who also include Pete Buttigieg, she is one of two women and the only person of color. And she's younger than the three septuagenarian front runners by a decade and a half.

Meanwhile, as the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives moves toward impeachment, another piece of Harris' record may supercharge her candidacy in the coming months: her background in law enforcement. At a time when liberals are clamoring to make the criminal-justice system less punitive, her record as a district attorney and state attorney general has been a liability. But

▲  
*Harris speaks at her town hall in Waterloo, Iowa*

in this new political climate, voters may relish the idea of seeing Harris—with her icy prosecutor's glare—square off against President Trump on the national stage.

“This guy has completely trampled on the rule of law, avoided consequence and accountability under law,” she says of the President. “For all the sh-t people give me for being a prosecutor, listen. I believe there should be accountability and consequence.”

**HARRIS LIVES** in Los Angeles now, where her husband of five years, entertainment lawyer Douglas Emhoff, is based. L.A. is only the latest of many places she's put down roots, she tells me in an interview

in a law office on the city's west side. But home, to her, always conjures memories of a Berkeley duplex where she lived with her mother and sister above a nursery school.

Born in Oakland, Harris had an itinerant childhood, moving from California to Illinois to Wisconsin to Montreal as her parents pursued academic careers. Her mother and father were both immigrants who came to the U.S. to attend the University of California, Berkeley. Shyamala Gopalan, Harris' mother, came from India to get a Ph.D. in nutrition and endocrinology, while Donald Harris, her father, came from Jamaica to study economics. As a result, most of Harris' family members were overseas. She learned, like many children of immigrants, that family and community aren't necessarily something you are born into; they are something you make. Her memories are replete with references to surrogate grandmas and second mothers, godparents and godchildren, aunts and uncles, none of whom are related.

Harris' parents met in the 1960s in the civil rights movement. Both were members of a small group of students who met to discuss black consciousness and liberation. They were unabashedly radical: the group's heroes were “Malcolm, Fidel, Che,” says Aubrey LaBrie, a leader of the group. Some in the group were involved in the founding of the Black Panther Party, he says. Now in his 80s, with graying braids and a voice made hoarse by Parkinson's, LaBrie remembers Harris' parents as committed activists, joining in a protest of the local Woolworth's to express solidarity with a sit-in at a segregated lunch counter at a Woolworth's in the South. Gopalan, who died of cancer in 2009, was “very feisty, strong-willed, very assertive,” he says.

Harris recalls being steeped in her parents' activism. In speeches, she says she remembers being surrounded by “a bunch of adults who spent all their time marching and shouting—for justice!” Once, she told me, she came down the stairs of her childhood house in Berkeley to see FREE BOBBY carved in wet cement, after the Black Panther leader Bobby Seale was arrested.

She was also on the front lines in her own way. In 1970, when she entered first grade, Harris was in the second class of children to be bused across town to inte-

## KAMALA'S STORY



1965

Harris was born in 1964 in Oakland to parents who had both immigrated to the U.S.; seen here with her mother and paternal grandfather in Jamaica



1970

Harris with her mother and younger sister Maya, outside of their Berkeley apartment in 1970



Early 1970s

Kamala with Maya, who now serves as chair for Harris' presidential campaign

grate an elementary school that had previously been 95% white. It was a 40-minute journey each way. She did not, at the time, understand that she was a pawn in grown-ups' sociopolitical experimentation—a lack of trauma that, she jokes, presents a challenge in politics. “People are like, ‘Tell us your suffering, tell us how hard it was,’” she says. “But I was raised by proud people. I was raised to know and believe we had everything we needed.”

It's easy to see how this upbringing shaped Harris' standing as an outsider—someone who had to convince others she belonged, no matter where she was. But she was the kind of outsider who was determined to get inside. She was always trying to find commonalities, even as she was aware of the difficulty of making herself understood in different contexts. “The reality is that when you are the so-called minority,” she says, “you learn many languages, necessarily.”

While others, including her own mother and sister, a former American Civil Liberties Union leader, sought to protest and advocate from outside, Harris worked to find her way into institutions where no one like her had ever been in charge. After graduating from Howard University, the historically black college in Washington, D.C., and the University of California's Hastings College of the Law, she became a prosecutor, first at the DA's office in Oakland's Alameda County and then in San Francisco. In 2003, when Harris announced she would run for San Francisco DA against her former boss, many of her liberal friends balked. Lateefah Simon, who had worked with Harris to get police and prosecutors

to treat underage girls in the sex trade as victims rather than criminals, remembers telling Harris she was disappointed by her decision. But Harris was unfazed. “She'd say, ‘Are you going to be outside all the time with a bullhorn, or are you going to be inside, deeply in the face of folks with decisionmaking power?’” Simon remembers. To Harris, Simon recalls, the way to make change was not to protest the system, but to take it over.

**HARRIS' UNDERDOG CAMPAIGN** did better than expected. Partly as a result of her relationship with her former boyfriend Willie Brown, the legendary California politician who was then speaker of the state assembly, Harris had cultivated a strong fundraising base among the city's wealthy socialites. Brown, 30 years her senior and technically still married, had also appointed Harris to boards and introduced her to his political network when they were dating in the 1990s, sparking accusations of nepotism.

But Harris' campaign was also uniquely her own. She put down her headquarters in one of the city's poorest black neighborhoods, pounded the pavement and used an ironing board as a standing desk. She

**‘She’s in kind of a no-person’s-land in terms of having a good base.’**

—Larry Gerston, a political scientist at San Jose State University

ran on a platform of restoring competence to the bumbling department and relentlessly criticized the incumbent for his low conviction rate for major crimes. She won in a landslide.

The law is written in black and white, but prosecutors have tremendous discretion to shape the way it is applied. It's a prosecutor who decides to put sex workers in jail while letting their customers off. It's a prosecutor who decides that a white teenager who kills is a good kid who deserves a second chance, but that a black teenager who commits the same crime is a predator who should be locked up for life. It's a prosecutor who often decides that a woman who reports rape just doesn't seem believable, even when there's physical evidence. It was a prosecutor who decided, in 2008, that Jeffrey Epstein deserved essentially house arrest for the serial sexual abuse of dozens of young women. Modern reformers seeking to curtail mass incarceration increasingly argue that no amount of policy reform will fix a system whose decisionmakers are vulnerable to certain blind spots. When Harris took over as DA, Simon remembers her pointing out all the framed photos of past DAs along a wall. The portraits were all of white men until her face appeared at the end of the line, a 40-year-old black woman.

It would not be easy to bring a new perspective inside the system. Just a few months into her tenure as San Francisco DA, a young gang member killed a San Francisco cop in the same rough neighborhood where she'd headquartered her campaign. Harris, who had run on her opposition to capital punishment,



**1986**

Harris graduates from Howard University, where she was involved with the student government



**2003**

She becomes the first woman, first African-American and first Indian-American DA in San Francisco



**2015**

Harris and Emhoff, married the year before, attend the opening of L.A.'s Broad museum



**2019**

At a Democratic debate in June, Harris confronts Biden on busing and segregation

announced she would not seek the death penalty. The decision sparked a major controversy that some thought would end her political career before it started. From the pulpit at the officer's funeral, both California's senior Senator, Dianne Feinstein, and the head of the police union called for the death penalty as Harris sat stunned in the audience. She stuck by her decision in the face of the firestorm, ultimately securing a sentence of life without parole.

A couple of years later, as a wave of homicides swept the city, Harris again saw her convictions tested. While other elected officials proposed putting more cops on the street and beefing up gang enforcement, she wanted a new approach. "Instead of just accepting these statistics and reacting, I asked my team to tell me, Who are the homicide victims under the age of 25?" she says. Both the victims and the perpetrators, they discovered, had something in common: more than 90% were high school dropouts. Many started missing class in elementary school, quickly falling too far behind to ever catch up.

Seeing an opening, Harris began sending notices to the families of chronically truant kids. In meetings, her office's representatives outlined the services that might help the family, but also reminded them that parents whose kids didn't go to school were committing a crime and could be subject to fines and arrest. Even some members of Harris' own staff considered her approach overly threatening to struggling families, but Harris blazed ahead. "She said to me, '[People] will stop for a stray dog before they will stop for a black child alone in the middle of the day,'" re-

calls Simon, the former colleague.

The thought of it still fills Harris with fury. "People had no expectations from these children," she says. "They had no understanding of the capacity of these children. The system was not responding to what was in my mind a crisis. We improved attendance by over 30%. No parent ever went to jail. It was about what I could do, in my limited capacity, based on the position I had." The controversy still dogs Harris, however, Exhibit A for liberals who say she punished those she should have been trying to help.

When Simon expressed her doubts, Harris would remind her of all the funerals she'd attended. For all the people you've buried, was anybody ever held accountable? The women raped and left for dead on street corners, who is going to see them? "Black people want law enforcement," says Simon, who considers herself a prison abolitionist. "We just don't want them to kill our children."

After two terms as DA, Harris ran for state attorney general, winning a close race against the Republican DA of Los Angeles. As attorney general, she went after big banks and the pharmaceutical industry, for-profit colleges and oil companies. She refused to defend the voter-approved Proposition 8 banning gay marriage, paving the way for the Supreme Court's 2015 decision legalizing it, and she created a bureau of children's justice to oversee children's services.

But she also backed down from many fights, declining to endorse ballot initiatives that would have reformed the three-strikes law and ended the death penalty. She even appealed a federal court

decision striking down the death penalty as unconstitutional, successfully reinstating a penalty she claimed to oppose.

Criminal-justice reformers charge that Harris is cautious at best and hypocritical at worst, an ambitious pol who wants to have it both ways and lacks the guts to pursue bold reforms. A new wave of progressive DAs like Philadelphia's Larry Krasner has gone much further than Harris ever did, with initiatives like restricting the use of cash bail, which reformers say unfairly penalizes the poor while allowing the rich to buy their way out of jail. "There's sort of a laundry list for what it means to be a progressive prosecutor, and she doesn't check a single one of the boxes," says Lara Bazelon, a professor at the University of San Francisco School of Law. "At least she didn't when she was an actual prosecutor and she was in a position to do something to make the system more fair."

Harris, Bazelon notes, dismissed the idea of legalizing marijuana as recently as 2014, but now that it's popular she supports it. "That seems to be a theme: once she's not in any sort of political risk, and there's a consensus that a reform is a good thing, she's behind it," Bazelon said. "But when it's time to be bold and do the right thing, she doesn't."

**SINCE HER ELECTION** to the Senate in 2016, Harris has thrilled liberal audiences with her punishing interrogations of Trump Administration officials. She made former Attorney General Jeff Sessions blanch and Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh squirm. And in May, she deftly filleted the current Attorney

General, William Barr, asking him, “Has the President or anyone at the White House ever asked or suggested that you open an investigation of anyone?” Barr was reduced to stuttering. He wouldn’t or couldn’t answer. In recent weeks, the clip has gone viral again as new questions have arisen about Barr’s involvement in the President’s political pressuring of foreign governments.

Sitting in the office in Los Angeles, Harris says she asked that question on a prosecutor’s hunch. “It has become clear to me that these are the kinds of questions you have to ask members of this Administration,” she says. “What kind of unethical requests has this President made of you? I knew by instinct and by example that it is not beyond him to think that America’s justice system is his personal apparatus for political gain. He’s made that quite clear.”

Now that the process to impeach Trump is under way—something Harris called for, but not until several other candidates beat her to it—many liberals fantasize about her as the prosecutor of the impeachment trial in the Senate. The Harris they see in those hearings is the Harris they crave: sharp, ruthless, oppositional. (Unfortunately for her campaign, ethics rules prevent her from using those clips to raise money.) But that’s not the Harris they get on the campaign trail. Presidential candidate Harris wants to be about unity, about uplift, about bringing people together around not a particular agenda but a sense of “who we are.” Campaigning to fix what keeps people up at night, she might just cure America’s insomnia by putting us to sleep with platitudes.

Various commentators have found Harris elusive, and she can be hard to pin down on policy positions. Early in her presidential campaign she called for abolishing private health insurance, then took it back, then later released a health care plan that would be government-run but allow for both public and private health insurance. In the first debate, Harris scored a clean hit on Biden with her attack on his opposition to federally mandated busing in the 1970s, and surged in the polls. But in the ensuing days she couldn’t definitively describe her own position on busing. When I asked her what ought to be done about the ongoing segregation of public schools, she spent several

minutes discussing the need to “speak the truth about all of this,” before finally settling on a prescription: “To deal with this issue,” she said, “we need to collect the data and then we need to expose it.”

By upbringing and orientation, Harris seems to have a strong sense of right and wrong and a fierce drive to fight injustice, coupled with virtually no large-scale policy instincts. Presented with a problem, she looks for ways to solve it, starting with data, guided by few firm ideological convictions. “All these grand ideas that academics and so many have about how you’re going to transform the world,” she says. “But, you know, pay attention to the basics.”

Perhaps, in these days of brutal ideological combat, that kind of pragmatism could be sold as refreshing. But in Harris’ case it seems to be having the opposite effect. Some of the attendees at her events in Iowa told me they don’t think she’s progressive enough; others said she strikes them as too far left. “She hasn’t gone far enough to get the activists behind her, but she’s gone too far for some of the moderates,” says Larry Gerston, a professor emeritus of political science at San Jose State University. “So she’s in kind of a no-person’s-land in terms of having a good base.” And yet, polls indicate that Democratic voters still want to like her—if only they can figure out what she’s about. The race is far from over. Iowa voters are notorious for shopping around until the end.

On a clear early-fall day, more than 100 people have come to hear Harris speak in a pub in Coralville. “I like Biden, but I want someone new,” says 71-year-old Jane Carlson, a retired university worker. “I don’t want yesterday. I want tomorrow.”

Harris bounds onto the stage, all gleaming smiles and upbeat energy. “So, I’m moving here!” she says with a big laugh, and then turns serious. “We are at an inflection moment in the history of our country,” she tells the crowd, “a moment in time requiring us to look in the mirror and ask a question, that question being, Who are we?”

While Harris is still speaking, a few people begin to trickle out the back of the venue. Elizabeth Warren is holding an event a little ways down the road, they tell me, and they don’t want to miss it. —*With reporting by LISSANDRA VILLA/WASHINGTON* □



*Harris takes a cue from a local drill team at the Polk County Democrats’ Steak Fry in Des Moines in September*







*A painter works on a Tehran mural of Khamenei, left, and Iran's first Supreme Leader, Ruhollah Khomeini*

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. ABBAS

World

# The Resistance

Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei  
is one despot Trump might not win over

**By Karim Sadjadpour**

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IRAN'S PRESIDENT ARRIVED IN NEW YORK CITY in September and left, as usual, without meeting the American one. Both Hassan Rouhani and Donald Trump professed an appetite for sitting down and talking over the ever more treacherous rift between their nations. But as Rouhani has pointed out in private, Iran's top elected official "has no authority in foreign policy." That authority—and nearly every other strand of power in the Islamic Republic—resides with the elderly cleric who remained 6,000 miles away, in the country he has not left for decades.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, 80 years of age, disabled by a saboteur's bomb blast and lit by a righteous certainty, holds the title of Supreme Leader of Iran. But he has quietly emerged as the most powerful person in the Middle East, with uniformed military fighting in Syria and loyal proxies dominant in Lebanon, Yemen and (despite a U.S. investment of \$1 trillion and thousands of lives) Iraq. Since the spring, behind a thin veil of denials, he has also presided over an audacious and escalating campaign to raise uncertainty and global oil prices, shooting down a \$176 million U.S. drone, blowing holes in tankers and bombing the heart of Saudi Arabia's oil production, all without drawing a U.S. military response.

Khamenei, who has confounded every U.S. President he has faced since coming to power 30 years ago, harbors a particular animus for Trump. In June, he told the Prime Minister of Japan, who had come bearing a message from the White House, "I do not consider Trump as a person worth exchanging any message with." A detonation on the hull of a Japanese oil tanker the same day might have been an exclamation point.

Perhaps no other foreign leader is working harder to put Trump out of office than Khamenei. And perhaps no other foreign leader differs in more ways. Trump, thrice married and irreligious, has lived a life of opulence and publicity. The deeply devout Khamenei has been married for over 55 years, and he openly disdains pomp and materialism. Trump, operating on impulse, exhibits no organizing principles. Khamenei has shown a lifelong commitment to his: resistance against "global arrogance"—his moniker for American imperialism—is both ideology and strategic doctrine for the theocracy. When Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from the 2015 deal that had significantly curtailed Iran's nuclear program, the move validated Khamenei's view of the U.S. as "deceitful, untrustworthy and backstabbing." The sanc-

tions Trump then imposed have further debilitated Iran's economy, sending it to 50% inflation. But they seemingly stiffened Khamenei's resolve. "Resistance," Khamenei said in a recent speech that included the word 70 times, "unlike surrender, leads to the retreat of the enemy."

In Trump, Iran has an enemy who does not want to fight. After an Iranian missile shot down that massive U.S. drone in June, Trump at the last minute retracted his own order for military retaliation. Two days later, he thanked Iran for not shooting down a manned flight: "That's something we really appreciate." The vacillation seems to have only increased Khamenei's appetite for risk, and on Sept. 14, Saudi Arabia's largest oil facility was crippled by a missile and drone attack.

Iran denied involvement, but the game unfolding now is one Khamenei knows well. For years, he has carefully calibrated Iran's reaction to U.S. pressure: an insufficient response might project weakness and invite more pressure. An excessive response, on the other hand, could trigger a serious U.S. retaliation and risk outright war. It's a situation made even less predictable by two qualities the leaders do share: each harbors an appetite for conspiracy theories and a profound sense of victimization.

## Being Khamenei

The life of Iran's Supreme Leader tracks that of the Islamic Republic he has led for three decades:

- 1.** In 1980, Khamenei visited American hostages inside the captured U.S. embassy
- 2.** Recovering in a Tehran hospital from a 1981 bomb blast that cost him the use of his right hand
- 3.** Portraits of Khamenei and his mentor and predecessor, Khomeini (*right*), at a Tehran polling place in June



**KHAMENEI IS A** geriatric cleric ruling over an increasingly secular population whose median age is 30. Aside from Syria's Bashar Assad, he has no reliable friends in the world. And he goes to bed every night and wakes every morning believing that the U.S. government is actively trying to overthrow him. This paranoia—frequently reflected in official state media, which Khamenei controls—is also driven by political expediency. Mohammed Khatami, the reformist cleric who was Iran's President for two terms (1997–2005), told me in a private meeting in Oslo in 2008 that when he was in office Khamenei used to tell him that Iran “needs enmity with the United States. The revolution needs enmity with the United States.”

Despite its distance and a military budget less than 3% of that of the U.S., Iran has loomed large in American domestic politics. The Iran hostage crisis ended Jimmy Carter's presidency; Iran-*contra* tainted Ronald Reagan's presidency; Iranian machinations in post-Saddam Iraq exhausted George W. Bush's presidency. And the Iran nuclear program and negotiations engrossed the Obama presidency.

Trump inherited from Obama an Iran that resembled the late-stage USSR, powerful beyond its borders but hemorrhaging billions of dollars in foreign entangle-

ments and mired by internal economic malaise and ideological fatigue. But instead of marshaling global unity against Tehran's malign activities, Trump abandoned the nuclear agreement the U.N. reported Iran had been adhering to.

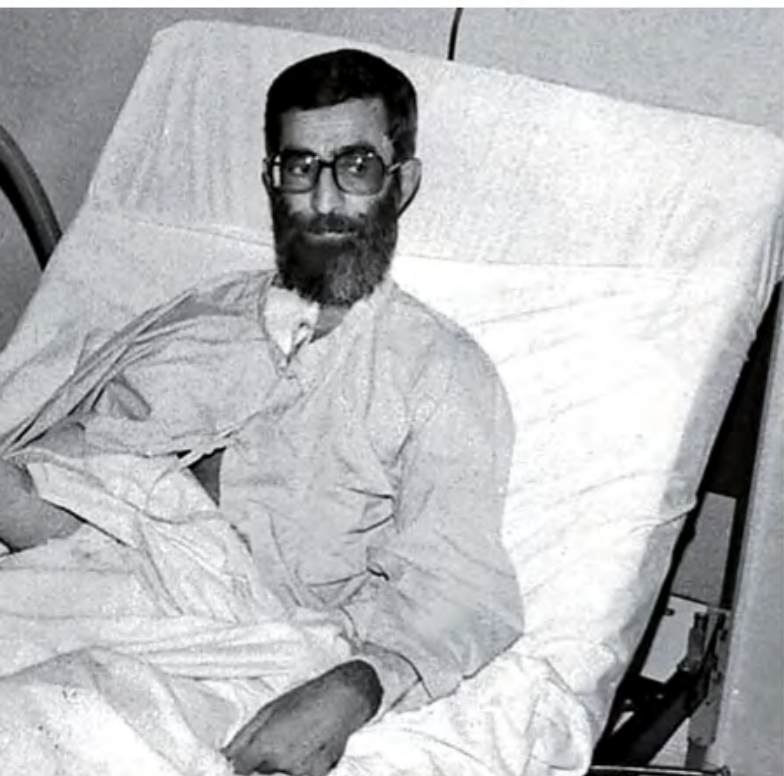
To this day, senior U.S. government officials confuse Khamenei with his charismatic predecessor: Grand Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic. Although Khomeini died 30 years ago, his sinister daily presence on American TV sets through the 444-day hostage crisis left a lasting impression. “These economic sanctions are just a part of the U.S. government's total effort to change the behavior of the Ayatollah Khomeini,” Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a November 2018 briefing. “The assets of Ayatollah Khomeini and his office,” President Trump followed up in June 2019, “will not be spared from the sanctions.”

The confusion—like so much the U.S. does—may serve Khamenei. He prefers to obscure his vast power behind the Islamic Republic's byzantine array of institutions. The Assembly of Experts, Guardian Council, Expediency Council and Revolutionary Guards evoke a *Game of Thrones*-style drama. But in reality they are all led by individuals handpicked by Khamenei or

unfailingly loyal to him. They serve to buttress rather than check his authority.

Khamenei is a reader. He has frequently said Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* is the greatest novel ever written, and his Instagram feed shows him smiling as he reads a Persian translation of *Fire and Fury*, Michael Wolff's unflattering account of Trump's first year in office. And though it's unknown whether he's read *The Prince*, he displays a Machiavellian genius in manipulating what Iranians call “the system.” Khamenei's slyest feat: assuring that he has power without accountability, while Iran's elected Presidents have accountability without power.

Iran makes a great show of its highly manipulated presidential elections, and their importance to the public became clear when the 2009 ballot was stolen. Millions took to the streets in what became known as the Green Movement, brutally quashed by the leader's internal militia, the Basij. Marring the ballot was a dangerous miscalculation by Khamenei, and perhaps an unnecessary one. No matter the challenge brought by a President—the economic challenge of Hashemi Rafsanjani (1989–1997), the democratic challenge of Khatami, the populist challenge of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005–2013) or the pragmatic one of Rouhani



# World

(2013–present)—Khamenei emasculated each. In more than two decades researching Iran, both in Tehran and the U.S., I have learned the most important indicator of the regime’s behavior is in the speeches of the Supreme Leader.

**KHAMENEI PROJECTS** a life of piety and service. He hasn’t left the nation since 1989 and, apart from a small, trusted coterie of advisers, is largely inaccessible. His modest official residence in working-class central Tehran is hidden from the public, and his clothing usually consists of dull robes and cheap slippers. Visitors to Khamenei’s abode curry favor with him by publicly recounting its simple decor and plain dinner menu, often bread, cheese and eggs.

Among his two daughters and four sons (all of whom became clerics) only one, Mojtaba, has a public profile. And in contrast to Arab first ladies whose spendthrift ways have fueled popular anger, Mrs. Khamenei has never been seen in photographs. Still, the facade was pierced by a 2013 Reuters investigative report that revealed Khamenei controls a \$95 billion financial conglomerate, which he uses as he wishes. The conglomerate was built on the seizure of property of Iranians, many of them religious minorities, and holds stakes in sectors as diverse as oil, telecommunications, the production of birth control pills and ostrich farming.

But if Khamenei controls more billions than Trump ever claimed to, his origin story is both humbler and bloodier. The second of eight children born to a Shi’ite cleric father in the shrine city of Mashhad, Khamenei has often romanticized his deprived but devout upbringing, saying he frequently ate “bread and raisins” for dinner. He was enrolled in religious education by age 5 and recalls entering “the arena of jihad” as a teenager, inspired by a radical Shi’ite cleric complicit in the assassination of several prominent Iranian secular intellectuals and government officials in the 1950s. While studying in Qom—the Shi’ite Vatican—in his early 20s, Khamenei came under the tutelage of Khomeini, who became his lifelong mentor.

At the time, Khomeini was largely unknown in Iran, but his opposition to the social reforms—particularly women’s enfranchisement—and modern pre-



tensions of Iran’s ruling monarch, Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, gained him a loyal following among deeply traditional seminary students. When the Shah exiled Khomeini in 1963, Khamenei remained in Iran disseminating his mentor’s unorthodox teachings about Islamic government. Because that theocratic doctrine cast the West as a foil to the virtue of fundamentalist Islam, it made common cause with Iran’s anti-imperialist liberal intelligentsia, who resented American meddling in Iran. Traumas in Khamenei’s personal history also shape his worldview. While working underground, he was repeatedly arrested for his antigovernment

▲  
*Khamenei and Qasem Soleimani flank Iraqi cleric Muqtada al-Sadr at a Tehran mourning ceremony on Sept. 10*

agitations by the Shah’s secret police (SAVAK) and endured torture and solitary confinement. Those who know Khamenei personally have speculated that the roots of his hatred toward Israel and the U.S. go back to this period, since SAVAK was widely believed to have received assistance from the CIA and Mossad.

When Grand Ayatollah Khomeini returned in triumph in 1979, having overthrown the Shah, his disciple was catapulted from anonymity. Khamenei was



delivering a speech on June 27, 1981, in a Tehran mosque, when a bomb hidden in a tape recorder exploded. According to his official website, “The right side of his body was full of shrapnel and pieces of radio.” Khamenei’s right hand was no longer functional. “I won’t need the hand,” he claims to have replied. “It would suffice if my brain and tongue work.” Since then he has been forced to do everything, include write, with his left hand. An Islamic Republic political insider once told me Khamenei’s contempt for his opponents is refreshed every morning “when he struggles to wash his ass with one hand.”

The cultlike Marxist-Islamist organization that was blamed for the bomb, the Mujahedin-e-Khalq, now promotes regime change from exile. It has minimal support but deep pockets and has together paid Trump associates John Bolton and Rudy Giuliani hundreds of thousands of dollars in speaking fees.

**KHAMENEI BECAME** an Ayatollah by shortcut. When Khomeini died in 1989, shortly after agreeing to a cease-fire to end the brutal eight-year war with Iraq, there was no clear successor. Then speaker of the parliament Rafsanjani claimed that Khomeini’s dying wish was for Khamenei to succeed him, and made it happen. “I am an individual with many faults and shortcomings,” Khamenei said in his inaugural speech, “and truly a minor seminarian.” In the demanding hierarchy of Shi’ite Islam, he had the clerical equivalent of a master’s degree (*hojjat al-Eslam*).

He was made an Ayatollah overnight, but, lacking the respect of the seminary, instead sought the legitimacy of the barracks. Khamenei cultivated the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), selecting its top cadres, and shuffling them every several years to prevent them from establishing independent power bases. The checkered IRGC scarf Khamenei wears around his neck signals a symbiotic relationship: politically expedient for Khamenei and financially expedient for the Guards, who have become a dominant economic force in the theocracy they defend. Between banking, construction, smuggling and other nebulous enterprises, the IRGC, one study estimates, now accounts for one-third of the Iranian economy.

Iran, which is publicly edging toward resuming its nuclear program, will likely always want to be a screwdriver turn away from having atomic weapons. But for now it has been doing well without them. Khamenei is likely the only leader in today’s Middle East who can inspire people, many of whom are not even Iranian citizens, to go out and kill—and potentially die—for him. It’s a major reason Iran’s regional proxies have consistently outmatched their opponents, as the Islamic Republic moved to exploit the opportunities created by the U.S. in Iraq and the power vacuums created by the Arab uprisings. The Arab countries in which

Tehran wields the most influence—Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen—are engulfed in civil strife and ruled by weak, embattled central governments.

At the same time, Iran is the only nation in the world simultaneously fighting three cold wars—with Israel, Saudi Arabia and the U.S. Khamenei manages those conflicts with two crucial tools: Qasem Soleimani, the charismatic commander of IRGC operations abroad, is Khamenei’s sword. Foreign Minister Javad Zarif, in contrast, is his shield, deflecting Western economic and political pressure. Soleimani deals with foreign armies, Zarif with foreign ministries.

And the 80 million Iranians? Khamenei has shown himself willing to subject them to indefinite economic hardship rather than hold his nose, swallow his pride and do a deal with the U.S. His insensitivity—his own brother, a reformist cleric, was once beaten by a hard-liner mob—has allowed Khamenei to play a weak hand strongly. Trump, hypersensitive to his domestic political fortunes, has played a strong hand weakly.

Trump’s warm interactions with North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un are understood by Tehran as evidence that pageantry and flattery are higher priorities for the U.S. President than nuclear nonproliferation and human rights. Yet Khamenei is too proud, and dogmatic, to flatter Trump. If Tehran ever does come to the table, another difference presents new obstacles. Trump prefers public spectacles about broad topics, while Khamenei favors covert discussions on narrow ones.

But then Trump faces re-election in 13 months. Khamenei serves for life. Once again, no successor is in sight. But the shape the Islamic Republic has assumed on his watch, morphing from a clerical autocracy into a military autocracy, suggests the IRGC will play a much more overt role in Iran’s politics, on the lines of Pakistan’s or Egypt’s militaries.

For now, however, the current game of chicken between the U.S. and Iran remains a test of wills between two proud, elderly men. The consequences of their actions will long outlive both.

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*Sadjadpour is a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*

FRONTIERS OF MEDICINE

# THE OVERLOOKED

BILLIONS OF DOLLARS HAVE BEEN SPENT ON BREAST-CANCER RESEARCH. BUT WOMEN WITH METASTATIC FORMS OF THE DISEASE HAVE RARELY BEEN THE FOCUS BY KATE PICKERT

LIANNE KRAEMER HAD BEEN LIVING WITH METASTATIC breast cancer for more than a year when I met her in December 2017 at the Henry B. González Convention Center in San Antonio. Throughout the week, more than 7,000 doctors, scientists and pharmaceutical-company representatives would descend on the city for the country's most important breast-cancer conference. Inside the main exhibition hall, it seemed that every major pharmaceutical company was putting on its best come-hither show. A pair of young, lithe dancers whipped flowing fabric through the air at a booth for the drug Faslodex, a new injectable from AstraZeneca used to treat women with estrogen-fueled advanced breast cancer. Novartis had free cupcakes. Tesaro, a company developing new drugs for BRCA-linked breast cancer, had Nutella-branded ice cream cones. Espresso was available at Eli Lilly, and Pfizer had put out small cups of frozen yogurt. Medtronic, a medical-device company, had breasts of raw chicken at its booth so surgeons could test the Plasma-Blade, its new soft-tissue-dissection knife.

Although I had worked as a health-care journalist for nearly a decade, I had never attended this particular conference. I was there to report on the latest scientific advances in breast cancer, but I was also an interested party. Three years earlier, at the age of 35, I had been diagnosed with breast cancer and begun what would be more than a year of treatment. My cancer responded well to the chemotherapy and targeted drug therapy my doctors prescribed, and I was, according to the evidence, cancer-free. I was grateful, but I wanted to learn more about women with metastatic disease whose breast cancer had managed to carry on despite treatment and spread to other parts of their bodies.

*Kraemer was 39 when she found out her breast cancer had spread and formed tumors inside her brain*





# Health

Kraemer, a smiling, energetic woman with dark brown hair and eyes, sat at a table in the back of the hall. There was no complimentary coffee or ice cream, just brochures stacked in neat rows and a small sign that said METAVIVOR. Founded in 2009, METAvivor is a nonprofit organization run by and advocating for metastatic-breast-cancer patients. In recent years, the group and others like it have tried to turn public attention—often focused on feel-good “survivor” stories—to the more than 160,000 women in America living with metastatic breast cancer. Having a presence at major conferences is part of a strategy to increase research funding for metastatic disease and raise awareness that for all the strides made in treatment, some 40,000 American women still die from breast cancer every year.

Despite the billions of dollars collected and spent on breast-cancer research over the past half-century, relatively little has been devoted to studying metastatic-breast-cancer patients or their particular forms of the disease. Doctors do not know why some breast cancers eventually form deadly metastases or how to quash the disease once it has spread. Patients with metastatic disease are typically treated with one drug after another, their doctors switching the medications whenever the disease stops responding to treatment. Eventually, nearly all patients with breast-cancer metastases run out of options and die, although in recent years, many have been living longer. Of the four metastatic-breast-cancer patients who founded METAvivor in 2009, three have died, but one is still alive, 13 years after discovering that her disease had spread.

Diagnosed with estrogen-receptor-positive breast cancer in January 2014 at the age of 37, Kraemer had a double mastectomy, chemotherapy, lymph-node removal, radiation and hormone treatment. She emerged from the yearlong ordeal relieved she had acted quickly—she’d felt a lump in her breast and was diagnosed the next month. Then, in June 2016, Kraemer was doing laundry when she felt a tingling in the right side of her lips. The next day, the right side of her gums and tongue started to feel weird too. “During that day, the crease on my right index finger felt like someone had put a slight rubber band around it,” Kraemer told me.

Kraemer emailed her oncologist, who recommended she get a brain MRI, and she asked her uncle, a neurologist, to review the scan. When he broke the news that it looked as if her breast cancer had spread and formed about a dozen small tumors inside her brain, she was stunned.

Three-quarters of women with metastatic breast cancer were originally diagnosed with early-stage disease. The idea that the breast cancer “came back” after initial treatment is a bit misleading. Women who undergo traditional chemotherapy shortly after an early-stage diagnosis, as I did, do so because their

doctors believe they may have micrometastases—cancer growths outside the breast that are too small to appear on scans. But sometimes breast cancer that is treated will later metastasize into larger tumors around the body, somehow managing to survive the initial treatment. Women who declare themselves cancer-free have no way of knowing if they really are. Sometimes breast cancer continues to grow during treatment. Other times, breast-cancer cells remain alive and go dormant but then begin multiplying years or even decades later.

Often, though not always, newly diagnosed breast-cancer patients get abdominal scans, but they almost never have brain scans unless a symptom appears. (About a year after I finished treatment, I had a debilitating two-day headache and my oncologist recommended I get a brain MRI, which turned up nothing. I was diagnosed with a migraine.) Even if Kraemer had had a brain scan when she was diagnosed, it’s possible the tumors inside her skull were so small that they would have been invisible on an MRI.

When we first spoke by phone a few months after we met in San Antonio, it was clear that Kraemer had thought through every possible diagnostic scenario. Could her doctors have done more? Did the month that passed between the time she found a lump in her breast and her diagnosis make a difference? Kraemer had complications with her double mastectomy that delayed the start of her chemotherapy. Did this give the cancer time to spread to her brain? She will never know, but she believes that most likely, her metastatic breast cancer could not have been prevented.

“You can do everything right and still end up metastatic,” Kraemer said. “I just assumed that could never be me because I would catch it early, because I was on top of things. I believed the narrative that is pushed on women, that if you check your breasts and if you catch it early, you’re fine. That surely the women who are not O.K. must not have gotten good treatment or must not have caught it when they should have. I believed what I was told.”

**EXISTING BREAST-CANCER-TREATMENT** protocols fail in tens of thousands of women like Lianne Kraemer every year. In some cases, breast-cancer patients don’t have access to high-quality treatment or they ignore signs of the disease until it’s incurable. But more women who die of breast cancer succumb to the disease for no other reason than that it manages to outwit the protocols.

Pharmaceutical companies and researchers often test new drugs on metastatic patients before anyone else. These are women who are dying anyway, and they are the ones most willing to be part of experiments. But the goal for most drug development is to treat early-stage patients successfully and eradicate breast cancer before it spreads.

According to Cyrus Ghajar, a cancer biologist at the

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EARLY,  
YOU’RE FINE.’  
—LIANNE KRAEMER

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, 25% to 40% of early-stage breast-cancer patients already have cancer cells in their bone marrow, and these patients are, on average, three times more likely than those who don't to develop other metastases later. It's impossible to know if a patient has cancer cells in her bone marrow without driving a long needle into a large bone and aspirating marrow from inside. Ghajar, one of a relatively small number of scientists studying metastatic breast cancer full time, said that, in theory, patients could give consent to have their marrow drawn when they are placed under general anesthesia for lumpectomies or mastectomies. The results could tell doctors which women were more likely to face a recurrence of their breast cancer and therefore might need more treatment up front. "We don't have a way to further stratify people, because we haven't studied it enough," Ghajar told me. "We don't have enough samples."

Ghajar pointed out that the Cancer Moonshot, a National Cancer Institute initiative launched by President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden, does not explicitly provide funding to address the challenges of metastatic cancer. "How can you have a moon shot trying to cure cancer and not mention people *dying* of cancer?" he said.

Alana Welm, a molecular biologist, runs a lab devoted to studying breast-cancer metastases at the University of Utah's Huntsman Cancer Institute. One of her research projects compares breast-cancer cells from a patient's original tumor against cancer cells found elsewhere in the body after the disease spreads. The idea is to determine the differences between the cells to find clues about why some migrated and how they may then be affected by microenvironments inside the body. "Think about how hard this research is," Welm said. By the time a woman is diagnosed with metastatic disease, her original biopsy tissue may no longer be available. In addition, it's often hard to get a sample of a metastatic tumor, which may be buried inside the brain or located in a place that is difficult to access safely, as opposed to the readily available breast tissue that gets biopsied in early-stage patients. "I sometimes wait for years in between to try to get these samples," Welm said. Welm and other researchers encourage metastatic-breast-cancer patients to consider making plans to have an autopsy done immediately after they die so that cells can be harvested, preserved and studied before they degrade.

After I finished my treatment for early-stage disease in February 2016, I did not celebrate. I did not feel cured. I felt scared. Although it is unlikely, my disease could recur. Some researchers estimate that breast cancer recurs in 20% to 30% of patients either locally or elsewhere in the body, but the odds vary significantly depending on the specific type of the disease a woman has and her treatment outcome. I was

unnerved when I learned that I would not get even annual scans to look for signs of metastases. Studies published in the 1990s showed that detecting metastases through scheduled scans, rather than when a symptom appears, did not change survival rates, prognosis or quality of life. Scanning every breast-cancer patient post-treatment would be expensive and would undoubtedly lead to unnecessary medical intervention.

But imaging has gotten much better since the 1990s, with MRI, positron-emission tomography (PET) and CT scans able to detect tumors as small as a few millimeters. A 2017 study by researchers at the National Cancer Institute found that some 11% of women under 65 diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer live for 10 years or more. The year prior, George Sledge, chief of oncology at Stanford, had published a paper in the *Journal of Oncology Practice* called "Curing Metastatic Breast Cancer." In it, he suggested that the existing paradigm around metastatic breast cancer—that it is incurable and not worth looking for—should be updated in the face of new science. "If some patients are cured," he wrote, "might not we cure more?"

**11%**  
of women under 65  
with metastatic  
breast cancer survive  
10 years or more

**160,000**  
women in America  
are living with  
metastatic  
breast cancer

**75%**  
of women with  
metastatic breast  
cancer were  
originally diagnosed  
with early-stage  
disease

**ABOUT A MONTH** after her diagnosis of metastatic breast cancer, Kraemer was going through her belongings, hoping to save her parents the agony of discarding her possessions after she died, when her hands settled on a photograph. It was a picture of a smiling couple: Kraemer and an ex-boyfriend, a Nebraska native named Eric Marintzer. After he had unceremoniously dumped her more than a decade earlier, Kraemer had thrown out every physical reminder of him. He had given her a waffle iron as a gift, and she had smashed it to bits in an alley. But somehow, this photograph had survived the reckoning.

Like any modern woman, Kraemer picked up her iPhone and found Marintzer's Instagram profile. She scrolled through images, her thumb moving so quickly that she accidentally "liked" one. Panicked, she threw her phone across the room so hard that the screen shattered. Then she decided to come clean. She had just been diagnosed with a terminal disease. What did she have to lose?

Kraemer sent Marintzer a message, saying she had seen his photographs and accidentally "liked" one. To her surprise, he wrote back. They started texting, and eventually he asked her out for drinks. She was living in St. Louis but often traveled to Chicago, where Marintzer lived. Whenever she went, they got together. It was refreshing to be with someone who didn't know about her disease. "Everybody in my life was treating me with kid gloves," Kraemer said.

After spending New Year's Eve together, they talked about whether they should officially be a couple again. "There's something you need to know," Kraemer said. Marintzer listened and then said her

# Health

metastatic breast cancer was no reason to change their plans. Before long, she moved into his condo and they picked up where they had left off.

Women who have breast cancer that has spread to the brain often die within a year or two of the diagnosis. To shrink the tumors inside Kraemer's brain, one oncologist recommended she undergo what's known as "whole brain radiation," an extreme but common procedure for patients with multiple brain tumors. Such treatment can cause debilitating fatigue and permanent cognitive damage. Kraemer instead enrolled in a clinical trial to test whether a relatively new drug called Verzenio could beat back brain tumors in women with estrogen-receptor-positive metastatic breast cancer. Kraemer went on the drug, and most of her tumors stayed the same size for eight months, a good sign. The largest even shrank. The drug also kicked Kraemer into chemical menopause, which her oncologist thought might help cut off the supply of estrogen her type of breast cancer was feeding on.

But the drug had side effects, including chronic diarrhea that required Kraemer to get IV fluids to prevent dehydration. Her oncologist decreased the dose of the trial drug, which stopped the diarrhea but also the menopause. Soon her tumors began growing again. The clinical-trial protocol dictated that Kraemer had to stop taking Verzenio—if her cancer was growing, the drug was not working. But a new oncologist had a different take. Nancy Lin, a metastatic specialist at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, speculated that the drug actually was working and that the estrogen produced by Kraemer's ovaries was canceling out its effects. The problem was that the clinical-trial rules did not allow patients to start hormone therapy in the middle of the study. "I said, 'I don't care what I have to sell or do, someone's going to get me that damn drug back,'" Kraemer told me. Lin lobbied the drugmaker Eli Lilly to allow Kraemer to have Verzenio and begin hormone therapy. Miraculously the company agreed to sponsor a new trial with just one patient, Kraemer.

The treatment kept Kraemer's brain tumors stable for six months. But in January 2018, a scan showed they were growing. Still worried about the cognitive side effects of whole brain radiation, Kraemer began specialized radiation treatment that would hit only her largest tumor. Her brain tumors remained stable for a few months, but eventually they started growing again. Kraemer enrolled in yet another clinical trial, this one testing whether a drug that has been shown to work against certain types of liver and kidney cancer might help women with metastatic breast cancer.

In September 2018, I flew to Chicago to see Kraemer. I met her and Marintzer for breakfast the day after I arrived and couldn't help thinking they looked entirely, astonishingly normal, their predicament hidden inside a relationship they were trying hard

not to define by the fact that Kraemer was battling a disease that would most likely cut her life short.

Later that day, I asked Kraemer how her disease affects her everyday life. She said her largest tumor in her brain had begun to impede her ability to use her right hand. She could no longer hold chopsticks or write legibly. She also had frequent migraines and once burned herself on a hot pan because she couldn't feel that her hand was on it. She said ever since her targeted brain radiation, she had had trouble multitasking and struggled to have a conversation if music was playing in the background. I asked if she felt like she was dying. "Yes and no," she said. She had a loving boyfriend, a tight-knit family and a good life, but her symptoms were getting worse. "I am in a decline," she said.

Kraemer babysat in high school, worked as a nanny in college and chose a career as a speech pathologist for kids. "All I wanted to do was be a mother," she told me. After her early-stage diagnosis, Kraemer froze eggs harvested from her ovaries, and every three months, she pays to keep them in storage. "I know I'm not going to use them, but I can't stop paying for them and just throw them away," she said.

In December 2017, Kraemer had told me that the upcoming Christmas holiday would probably be her last. But in December 2018, she and Marintzer went shopping for a Christmas tree and picked out the biggest one they could find. It was so large, they had to move most of their furniture out of their living room. "We know that the number of Christmases Lianne has are limited," Marintzer told me. "Let's do it up."

A scan in January 2019 showed that several of Kraemer's tumors were growing again. In the months since, she has been treated with multiple types of chemotherapy and more specialized radiation. But her symptoms are becoming more pronounced. Kraemer's right hand and arm are now mostly useless. Her right foot and leg are also not working properly, and she walks with a noticeable limp. She is weighing whether to allow a neurosurgeon to try to excise the largest tumor inside her brain. The surgery would be risky, so Kraemer and Marintzer decided to take one more big vacation. In August, they traveled to the Greek islands and stayed on the cliffs of Santorini.

"All things considered, I'm really lucky," Kraemer, now 43, told me recently. It has been more than three years since she was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in her brain. She has survived longer than most women like her, thanks to new drugs, clinical trials and creative thinking by her doctors. Kraemer is proof that research and science can change the fates of metastatic-breast-cancer patients. We just need more of it.

'HOW CAN YOU HAVE A MOON SHOT TRYING TO CURE CANCER AND NOT MENTION PEOPLE DYING OF CANCER?'

—DR. CYRUS GHAJAR, cancer biologist at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle

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*Excerpted from* Radical: The Science, Culture, and History of Breast Cancer in America

# Time Off



**BREAKING  
DOWN**

*Breaking Bad* is  
reborn on Netflix  
in the form  
of an original  
movie starring  
Aaron Paul

**INSIDE**

A DARK NEW COMEDY FOR FANS  
OF FLEABAG

THE NEXT CHAPTER OF  
OLIVE KITTERIDGE

ANTONIO BANDERAS REACHES  
NEW HEIGHTS

## TELEVISION

### When the finale isn't final

By Judy Berman

**T**HE LAST TIME WE SAW JESSE Pinkman, in the series finale of *Breaking Bad*, he'd just escaped a massacre. After refusing to put a mortally wounded Walter White (Bryan Cranston) out of his misery—an act that would've added one more sin to the long list he'd committed under the influence of the meth kingpin who used to be his high school science teacher—Jesse (Aaron Paul) drove the nearest El Camino straight through a chain-link fence, hit the road and never looked back. His symbolic shackles broken, he laughed and sobbed, his grizzled face filling the frame. By then, he was a traumatized, nearly feral mess. But he was free.

Unlike Walt's inevitable death, Jesse's ending was morally ambiguous: manipulated by a man who'd come to represent evil incarnate but still personally implicated in horrific violence, Jesse had also suffered terribly for his transgressions. Like Dorian Gray's portrait, his face registered the blackening of Walt's soul. So it seemed appropriate that Jesse's fate remained unsettled. Sure, he made it out of five seasons alive. Surviving much longer, however, would be a test of his intelligence, resourcefulness and—most of all—his determination to live a better life.

Six years later, *Breaking Bad* creator Vince Gilligan is back with the results. And for fans like me, there's something strangely urgent about that update. Jesse was the show's audience surrogate, the tortured conscience of a criminal demimonde populated by milquetoast psychos (Walt, Todd, Gus Fring) and sad, irredeemably compromised men like Saul Goodman and Mike Ehrmantraut. *El Camino: A Breaking Bad Movie*, which comes to Netflix and some theaters on Oct. 11, offers Jesse a chance to start over. It's the latest in a recent

**There's a unique potency to the connections viewers form with TV characters**



▲  
The film reunites Jesse with pals Badger (Matt L. Jones, left) and Skinny Pete (Charles Baker)

boom of TV-to-film adaptations of varying quality. For better or worse, these sequels exist thanks to the devotion of fans—and particularly the lasting bonds we form with characters like Jesse.

**OBVIOUSLY, *EL CAMINO*** and the rest of this year's many feature-length addenda to popular shows—*Deadwood: The Movie*, *Transparent: Musicale Finale*, *Downton Abbey*, even *Rocko's Modern Life: Static Cling*—are inseparable from the larger, more established trend of squeezing every possible cent out of existing intellectual properties. Stories don't end anymore. Cinematic universes actually do feel infinite. Forget the Disney–Marvel–*Star Wars* machine; even Margaret Atwood's literary classic *The Handmaid's Tale* has a sequel now.

Yet there's a unique potency to audiences' connections with characters on TV, which at its best combines the vividness of movies, the intimacy of books and the seriality of comics. Sometimes we remember these fictional people

with the same wistfulness that colors our memories of friends with whom we've lost touch. Film franchises based on decades-old series with loyal fan bases, from *Star Trek* to *The Muppet Show*, can still be relied upon to rake in millions. These new chapters can be great, but only if they have something to offer audiences besides nostalgia.

*Deadwood*, for instance, had unfinished business. HBO canceled the brilliant western in 2006 between seasons, before creator David Milch could wrap up a series-long arc driven by power, progress and greed. It took so long to get this year's culminating made-for-TV movie made that Milch ended up setting it a decade after the events of the series finale, as older, more settled characters reunited to celebrate South Dakota's statehood. The film left a few of the drama's best characters, like widowed financier Alma Garret (Molly Parker), with little to do. Yet new historical perspective and a poignant resolution for *Deadwood's* greatest creation—Ian McShane's Shakespearean saloon owner Al Swearengen—made the ride back into town worthwhile.

Spun off from shows that aired for long enough to start repeating themselves, the *Downton Abbey* and *Transparent* movies had less reason to exist. The former, a glossy gown-fest contrived around the Crawleys hosting the

king and queen that arrived in theaters last month, goes down easily enough, as long as you have a high tolerance for monarchist propaganda. But does Lady Mary's (Michelle Dockery) commitment to preserving the estate really need to be tested again? (Many viewers thought yes: the film grossed a surprising \$31 million in its opening weekend.) The self-indulgent straight-to-Amazon *Transparent* musical was too quirky and niche to be a cash grab; it's likelier that it was a well-intentioned but artistically bankrupt effort to move on without disgraced former star Jeffrey Tambor.

**IT SEEMS RELEVANT** that these films are sequels to shows that debuted before Netflix started spewing out hundreds of originals each year. They satisfy our nostalgia for the monoculture of appointment TV, along with our lingering affections for familiar characters. Especially now that we're all streaming different things at different times, there's community to be found in going to the cinema to watch *Downton* in the company of others who've paid to laugh at the Dowager Countess's zingers.

That goes double for *El Camino*. Written and directed by Gilligan, it has an action-thriller scale that more than justifies the theatrical release, elevating cinematography and sound design whose artfulness was unparalleled on TV. (Whatever you do, don't watch it on your phone.) The movie joins AMC's *Better Call Saul* as an expansion of a *Breaking Bad* Televisual Universe that is also a moral universe, weighing the soul of each protagonist in turn. In Walt, Gilligan illustrated how meekness can conceal malice. Saul Goodman is what happens when a person with good intentions is incapable of following society's rules.

Going into *El Camino*, Jesse's soul still hangs in the balance. And unlike diabolical Walt or self-saboteur Saul, we can't help but worry for him—because we can imagine ourselves behind the wheel of that getaway car. What choice do we have but to see his story through to the end? □



#### QUICK TALK

## Aaron Paul

*In the midst of shooting Westworld, Aaron Paul took a break to talk about El Camino and returning to the role that earned him three Emmy Awards*

**How has your relationship with Jesse Pinkman changed over the years?** In the first couple seasons, I tried to stay within that skin. But [co-star] Bryan [Cranston] taught me that it's O.K. to wash the makeup off at the end of the day and just be yourself. It was a bit of a struggle for all of us—it was an emotional toll. Playing Jesse was like revisiting an old friend.

**Did you yourself ever fantasize about what happened to Jesse?** People ask me that almost on a daily basis. My response is: "I have no idea. He's probably on the run and in hiding. His fingerprints were all over that murder scene." But I fantasized that he was just living in the woods somewhere, working with his hands again, creating things with wood.

**The ending of Breaking Bad is widely beloved. Did you have any trepidation when creator Vince Gilligan asked you to star in a continuation?** Zero. I think any fan of Vince trusts him. He's not going to do something for no reason. It was this itch that he just had to scratch—the one unanswered question that he was living with.

**The movie picks back up with Jesse in a raw and traumatized state. How difficult was it to get back into such a mind-set?** Honestly, not at all. After I first read the script, I instantly felt all of those emotions running through me. Because I lived this guy. Everything you saw and didn't see—I lived through these moments.  
—ANDREW R. CHOW

THE MORE YOU  
UNDERSTAND  
HER WORLD,  
THE MORE  
POSSIBILITIES  
YOU SEE.



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## TimeOff Reviews



For Miri (Haggard), life on the outside is just as perilous as prison

### TELEVISION

## Love Fleabag? Meet Miri

By Judy Berman

EVEN BEFORE IT DOMINATED THE Emmys, *Fleabag* was bound to loom large over Showtime's *Back to Life*. Aside from sharing a pair of executive producers, Harry and Jack Williams, both British imports cast their creator-stars as women who've been deemed terminally unlovable. Both have six-episode seasons built around those characters' secrets. They share witty, concise scripts and defining fascinations with ugly emotions: grief, loneliness, guilt, shame, self-hatred.

The big difference between *Back to Life* protagonist Miri Matteson (*Episodes*' Daisy Haggard, in her writing debut) and Phoebe Waller-Bridge's indelible *Fleabag* is the grave and public nature of Miri's predicament. After serving 18 years in prison for a crime she committed as a teenager, she returns to the seaside town where she grew up—a place where everybody knows everybody, and most see her homecoming as a threat to public safety.

It takes a while for Haggard and co-writer Laura Solon to fill in the backstory. By then, you're likely to have reached two hard-to-reconcile conclusions: that whatever happened must've been devastating, and that

Miri can't possibly deserve her monstrous reputation. Timid and fragile, she radiates the benign dizziness of a '90s Lisa Kudrow character—Haggard even looks a bit like Kudrow—if that flaky woman-child were also a recently incarcerated local pariah. Miri trips over the usual ex-con hurdles: awkward job interviews, tough reunions, check-ins with a distracted parole officer (Jo Martin's Janice). But the show is more about the unique nightmare of being hated and misunderstood by everyone around you. Miri could easily have allowed the ordeal to break her, though in a rare insight Janice observes, "I deal with broken women all day, and you? You've got it all."

Miri is a scapegoat, defined by what others project on her. That's a difficult portrait to paint in under three hours while juggling elements of comedy and crime drama, but *Back to Life* (premiering Oct. 6) smartly surrounds Miri with distinctive secondary characters: her distant mom (Geraldine James), obsessive conservationist dad (Richard Durden), a love interest (Adeel Akhtar) with secrets of his own. What *Fleabag* did for one wounded human being, this worthy successor does for a scarred community. □



BOOKS

# Aging with Olive

By Annabel Gutterman

MORE THAN 10 YEARS HAVE PASSED since Elizabeth Strout introduced the world to retired teacher Olive Kitteridge, a character who is at once frank, frightening and full of wisdom, often in a single breath. Now, Strout brings her beloved protagonist back in *Olive, Again*, a follow-up to her Pulitzer Prize-winning 2008 novel-in-stories. The new book is a nostalgic return to Crosby, Maine, where Olive continues to poke around in the lives of her fellow townspeople.

The 13 interlinked stories in *Olive, Again* embrace both new and familiar characters navigating the struggles that arise in everyday life. Olive finagles her way into each chapter with her distinct, outsize presence—whether she’s a central player in the action (as when she unexpectedly delivers a baby) or a scene-stealing side character (grumpily ordering doughnuts at the local shop).

None of the scenarios is particularly novel: a mother facing a medical crisis fears for her family’s future. Adult brothers realize the sacrifices they’ve made in marrying very different women, who draw them apart. An estranged couple comes closer together after their daughter makes a surprising announcement. But the stories are rendered in such delicate turns that Strout is again able to portray the subtle heartbreaks that punctuate the mundanities of life.

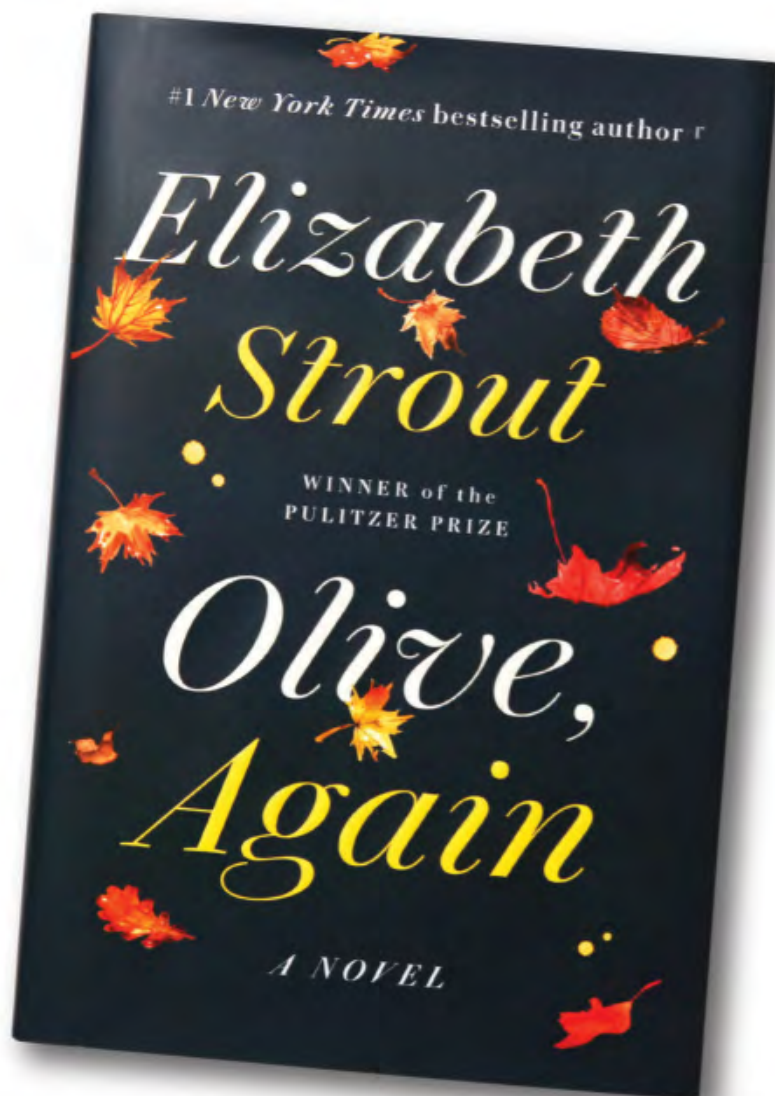
*Olive, Again* is Strout’s seventh novel

And none are more devastating than the ones Olive reckons with herself.

Growing older can be tough, but growing old is much harder. Aging and the anxieties that surround it plague Olive, who was widowed at the end of the first novel, especially as she attempts to reconnect with her adult son Christopher. Their interactions are achingly rushed, emphasizing a sense that their time together is limited. Tension only rises when Chris discovers that Olive has found love again.

**Growing older can be tough, but growing old is much harder**

While Strout fills her protagonist’s life with exchanges and interactions, she underlines a poignant sense of disappointment. As Olive is forced to reflect on the meaning of her life in old age, she’s overwhelmed by a sense of loneliness—a symptom of living that is perhaps the most crushing of all. □



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## MOVIES

### Banderas, alive with color

By Stephanie Zacharek

PEDRO ALMODÓVAR'S WORLD HAS ALWAYS BEEN one of color. He'll ask his actors to perform the most delicately complex scenes in front of wildly patterned wallpaper. The furnishings in his characters' apartments are like visual music: hanging lamps in tangerine and turquoise, vases of van Gogh-hued flowers, couches whose fabric channels the upbeat mood of a tiki bar. He orchestrates the outdoors too, by making judicious use of a mosaic wall, a brightly painted door, trees that have been saving up all their chlorophyll just for him.

Color is everywhere in Almodóvar's astonishing and deeply moving *Pain and Glory*. But a brilliant filmmaker can always make you see the world in a new way, and the colors of *Pain and Glory* are like a newly discovered dialect in a familiar language. Antonio Banderas plays Salvador Mallo, a successful filmmaker in his 60s living in Madrid (and obviously a fictional stand-in for Almodóvar himself). Salvador suffers from a list of aches, pains and ailments as long as those reams of tiny print on the folded-up paper that comes tucked into an aspirin bottle: digestive issues, migraines, anxiety and, worst of all, debilitating back pain. He has plenty of money, but he hasn't made a film in ages and may never make one again. He runs into an aging actress from his past, who asks him what he'll do if he stops making movies. "Live, I guess," he responds, but if the words sound positive enough, his eyes tell the real story: they're weary, like a crumpled tissue.

But a series of reconnections and recollections gradually bring Salvador back to life. A long-lost love, Federico (Leonardo Sbaraglia), re-emerges as if from the ether. Salvador reflects on his deeper past too, particularly his precocious childhood in a small Spanish village: he thinks of the teenage construction worker (César Vicente) who used to come to his family's house, who ignited the first spark of erotic desire in him as a youngster. But his most tender memories are reserved for his capable, affectionate mother, played by Penélope Cruz. Radiant and vital, she looks barely older than she did in Almodóvar's 1999 *All About My Mother*.

**NOT ALL** of *Pain and Glory* is strictly autobiographical. But Banderas' performance—maybe the finest he's ever given—is so fine-grained in its attentiveness to every nuance of physical and psychic suffering that you can't help thinking Almodóvar is speaking through him. Some of us



▲  
*Banderas gives possibly the best performance of his career*

▼  
*A radiant Cruz plays a filmmaker's mother, and a memory*



grew up with Almodóvar: in the 1980s, nutso, glorious melodramatic visions like *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* and *Matador* (both featuring a very young Banderas, who, like Cruz, has long been an Almodóvar regular) were like nothing we'd ever seen. But as out-there as they were, they also rang with generosity. Almodóvar has always been attuned to women's experience, certainly, but also to drag queens and all manner of people who might have reason to feel like misfits. He was reckoning with trans identity long before most of us were thinking about it—Almodóvar made a place for everyone.

So to see Almodóvar-as-Salvador suffering in this way is acutely painful—yet this movie is hardly joyless. In its most beautiful scenes, Salvador spends time with his mother (Julieta Serrano), now aged, teasing her gently even after she's spoken somewhat sharply to him. Frail but still peppery, she sits in a chair in the bedroom he's prepared for her—it's covered in a bright purple print, a faux flower garden unto itself. In a box of old things, she comes across an old-fashioned wooden darning egg. Salvador's face lights up—he remembers watching her use it—and when she hands it to him, his hand curls around it like the treasure it is.

There's color all around them in the room, and in their life together. Almodóvar's colors—as brought to life here by his production designer Antxón Gómez, and as captured by his frequent cinematographer José Luis Alcaine—aren't just a stimulant but an energy source, like sugar: they get the eyes busy and keep them working, in turn heating up the brain's furnace, and before long, the heart starts pumping harder too. Everything about *Pain and Glory* is awake and alive, and Almodóvar's nerve endings become ours as well. □

## THEATER

# Making it up, on Broadway

By Rob LeDonne

WHEN LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA WAS IN REHEARSALS for his breakout theatrical production *In the Heights*, he—along with his cast and crew—would break up the grueling schedule by sneaking off and improvising, spitting bits of rhymes and jokes. “We did it as a fun way to blow off steam,” Miranda says. His colleague Anthony Veneziale, who had an extensive improv background, suggested they perform it in front of people.

So they did, in a show they called *Freestyle Love Supreme*, borrowing its name from John Coltrane’s 1965 album *A Love Supreme*, and billed as a hip-hop improv show. Miranda and his cohorts first performed it in the cramped basement of the temporarily closed theater-district location of New York City staple Drama Book Shop in 2003, basing the show on audience suggestions and making up the rest on the spot. Starting Oct. 2, the show will make its official Broadway debut at the Booth Theatre. “This was not a show that would, in our wildest dreams, play Broadway,” says Miranda. “I could show you footage of us with flyers, busking and making up raps and begging people to come to the show. We’ve come very far—and at the same time, it’s also been five blocks.”

That the show is on Broadway at all is a testament to the power of Miranda’s brand. Following the success of *In the Heights*, the writer-director-performer won universal acclaim for his show *Hamilton*, which has led to an eclectic career: he’s behind an upcoming remake of *The Little Mermaid*, a big-screen take on *In the Heights* and a movie version of Jonathan Larson’s play *Tick, Tick ... Boom!*, which he’ll direct—plus he’ll star in an adaptation of the fantasy novel series *His Dark Materials*, which premieres on Nov. 4 on HBO. Yet the joys of *Freestyle Love Supreme* continued to ricochet around his creative psyche. “It never went away,” he says. “It was always this supporting exercise that made all other things possible.”

Dusting off the show for Broadway was a way for Miranda to honor his creative past while helping push into the future. Improv is an art form mainly relegated to tiny stages, rarely performed at this scale. “We tried to do research into improv on Broadway,” says Veneziale, “and only came up with one or two things that fall vaguely into the realm of it. It feels pretty singular.” Director Thomas Kail, a longtime Miranda collaborator who also directed *Hamilton* and *In the Heights*, worked to give the show some basic structure



▲  
The cast of *Freestyle Love Supreme* takes the stage without a script

while still allowing it to stay loose. “There’s a liberation in doing something like this,” he says. “Unlike anything we’ve ever done, it takes this strange skill set we have and celebrates it.”

**THE 16-WEEK BROADWAY RUN** features a rotating group of freestylers—among them Miranda and Veneziale as well as Chris Sullivan, a beatboxer known as Shockwave and longtime member Utkarsh Ambudkar. Though Miranda’s calendar is jam-packed, it’s a priority for him to work in this way, without the restraints of scripted projects. “We do it for the joy of doing it,” he says, “and for the freedom that comes with getting onstage without a plan and connecting with an audience in the most visceral way possible: ‘Tell us what’s on your mind, and we’re going to make a show for you.’”

Though that may sound intimidating—standing in front of that many people onstage without a plan—Veneziale says it gets more natural after decades of practice. “It comes from a subliminal part of your subconscious, so you’re able to trust your abilities,” he says. “When you freestyle enough, you start dreaming in freestyle.” Miranda agrees, noting that the ability to improvise rhymed verses now comes as organically to him as speaking another language. “A lot of my life is pretty scheduled,” he says. “I’m juggling two kids, a marriage and a lot of projects. When I get to do a freestyle show, I don’t think of any of that.” □

# 10 Questions

**Bob Iger** The Disney CEO on consequential fun, firing humanely and what he learned from scraping chewing gum off desks

**T**here are many business-leadership books; what does *The Ride of a Lifetime* offer that's new? Because I'm in the business of storytelling, and I had some good stories to tell, I thought I could write a book of stories that could convey advice to young people in a less dry, less businesslike way.

**You write that your hardest day was when an alligator killed 2-year-old Lane Graves at a Disney park while you were opening a new park in Shanghai. What lesson did you learn from that?** That even though you're in a business that is essentially manufacturing fun, it doesn't mean that every day is going to be a happy day.

**You also write that you took your father, who struggled with mental health and financial issues, to dinner, and you told him that in your eyes, he'd been a success. How did he respond?** He did not express his understanding of it or his appreciation in words, but I could see that my words had meaning to him.

**You have a legendary work ethic. Is that partly biology? Could all people develop that?** I think it's a combination of biology, necessity and just practice.

**So we all have to scrape the chewing gum off a thousand desks, as you did one summer? That just taught me how to tolerate monotony. Anybody who's ever been in my life knows that I wake up happy, which basically makes it very, very difficult to live with me. Once I learned how to use that energy and enthusiasm to my advantage, it reinforced the whole dynamic and I probably applied myself even more.**

**Is there any downside to that work ethic? You write of not wanting it to cost you another marriage.** I think lives need balance—for you and for the people around you. I'm sure there

**“I WAKE UP HAPPY, WHICH BASICALLY MAKES IT VERY, VERY DIFFICULT TO LIVE WITH ME”**



are times in my life where I failed. The impact on my marriage wasn't really from work ethic as much as pursuing opportunity. When people gave me opportunities, I seized them. I didn't purposely put my marriage on the line, but as a result, I made it difficult on my marriage. At least my last one, not my current one.

**Risk-taking is a key leadership principle in the book. Yet one criticism that people level at Disney is that all its sequels and superhero movies feel iterative and not risky creatively. How would you address that?** I can name numerous risks that we've taken, just in the last few years: *Black Panther*, *Coco* and a number of movies that are coming up. I find that criticism to be unfounded and preposterous.

**One of the toughest parts of management is firing people. How do you do that in a humane fashion?** You start with never really wanting to. When I have to, I try to be empathetic. I try to be to the point. I try to be transparent, meaning not to make excuses. I try to be generous in terms of explaining the reasons why, and I try to do so quickly.

**Do you have any plans for after 2021, when you retire?** Nope. I'm looking forward to waking up and not having a to-do list a mile long.

**You've put your whole life, essentially, into a theme-park company. Do you ever think: Is that enough?** Here's what I think. There's never been a time when art and entertainment are as important as today. I think people are desperate for it, and I think that our place in the world is both important and something that I'm extremely proud of, to be in this business at this company at this point, at this time in the world. I don't look at what we do as frivolous. I don't look at what we do as small. I don't look at what we do as inconsequential.

—BELINDA LUSCOMBE

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