



AMERICA MUST CHANGE

by

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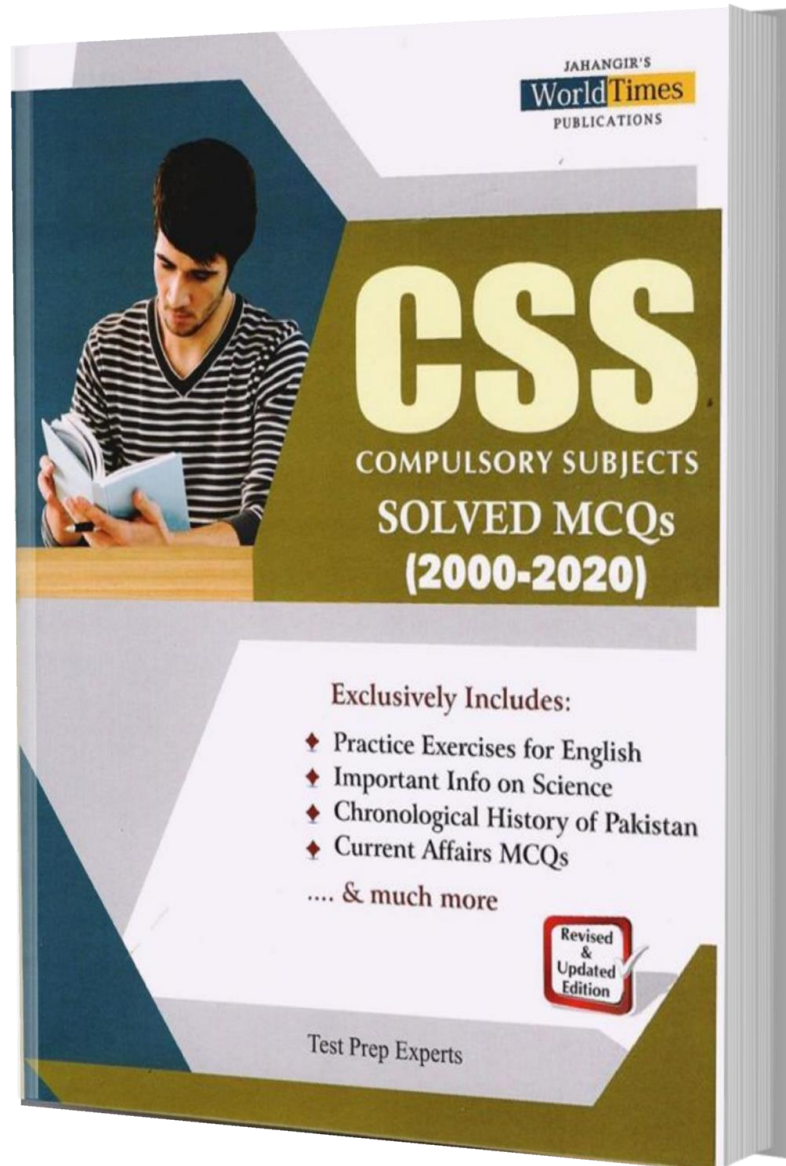
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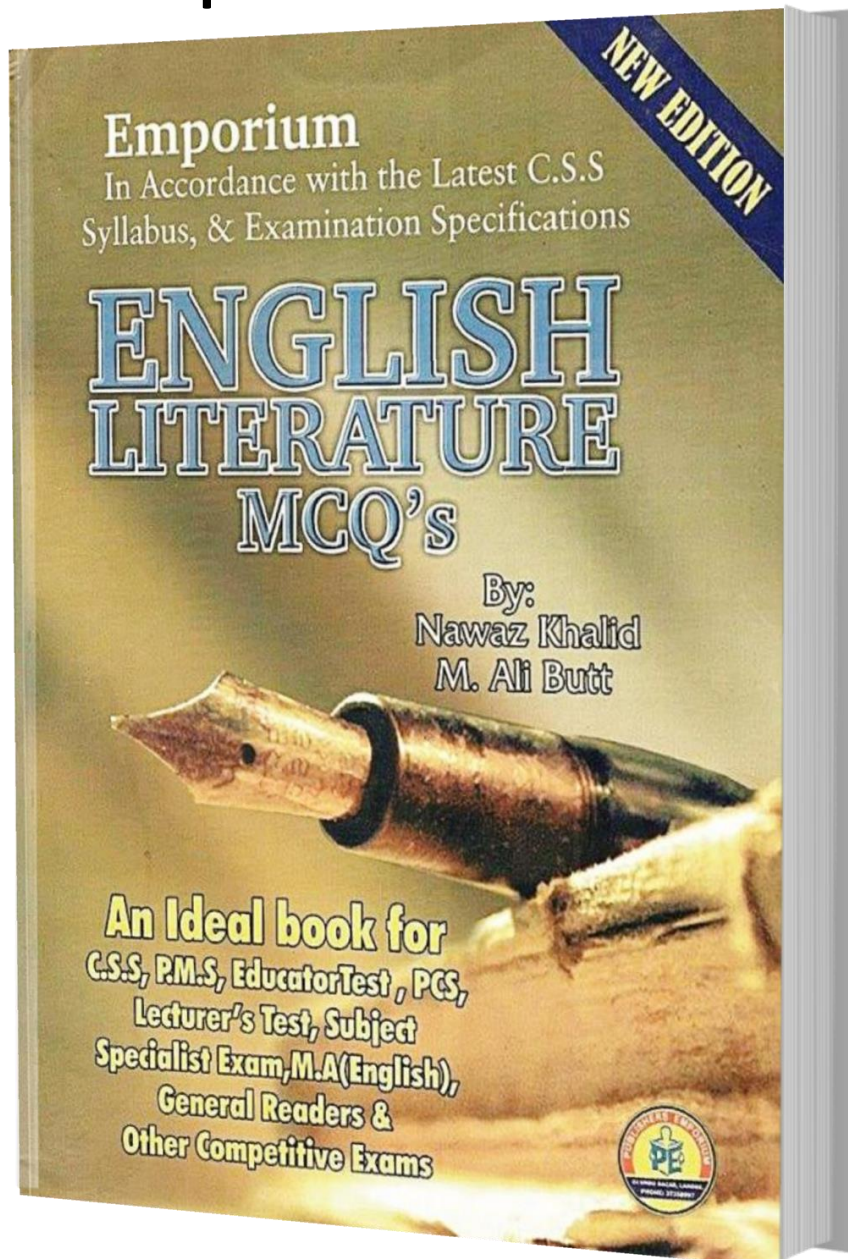
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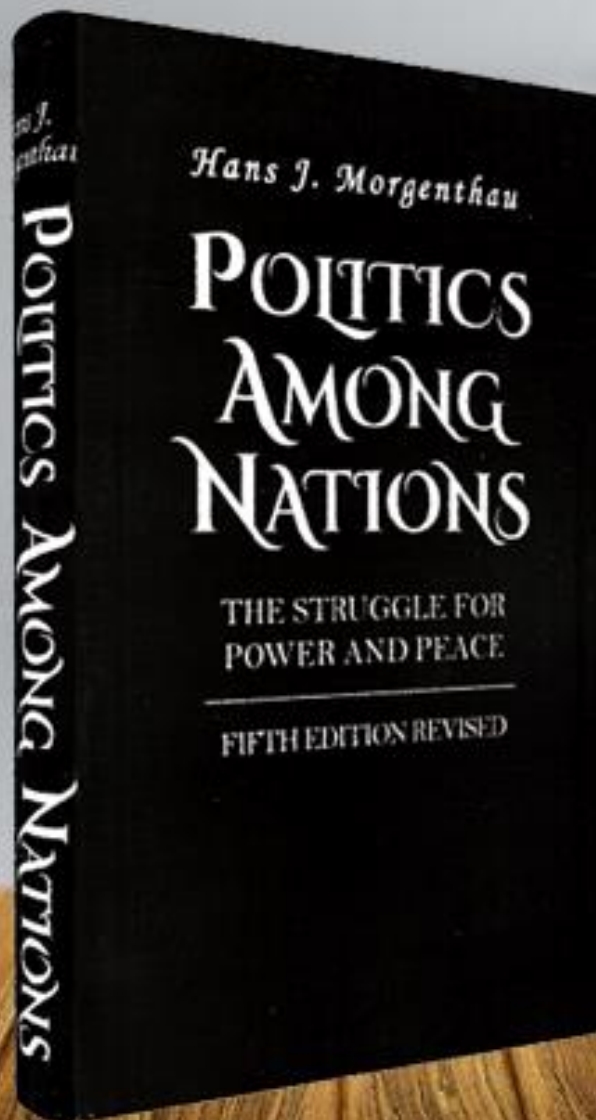
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^ **Juneteenth in the Greenwood district in Tulsa, Okla., on June 19**

Photograph by **Ruddy Roye** for **TIME**

ON THE COVER: Painting by **Charly Palmer** for **TIME**



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Built for Business

The American experiment

THIS JULY 4TH ARRIVES AT A CRITICAL MOMENT for what the Pulitzer Prize–winning novelist Viet Thanh Nguyen in this issue calls “the alchemical experiment” of the United States. As the country nears its 250th anniversary, it is being tested by an overdue reckoning on police brutality, white supremacy and systemic racism in all its forms, by a relentless pandemic on the rise again, by a deep economic and unemployment crisis, by a President who continually deploys racist language and stokes rather than calms division.

This week, we turned to voices from within and outside TIME to explore the frustrations, hopes and experiences of marginalized communities in a country that claimed equality as its cornerstone but hasn’t delivered for so many. Working with the searing photographs of Haruka Sakaguchi, Anna Purna Kambhampaty explores the anti-Asian discrimination that accompanied the coronavirus outbreak and asks how Asian Americans’ perspectives have shifted amid the Black Lives Matter protests. Alana Semuels documents how persistent racism and segregation have created an ever widening wealth gap in the U.S. It’s a crisis deepened—as Abby Vesoulis notes—by Trump Administration policy changes, from attempting to curb access to food stamps to trying to limit protections for people who borrow money ahead of payday. Abigail Abrams reports on the double challenge faced by those who are Black and disabled in encounters with police, and how those risks might be addressed by new models of public safety.

“The videos of George Floyd and Rayshard Brooks dying have combined with the vulnerability caused by COVID-19 and the feeling that the country is broken to bring us all to the brink of madness and, apparently, to the precipice of significant change,” writes contributor and Princeton professor Eddie S. Glaude Jr. What will come of it? The writer Damon Young is unsure. Though he sees white Americans finally realizing their own obligations in larger numbers, the “what” of what’s happening “remains cloudy,” he says, adding, “Whether America has the will and the rigor and the stamina to see this through is yet to be seen, and I won’t hold

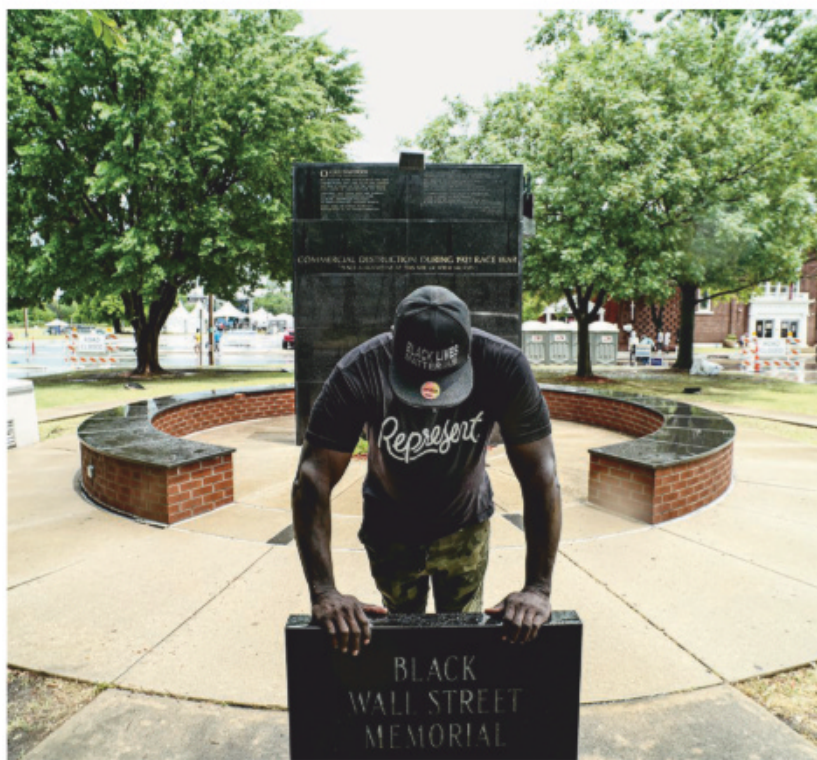
my breath waiting for it.” Jaquira Díaz, a gay Black Puerto Rican woman who has spent the pandemic separated from her transmasculine partner because of tightened restrictions on immigration, notes that America has always been in crisis. But she locates hope at a moment when equality may finally be seen as a broader fight.

HERE AT TIME, I’ve been grappling with the question of what it means to be leading an American institution at a time when we are all re-examining what equality means in America. Over the past few weeks, as Black Americans have been sharing their experiences in their workplaces, in their networks and in the media, including our pages, we’ve had many similar conversations here. I’ve spoken with and heard from many colleagues about their experiences. I’ve heard stories from employees who feel unheard, unseen and exhausted by what they experience, and many powerful ideas about how we can change.

TIME’s leadership is committed to standing up against white supremacy, police brutality and systemic racism, and to standing up for change. We are committed to building a company that reflects the demographics and lived experiences of the world we cover, to increasing the hiring, professional development and career advancement of Black employees and members of other underrepresented groups, and to creating antiracist workplace environments. We have asked our team to hold all TIME leaders accountable for transparency around these efforts and for showing demonstrable, sustained progress. I invite you to do the same. This work is essential to our workplace and to our coverage, to supporting our team and to delivering for you.

These challenges are not unique to TIME, but they are real here and throughout other media institutions. Companies like ours have a particular obligation to reflect the world and the people we cover. We miss critical stories by not hearing and elevating the voices of people who have lived those stories. We must turn this awakening into long-overdue change.

Edward Felsenthal,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & CEO
@EFELSENTHAL



▲
A memorial to Black Wall Street in Tulsa, Okla., on June 19, Juneteenth, a day before Trump’s rally



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Introducing ATEM Mini

The compact television studio that lets you create presentation videos and live streams!

Blackmagic Design is a leader in video for the television industry, and now you can create your own streaming videos with ATEM Mini. Simply connect HDMI cameras, computers or even microphones. Then push the buttons on the panel to switch video sources just like a professional broadcaster! You can even add titles, picture in picture overlays and mix audio! Then live stream to Zoom, Skype or YouTube!

Create Training and Educational Videos

ATEM Mini's includes everything you need. All the buttons are positioned on the front panel so it's very easy to learn. There are 4 HDMI video inputs for connecting cameras and computers, plus a USB output that looks like a webcam so you can connect to Zoom or Skype. ATEM Software Control for Mac and PC is also included, which allows access to more advanced "broadcast" features!

Use Professional Video Effects

ATEM Mini is really a professional broadcast switcher used by television stations. This means it has professional effects such as a DVE for picture in picture effects commonly used for commenting over a computer slide show. There are titles for presenter names, wipe effects for transitioning between sources and a green screen keyer for replacing backgrounds with graphics.

Live Stream Training and Conferences

The ATEM Mini Pro model has a built in hardware streaming engine for live streaming via its ethernet connection. This means you can live stream to YouTube, Facebook and Teams in much better quality and with perfectly smooth motion. You can even connect a hard disk or flash storage to the USB connection and record your stream for upload later!

Monitor all Video Inputs!

With so many cameras, computers and effects, things can get busy fast! The ATEM Mini Pro model features a "multiview" that lets you see all cameras, titles and program, plus streaming and recording status all on a single TV or monitor. There are even tally indicators to show when a camera is on air! Only ATEM Mini is a true professional television studio in a small compact design!

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Conversation



WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT...

THE OVERDUE AWAKENING “Extremely well-written, passionate and persuasive. Damn good job!” Jack E. White, an African-American editor and writer who worked at TIME starting in 1972, wrote to Justin Worland regarding his June 22/June 29 cover story on systemic racism. Dale Kueter of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, found Jennifer Eberhardt’s and Von Miller’s accompanying op-eds edifying, adding, “Implicit racial bias, to use Eberhardt’s words, I believe rests not only in the machinery of governing but in everyone’s heart.” David Edelberg of Chicago said the issue should be required reading in schools, while David Hirsch of Dallas expressed hope that discussions about Black history would spark similar conversations about other minority groups in the U.S., like Native Americans.

‘A child born today will not see the end of racism until we change as a society.’

ENRIQUE PUERTOS,
Cleveland, Ga.

SAY THEIR NAMES Titus Kaphar’s June 15 cover painting of a Black mother and missing child, created in the wake of George Floyd’s May 25 death, moved readers like Laurette Koserowski of Andover, N.J., to tears. “What a masterpiece of emotion,” wrote Beth Barham of Dripping Springs, Texas. Pam Wright of Elkhart, Ind., “sobbed” reading Kaphar’s accompanying poem explaining the meaning of the painting. “I feel humbled and ashamed that some Americans are made to feel afraid and unsafe in their own country,” she said. “I can only hope that this will indeed open eyes that have been shut.”

‘When I saw this cover, I called my mom and said “Ma, I love you!”’

DIRON FORD,
Newport News, Va.



Behind the cover

For this week’s cover, TIME turned to Atlanta-based artist Charly Palmer (*above, in his studio*), who recently created the cover art for John Legend’s album *Bigger Love*. His painting *In Her Eyes* shows a girl faced with both the injustice of today and America’s historical role in it. “For the past 25 years, I have been on a mission through my art to sound the alarm,” Palmer says. “I hope that this cover reflects that concern.” Learn more at time.com/charly-palmer



CONTINUING ED TIME and Columbia Business School (*above*) are teaming up to offer affordable, on-demand online classes on topics from negotiation skills to the fundamentals of corporate finance. Learn more and enroll at time.com/columbia-gsb

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PROGRAMMING NOTE This is a special double issue that will be on sale for two weeks. The next issue of TIME will be published on July 9 and available on newsstands on July 10.

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‘Rayshard Brooks could’ve been my brother, my father, or even my significant other.’

PINKY COLE,
Atlanta restaurateur and philanthropist, in a June 19 statement on deciding to work with Clark Atlanta University to offer scholarships to the children of Rayshard Brooks, a Black man killed a week earlier by Atlanta Police

‘I think we’re talking about a structural and cultural revolution being pushed by the radical left, the intolerant left.’

CHRIS MCDANIEL,
Republican Mississippi state senator, speaking June 20 of his opposition to efforts to change the state flag, which is embedded with an image of a Confederate battle flag

‘I TURNED TO MY HUSBAND AND I TOLD HIM, “I’M SAFE.”’

BRIAN DE LOS SANTOS, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipient, after the Supreme Court’s June 18 decision blocking the Trump Administration from ending the program

‘I have not resigned.’

GEOFFREY BERMAN,
then U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, after Attorney General William Barr announced June 19 that Berman was “stepping down”; Berman, whose office has overseen investigations involving people close to President Donald Trump, left his post the following day after Trump fired him

‘The alternative is to wait out the COVID-19 pandemic.’

LEE HSIEN LOONG,
Singapore’s Prime Minister, announcing on June 23 that elections will be held July 10, nine months earlier than required by law



100.4°F

Temperature recorded in the Siberian town of Verkhoyansk on June 20, a record high for the Arctic locale

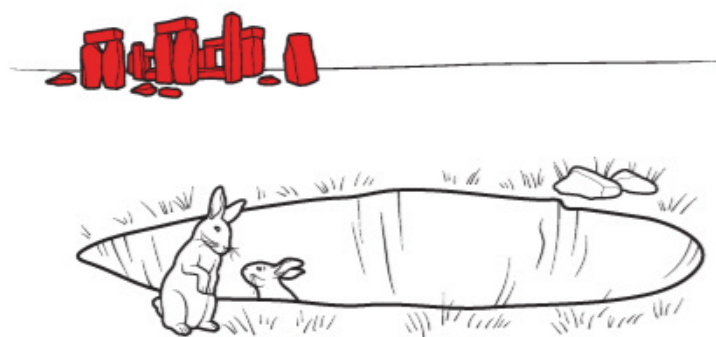


GOOD NEWS
of the week

Eight years after being shot by a Taliban fighter, education advocate and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai graduated from Oxford University with a degree in philosophy, politics and economics; she shared the news on June 19

4,500

Approximate age in years of the Neolithic monument newly discovered near Stonehenge; more than a dozen 30-ft.-wide pits make up what is now thought to be the U.K.’s largest prehistoric monument



For certain adults with newly diagnosed non-small cell lung cancer that has spread



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Indication & Important Safety Information for OPDIVO® (nivolumab) + YERVOY® (ipilimumab)

What is OPDIVO + YERVOY?

OPDIVO® is a prescription medicine used in combination with YERVOY® (ipilimumab) as a first treatment for adults with a type of advanced stage lung cancer (called non-small cell lung cancer) when your lung cancer has spread to other parts of your body (metastatic) and your tumors are positive for PD-L1, but do not have an abnormal EGFR or ALK gene.

It is not known if OPDIVO is safe and effective in children younger than 18 years of age.

Important Safety Information for OPDIVO + YERVOY

OPDIVO is a medicine that may treat certain cancers by working with your immune system. OPDIVO can cause your immune system to attack normal organs and tissues in any area of your body and can affect the way they work. These problems can sometimes become serious or life-threatening and can lead to death. These problems may happen anytime during treatment or even after your treatment has ended. Some of these problems may happen more often when OPDIVO is used in combination with YERVOY.

YERVOY can cause serious side effects in many parts of your body which can lead to death. These problems may happen anytime during treatment with YERVOY or after you have completed treatment.

Serious side effects may include:

- **Lung problems (pneumonitis).** Symptoms of pneumonitis may include: new or worsening cough; chest pain; and shortness of breath.
- **Intestinal problems (colitis) that can lead to tears or holes in your intestine.** Signs and symptoms of colitis may include: diarrhea (loose stools) or more bowel movements than usual; blood in your stools or dark, tarry, sticky stools; and severe stomach area (abdomen) pain or tenderness.
- **Liver problems (hepatitis).** Signs and symptoms of hepatitis may include: yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes; severe nausea or vomiting; pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen); drowsiness; dark urine (tea colored); bleeding or bruising more easily than normal; feeling less hungry than usual; and decreased energy.
- **Hormone gland problems (especially the thyroid, pituitary, adrenal glands, and pancreas).** Signs and symptoms that your hormone glands are not working properly may include: headaches that will not go away or unusual headaches; extreme tiredness; weight gain or weight loss; dizziness or fainting; changes in mood or behavior, such as decreased sex drive, irritability, or forgetfulness; hair loss; feeling cold; constipation; voice gets deeper; and excessive thirst or lots of urine.
- **Kidney problems, including nephritis and kidney failure.** Signs of kidney problems may include: decrease in the amount of urine; blood in your urine; swelling in your ankles; and loss of appetite.
- **Skin problems.** Signs of these problems may include: rash; itching; skin blistering; and ulcers in the mouth or other mucous membranes.
- **Inflammation of the brain (encephalitis).** Signs and symptoms of encephalitis may include: headache; fever; tiredness or weakness; confusion; memory problems; sleepiness; seeing or hearing things that are not really there (hallucinations); seizures; and stiff neck.
- **Problems in other organs.** Signs of these problems may include: changes in eyesight; severe or persistent muscle or joint pains; severe muscle weakness; and chest pain.

Additional serious side effects observed during a separate study of YERVOY alone include:

- **Nerve problems that can lead to paralysis.** Symptoms of nerve problems may include: unusual weakness of legs, arms, or face; and numbness or tingling in hands or feet.

- **Eye problems.** Symptoms may include: blurry vision, double vision, or other vision problems; and eye pain or redness.

Get medical help immediately if you develop any of these symptoms or they get worse. It may keep these problems from becoming more serious. Your healthcare team will check you for side effects during treatment and may treat you with corticosteroid or hormone replacement medicines. If you have a serious side effect, your healthcare team may also need to delay or completely stop your treatment.

OPDIVO and OPDIVO + YERVOY can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Severe infusion-related reactions.** Tell your doctor or nurse right away if you get these symptoms during an infusion: chills or shaking; itching or rash; flushing; difficulty breathing; dizziness; fever; and feeling like passing out.

Pregnancy and Nursing:

- Tell your healthcare provider if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. OPDIVO and YERVOY can harm your unborn baby. If you are a female who is able to become pregnant, your healthcare provider should do a pregnancy test before you start receiving OPDIVO. Females who are able to become pregnant should use an effective method of birth control during and for at least 5 months after the last dose. Talk to your healthcare provider about birth control methods that you can use during this time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you become pregnant or think you are pregnant during treatment. You or your healthcare provider should contact Bristol Myers Squibb at 1-800-721-5072 as soon as you become aware of the pregnancy.
- **Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study:** Females who become pregnant during treatment with YERVOY are encouraged to enroll in a Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study. The purpose of this study is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. You or your healthcare provider can enroll in the Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study by calling 1-844-593-7869.
- Before receiving treatment, tell your healthcare provider if you are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if either treatment passes into your breast milk. Do not breastfeed during treatment and for 5 months after the last dose.

Tell your healthcare provider about:

- Your health problems or concerns if you: have immune system problems such as autoimmune disease, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, lupus, or sarcoidosis; have had an organ transplant; have lung or breathing problems; have liver problems; or have any other medical conditions.
- All the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

The most common side effects of OPDIVO, when used in combination with YERVOY, include: feeling tired; diarrhea; rash; itching; nausea; pain in muscles, bones, and joints; fever; cough; decreased appetite; vomiting; stomach-area (abdominal) pain; shortness of breath; upper respiratory tract infection; headache; low thyroid hormone levels (hypothyroidism); decreased weight; and dizziness.

These are not all the possible side effects. For more information, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Important Facts for OPDIVO and YERVOY, including Boxed WARNING for YERVOY regarding immune-mediated side effects, on the following page.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The information below does not take the place of talking with your healthcare professional. Only your healthcare professional knows the specifics of your condition and how OPDIVO® (nivolumab) in combination with YERVOY® (ipilimumab) may fit into your overall therapy. Talk to your healthcare professional if you have any questions about OPDIVO (pronounced op-DEE-voh) and YERVOY (pronounced yur-voi).

Rx ONLY

What is the most important information I should know about OPDIVO (nivolumab) and YERVOY (ipilimumab)?

OPDIVO and YERVOY are medicines that may treat certain cancers by working with your immune system. OPDIVO and YERVOY can cause your immune system to attack normal organs and tissues in any area of your body and can affect the way they work. These problems can sometimes become serious or life-threatening and can lead to death and may happen anytime during treatment or even after your treatment has ended. Some of these problems may happen more often when OPDIVO is used in combination with YERVOY. YERVOY can cause serious side effects in many parts of your body which can lead to death. These problems may happen anytime during treatment with YERVOY or after you have completed treatment.

Call or see your healthcare provider right away if you develop any symptoms of the following problems or these symptoms get worse. Do not try to treat symptoms yourself.

Lung problems (pneumonitis). Symptoms of pneumonitis may include:

- new or worsening cough
- chest pain
- shortness of breath

Intestinal problems (colitis) that can lead to tears or holes in your intestine. Signs and symptoms of colitis may include:

- diarrhea (loose stools) or more bowel movements than usual
- mucus or blood in your stools or dark, tarry, sticky stools
- stomach-area (abdomen) pain or tenderness
- you may or may not have fever

Liver problems (hepatitis) that can lead to liver failure. Signs and symptoms of hepatitis may include:

- yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes
- nausea or vomiting
- pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen)
- drowsiness
- dark urine (tea colored)
- bleeding or bruising more easily than normal
- feeling less hungry than usual
- decreased energy

Hormone gland problems (especially the thyroid, pituitary, and adrenal glands; and pancreas). Signs and symptoms that your hormone glands are not working properly may include:

- headaches that will not go away or unusual headaches
- extreme tiredness or unusual sluggishness
- weight gain or weight loss
- dizziness or fainting
- changes in mood or behavior, such as decreased sex drive, irritability, or forgetfulness
- hair loss
- feeling cold
- constipation
- voice gets deeper
- excessive thirst or lots of urine

Kidney problems, including nephritis and kidney failure. Signs of kidney problems may include:

- decrease in the amount of urine
- blood in your urine
- swelling in your ankles
- loss of appetite

Skin Problems. Signs of these problems may include:

- skin rash with or without itching
- itching
- skin blistering or peeling
- sores or ulcers in mouth or other mucous membranes

Inflammation of the brain (encephalitis). Signs and symptoms of encephalitis may include:

- headache
- fever
- tiredness or weakness
- confusion
- memory problems
- sleepiness
- seeing or hearing things that are not really there (hallucinations)
- seizures
- stiff neck

Problems in other organs. Signs of these problems may include:

- changes in eyesight
- severe or persistent muscle or joint pains
- severe muscle weakness
- chest pain

Additional serious side effects observed during a separate study of YERVOY (ipilimumab) alone include:

Nerve problems that can lead to paralysis. Symptoms of nerve problems may include:

- unusual weakness of legs, arms, or face
- numbness or tingling in hands or feet

Eye problems. Symptoms may include:

- blurry vision, double vision, or other vision problems
- eye pain or redness

Get medical help immediately if you develop any of these symptoms or they get worse. It may keep these problems from becoming more serious. Your healthcare team will check you for side effects during treatment and may treat you with corticosteroid or hormone replacement medicines. If you have a serious side effect, your healthcare team may also need to delay or completely stop your treatment with OPDIVO (nivolumab) and YERVOY.

What are OPDIVO and YERVOY?

OPDIVO and YERVOY are prescription medicines used to treat adults with a type of advanced stage lung cancer called non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). OPDIVO may be used in combination with YERVOY as your first treatment for NSCLC:

- when your lung cancer has spread to other parts of your body (metastatic), and
- your tumors are positive for PD-L1, but do not have an abnormal EGFR or ALK gene.

It is not known if OPDIVO and YERVOY are safe and effective when used in children younger than 18 years of age.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before receiving OPDIVO and YERVOY?

Before you receive OPDIVO and YERVOY, tell your healthcare provider if you:

- have immune system problems (autoimmune disease) such as Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, lupus, or sarcoidosis
- have had an organ transplant
- have lung or breathing problems
- have liver problems
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. OPDIVO and YERVOY can harm your unborn baby. **Females who are able to become pregnant:**

Your healthcare provider should do a pregnancy test before you start receiving OPDIVO and YERVOY.

- You should use an effective method of birth control during and for at least 5 months after the last dose. Talk to your healthcare provider about birth control methods that you can use during this time.

- Tell your healthcare provider right away if you become pregnant or think you are pregnant during treatment. You or your healthcare provider should contact Bristol Myers Squibb at 1-800-721-5072 as soon as you become aware of the pregnancy.

- **Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study:** Females who become pregnant during treatment with YERVOY (ipilimumab) are encouraged to enroll in a Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study. The purpose of this study is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. You or your healthcare provider can enroll in the Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study by calling 1-844-593-7869.

- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if OPDIVO (nivolumab) or YERVOY passes into your breast milk. **Do not** breastfeed during treatment and for 5 months after the last dose.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare providers and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

What are the possible side effects of OPDIVO and YERVOY? OPDIVO and YERVOY can cause serious side effects, including:

- See "What is the most important information I should know about OPDIVO and YERVOY?"
- **Severe infusion reactions.** Tell your doctor or nurse right away if you get these symptoms during an infusion of OPDIVO or YERVOY:
 - chills or shaking
 - dizziness
 - itching or rash
 - fever
 - flushing
 - feeling like passing out
 - difficulty breathing


The most common side effects of OPDIVO when used in combination with YERVOY include:

- feeling tired
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- stomach-area (abdominal) pain
- rash
- shortness of breath
- itching
- upper respiratory tract infection
- nausea
- headache
- pain in muscles, bones, and joints
- low thyroid hormone levels (hypothyroidism)
- fever
- decreased weight
- cough
- dizziness
- decreased appetite

These are not all the possible side effects of OPDIVO and YERVOY. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about OPDIVO and YERVOY. For more information, talk with your healthcare provider, call 1-855-673-4861, or go to www.OPDIVO.com.

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The Brief

GOING UP
As Florida's virus numbers rise, thrill seekers on June 5 enjoy a newly reopened Universal Studios in Orlando



INSIDE

POLAND'S ELECTION COULD
SIGNAL A SHIFT FOR EUROPE

BOOM AND BUST FOR THE
FIREWORKS BUSINESS

SAMANTHA POWER REMEMBERS
JEAN KENNEDY SMITH

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREGG NEWTON

The Brief is reported by Alejandro de la Garza, Mélissa Godin, Suyin Haynes, Ciara Nugent, Billy Perrigo, Madeline Roache and Olivia B. Waxman

HEALTH

The danger of blaming testing

By Tara Law, Chris Wilson and Elijah Wolfson

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S FIRST CAMPAIGN rally since March 2 began inauspiciously, after his staff announced that six members of the advance team for the June 20 event had tested positive for the novel coronavirus. Oklahoma, where the rally was held, saw a major spike in cases that day; the state's seven-day average for new daily cases was up almost 240% since two weeks prior. And, after the largely unmasked crowd settled into Tulsa's BOK Center arena, Trump told a story that obfuscated the realities behind those numbers.

Coronavirus testing, he said, is a "double-edged sword." The problem, he claimed, wasn't that COVID-19 took advantage of a country reopening too early; it was that the level of testing going on in the U.S. made the pandemic look worse than it is. "When you do testing to that extent," Trump said, "you're gonna find more people, you're gonna find more cases. So I said to my people, 'Slow the testing down, please.'"

There's no doubt more testing does find more cases. That's a good thing. Testing widely offers a key measure of the impact the virus is having on American communities. Failure to do so in the early days of the pandemic played a major role in the fact that the country has seen more deaths than any other in the world to date.

But more testing doesn't explain the recent rise in cases. If it did, you'd expect that even as the absolute number of confirmed cases went up, the share of tests that came back positive would go down, or at least remain flat. Instead, across the U.S., that figure is rising.

SOME PLACES HAVE more reason to be concerned than others: the rise has been especially pronounced in a number of states, such as Arizona, Texas and Florida. And each of those states provides its own case study in why the higher numbers can't be explained by testing.

"I think it's a true increase in the number of cases," says Murray Côté, an associate professor of health policy and management at Texas A&M, of his state's situation.

"It's not just attributable to testing. If it was just due to the testing, we wouldn't see the rates that we see. And the rates are indicative of the relaxation." Côté says the models he's seen suggest the pandemic is unlikely to slow down there until late in the summer—unless more Texans alter their behavior to curb the virus's spread.

In Arizona, there are two major reasons the increase in daily new cases shouldn't be attributed to increased testing, says Dr. Joe Gerald, director of public-health policy and management at the University of Arizona. For one, cases didn't start to rise until almost two weeks after the state increased testing, which was 10 to 14 days after the end of its stay-at-home order—just the time frame by which COVID-19 symptoms appear. Second, hospital admissions are rising along with positive-case numbers, says Gerald. In theory, if tests were merely catching more people with mild COVID-19 symptoms, who were missed

when tests were available only for severe cases, hospital admissions should decline or stay steady.

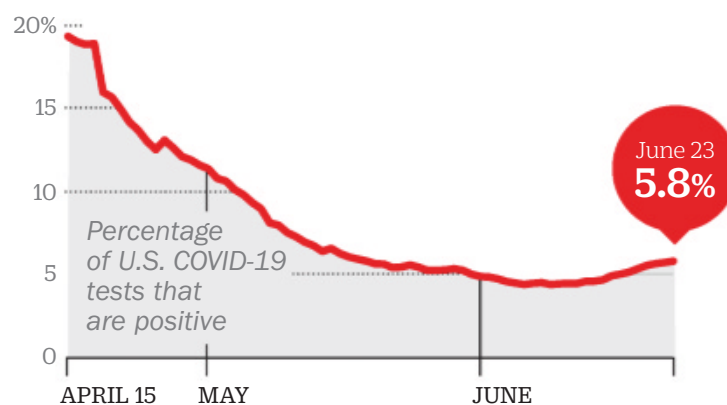
As for Florida, the surge in cases there mirrors a rise in the percentage of positives: even as testing volume increases, so does the rate of those infected—a clear sign the virus is spreading more rapidly than before. Increased testing in the state may explain some of the rise in cases, but it can't account for the rising share of tests coming back positive, says Dr. Aileen M. Marty, an infectious-disease specialist and professor at Florida International University.

Marty has been troubled that many people in her state don't seem to be taking social distancing seriously despite the rising number of cases. "We see people who don't want to wear masks, don't want to social distance, have a false sense that the pandemic is over," she says, "when in truth the numbers are only going up."

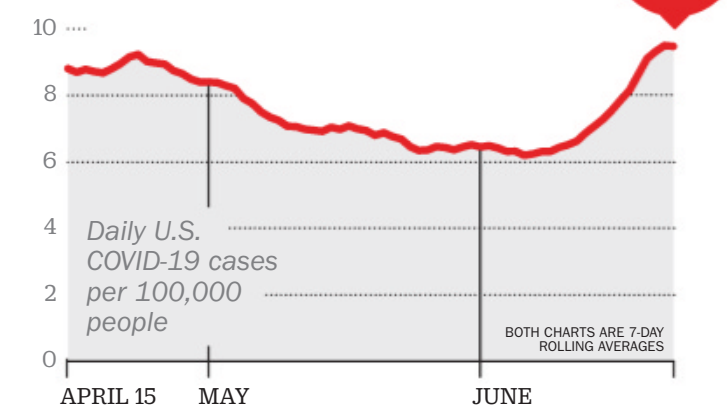
Trump wants the U.S. to rebound. So, of course, does everyone else. But feeding theories that COVID-19 is not a big deal—and, especially, that testing is a problem and not part of the solution—won't help kick-start the U.S. economy. If Trump did actually tell "his people" to slow down testing, he would have been putting thousands of lives, and the financial stability of millions more, at risk.

"I don't think there's any reason to believe that if we do nothing, it's just going to go away. I don't think we can bury our heads in the sand and pretend it's not there, and we'll wake up magically and it will be gone," says Gerald. "If we continue our policies as they are today, I only see conditions worsening."

The proportion of COVID-19 tests that are positive has been rising since mid-June ...



... indicating the rise in total cases is due to spread, not increased testing





OUT OF THE WOODS Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu opened on June 22 for the first time since March, when it had been forced to close because of COVID-19. The opening-night audience was made up of a verdant contingent of 2,292 houseplants, chosen from local nurseries to partake in a "highly symbolic act that defends the value of art, music and nature," according to the Liceu. After the concert, which was also streamed online, the plants were donated to health care professionals.

THE BULLETIN

Poland's autocratic leader faces an unexpectedly tight election

AFTER POLAND DELAYED ITS PRESIDENTIAL election in early May because of the COVID-19 pandemic, voters will now head to the polls on June 28, with a second round two weeks later if no candidate draws more than 50% of the vote. Incumbent Andrzej Duda and his allied right-wing government had been the clear favorite—but in the past month, liberal Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski of the center-right opposition party Civic Platform has shot up in polls. Victory for the opposition could signal that the rise of right-wing populists in southern and eastern Europe may be coming to an end.

NEWCOMER Since 2015, the Duda-affiliated Law and Justice party has freely enacted its conservative agenda—and when the campaign started in February, Trzaskowski, the son of a jazz musician, wasn't even on the ballot. The election delay allowed his party to replace its struggling candidate with the Warsaw mayor, who launched his campaign on May 15, pledging "to fight for a strong state, to fight for democracy."

UNEXPECTEDLY CLOSE April polls predicted Duda would secure a first-round win with more than 50% of the vote. But a June survey by data company Kantar found his support had dropped to 38%, while Trzaskowski scored 27%, up 9% from May. If it went to a runoff, the poll said, Duda would lose to the Warsaw mayor. The shift has prompted Duda to do what he can to boost his prospects, for example by showing off his close ties with Washington, visiting President Trump—who once praised him as an "exemplary ally"—on June 24.

DOUBLING DOWN As Duda's campaign struggles, he has ramped up hard-line rhetoric, branding LGBT rights an "ideology" worse than communism. (Trzaskowski accused him of fueling hate.) Duda's re-election could allow him to use veto powers and push through controversial judicial reforms that the E.U. condemns. The opposition is hoping a win by Trzaskowski can help Poland—and Europe—curb authoritarianism before it's too late. —MADELINE ROACHE

NEWS TICKER

White House to release bailout data

After weeks of pressure, the Trump Administration said June 19 that it would release information on businesses that **took federal Paycheck Protection Program loans** as part of the coronavirus stimulus. The Administration did not say when the information would be released.

Germany's reopening falters

Parts of northwest Germany **reintroduced COVID-19 lockdowns on June 23, closing businesses and banning some group meetings** more than a month after states began easing restrictions. Regional authorities cited local outbreaks, including one at a meatpacking plant that infected 1,553 workers.

R.I. addresses 'Plantations' name

Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo said June 22 that the state would remove references to "Plantations" on documents using the state's formal name, **"the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations."** The name does not have its origins in slavery, but, Raimondo said, "we can't ignore the image conjured by the word."

NEWS TICKER

Saudi Arabia bars hajj pilgrims

Saudi Arabia said June 22 that it was **barring international travelers from the annual hajj pilgrimage** to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina in July because of COVID-19. Limited numbers of Saudi residents will make the trip—a fraction of the 2.5 million Muslims who did so in 2019.

Trump orders new foreign-worker limits

President Trump issued an Executive Order on June 22 to **block many foreign workers from entering the U.S.** through the end of 2020—expanding on an order from April. The Administration says the move will help unemployed Americans, although many business leaders say it may slow economic recovery.

Massacre in a Mexican village

Fifteen people died in **a violent attack on an Indigenous community in the state of Oaxaca, in southern Mexico**, authorities said June 23. State prosecutors said they were investigating the motive and that the area had been plagued by territorial disputes; municipal officials linked the attackers to a local crime boss.

GOOD QUESTION

Fireworks use is up—so why is the industry in trouble?

IF YOU'VE BEEN LULLED TO SLEEP LATELY to the deafening roar of fireworks, you're not alone. From Los Angeles to Hartford, Conn., complaints and reports about fireworks have ballooned over the past month, leading New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio to announce a task force cracking down on them.

While this noisy phenomenon has plagued restless sleepers, it has been a welcome relief for some fireworks companies that were previously decimated by COVID-19. Anthony LoBianco, who runs Intergalactic Fireworks in Pennsylvania, has seen a dramatic increase in sales since reopening after being closed for 2½ months. "Usually there's one week before July 4th where it's like a mad rush," he says. "But that level of activity is happening now. Everyone is buying radically. They're bored, and they have nothing to do at night. Fireworks fill in that little void instead of sitting at home and watching TV."

But as retail-fireworks companies regain their footing, display-fireworks companies, which put on the massive shows you see at sporting events, music festivals and Fourth of July celebrations, are being crushed. California-based Pyro Spectaculars was preparing for a year of supplying fireworks for baseball games, cruise-line shows, graduations, concerts and more—but all those were canceled. And as July 4 approaches, the

400-plus Independence Day shows the company was planning to produce have dwindled to fewer than 40. "I say that with stomach pains," Jim Souza, the company's president and CEO, says.

Across the country, display-fireworks companies are facing similar mass Fourth of July cancellations from towns and cities that are still practicing social distancing. These companies, which typically make more than half their yearly revenue in one weekend, are now sitting on millions of dollars' worth of explosives that necessitate costly security and liability insurance. And this product surplus could wreak havoc on the supply chain next year. "There will be less orders going into 2021, and that's going to destabilize a very fragile industry within China," Stephen Vitale, the CEO of Pyrotecnico, says.

Vitale worries that the industry might not make it to New Year's without federal intervention. To stay afloat, the American Pyrotechnics Association is asking Congress for \$175 million in loans for roughly 150 small businesses as part of the next pandemic stimulus package.

If these businesses go under, it may be hard to replace them. The industry is governed by complicated regulations, making the barrier to entry extremely high. That could mean silent skies on holidays not just this year but going forward. "For a few years, some cities and towns are not going to be able to have a July 4th display," says Steven Pelkey, the owner of Atlas PyroVision, "because there just won't be enough of us around." —ANDREW R. CHOW

RETAIL

Celebrity salesmen

The Grateful Dead recently released a line of organic deodorants, in scents such as Skull & Roses and Sunshine. Here, other unusual celebrity ventures. —Alejandro de la Garza

SKULL SPIRITS

In 2007, *Ghostbusters* star Dan Aykroyd launched a line of vodka that comes in **skull-shaped glass bottles**. The unusual shape is intended as "a symbol of life, reflecting power and enlightenment."



RAMBO'S RECIPE

Actor Sylvester Stallone promoted a high-protein pudding in 2004. The *Rocky* star was later sued by the inventor of another pudding for bodybuilders, who claimed Stallone stole his recipe.

FAN FUNERAL

Rock band Kiss unveiled the perfect product for diehard fans in 2001: the Kiss Kasket. The rock-themed coffin can also serve as a cooler so buyers can get plenty of use out of it before the hereafter.

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The Brief Milestones

DIED

British singer **Vera Lynn**, known as the “Forces’ Sweetheart” during World War II, on June 18, at 103.

> **Joel Schumacher**, director of *Batman & Robin* and *St. Elmo’s Fire*, on June 22, at 80.

DECIDED

That **Captain Brett Crozier** will not be reinstated as commander of the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Theodore Roosevelt*, after he was fired over a letter raising concerns about COVID-19, a Navy official said on June 19.

ORDERED

Brazilian President **Jair Bolsonaro** to wear a face mask, by a Brazilian federal judge, on June 22. More than 51,000 people in the country have died from COVID-19 complications.

FOUND

By the National Archives on June 18, the **original “June-teenth” order**, which on June 19, 1865, informed enslaved people in Texas that they were free.

BACKED OUT

The **University of Michigan**, from hosting an October debate between President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden, on June 23, over coronavirus concerns. The debate will instead take place in Miami.

BANNED

Facebook users, from exchanging **historical artifacts** on the platform, according to new rules published on June 23.



Smith, who served as U.S. ambassador to Ireland, in Dublin in 1998

DIED

Jean Kennedy Smith

Ambassador of generosity

By **Samantha Power**

IN 1944, TWO PRIESTS ARRIVED AT THE KENNEDY HOME TO inform Joseph Kennedy Sr. and Rose Kennedy that their oldest son had been killed in World War II. Sixteen-year-old Jean, the eighth of their nine children, was devastated. After riding her bicycle to church to pray, she went next to the local hospital—to volunteer. Jean later recalled this as an obvious choice, asking, “What else could I do?”

To spend time with Jean Kennedy Smith, who died on June 17 at 92, was to be bowled over by the sheer quantity of positive energy she brought to this world. When I saw her after I became U.S. ambassador to the U.N., she was firm (and wise) in her direction: “Don’t waste any time, and find the people who actually want to do things.” Conscious of her privilege, Jean dedicated much of her life to providing arts programming to children with disabilities. And whatever pain she carried inside, she projected a permanent twinkle and an eagerness to conspire. Her matchmaking gifts were legendary—she not only set up brothers John, Bobby and Teddy with their wives, but as ambassador to Ireland in the 1990s, she also convinced a skeptical Clinton Administration to work with shunned Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams. In so doing, she made a significant contribution to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, which would end the deadly conflict in Northern Ireland.

Asked how she’d like to be remembered, she evoked Abraham Lincoln: “I have planted a rose where only thistles grew.” Jean Kennedy Smith did that and so much more.

Power is a former U.S. ambassador to the U.N. and author of The Education of an Idealist

CONVICTED

Maria Ressa

Freedom in peril

IN THE FOUR YEARS SINCE Rodrigo Duterte became President of the Philippines, the country that once had Asia’s freest news media has become a darker place. In May, Duterte’s government shut down the nation’s largest broadcast network. And on June 15, a judge convicted its most prominent journalist of what Reporters Without Borders called “absurd” libel charges, over a 2012 report on a supreme court judge. Maria Ressa, executive editor of the online news site Rappler, along with reporter Reynaldo Santos Jr., faces up to six years in prison.

Ressa, 56, has not only championed the independent reporting that holds government accountable. She’s also done pioneering work revealing how officials sow disinformation on social media, especially Facebook. For her leadership against creeping authoritarianism, Ressa was a 2018 TIME Person of the Year—a Guardian in the War on Truth.

“Freedom of the press is the foundation of every single right you have,” Ressa said outside the courtroom. “If we can’t hold power to account, we can’t do anything.”

—KARL VICK



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cruise guide

Minneapolis-based Land O'Lakes CEO **Beth Ford** says learning to listen is key to good leadership

By **Eben Shapiro**

THE LAND O'LAKES HEADQUARTERS IS A SHORT drive from the Minneapolis neighborhood where George Floyd was killed by police, setting off global protests over racism in the U.S. For the many *Fortune* 500 companies based in the Twin Cities, the tragedy exposed dramatic inequalities in a region that prides itself on its progressiveness. Beth Ford, the CEO of Land O'Lakes, had already been working to improve diversity at the \$14 billion agribusiness and food company. In a symbolic gesture in February, the company removed the Native American woman from the logo that had long appeared on its butter and cheese products.

In a recent video interview, Ford, 56, talked with TIME about how the company, a member-owned cooperative, and the Twin Cities corporate community need to address systemic racism in the area. She also discussed how the COVID crisis has exacerbated the "dire" need for Internet connectivity in rural America, a surge in the Land O'Lakes chicken-feed business and a record demand for butter, thanks to baking's taking off during quarantine.

What is it like to lead an organization so close to that epicenter of the events that have set off a worldwide call to address systemic racism?

This has been painful, enlightening and painful. And very difficult. This is so present, right in our community. I live in the Twin Cities. Everybody has this kind of really great feeling about Minneapolis, but we know that there's this disparity in outcomes.

What has been the reaction of the local business community? I don't know that we have engaged enough with the Black community. We have to listen to that leadership and then try to help change. We need to listen more as a community. We have multiple *Fortune* 500s here. [They include Target, 3M, General Mills and others.] We're known for this great education platform. We know we've had disparate outcomes. This is just unacceptable. And it's not because there haven't been attempts, but we clearly have to do something different. It's not working.

What have you done internally in recent weeks? The reality is, as a company, we've been trying to work on diversity issues, all of us [via]

FORD QUICK FACTS

Favorite books

"Doris Kearns Goodwin's *Leadership: In Turbulent Times*. Churchill's memoirs. I like Grant. They inform business leadership."

App for life

"I have three teenage children. And so a lot of the things that are indispensable are scheduling apps."

Morning routine

"I get up at 5 a.m., I work out at 5:30 to 6. That is a stress reliever for me; I do some of my best thinking."

employee resource groups, our African-ancestry group, Hispanic group, Asian, LGBTQ. We did listening sessions with our employees because I don't know their journey. I don't know what it must be like, that fear, the issues that they've had. And we need to hear that. And within our own four walls. Do you feel included? It's one thing to say we have a diverse management team or diverse population. It's another thing to say they feel inclusion, that they feel connected, that they feel listened to.

Shifting to your business, where have you seen strengths?

The butter business has been unbelievable. We're all at home, we're eating and making and baking and cooking. And it has stayed elevated. In a normal season, Mother's Day or Thanksgiving and Christmas are the times you have a surge in butter demand. We have some areas that it's like 150% to 200% of normal.

How have you kept up with demand?

We've had to reduce our SKUs [stock-keeping units]. I was saying to one of my brothers, "Jim, we're not doing cinnamon butter right now." We have to reduce to our core: stick butter, salted, unsalted, some of our spreads. And this is during what we call our flush period, the peak time where cows are most comfortable. It's cool at night, they make the most milk, volumes are surging. Normally, we are making butter and storing it and freezing it for the peak that happens in November, December. We haven't been able to store anything. We're coming off the line going right into retail and having to allocate even with that.

How much butter will you sell this year? Two hundred eighty million lb. It will be by far the biggest record that we've set in butter. [The company recently revised its forecast to closer to 290 million lb.]

How concerned are you about lack of access to broadband in rural areas? This should be considered like electricity and like mail delivery. This is the way we live our lives. Twenty-four million Americans lack



access to broadband; 19 million of those are in rural communities.

This problem precedes the current moment?

In the past, before COVID, because there's no access, do you know many of these communities were putting hot spots on school buses and parking them in their community? And then parents or kids would drive up next to the bus to try to get free wi-fi to be able to finish their work. Or there might be a Dairy Queen in town or a gas station. And after school, they take them there and that's where they do their homework. This is simply unacceptable.

What were you doing, before and after COVID, to address this? We're pushing for federal

investment of \$150 billion, which is what it will take to close this gap. It's another thing when we have an urgent situation. What we will do is work through our local retailers and with our own sites in rural communities to turn on free wi-fi, partner with Microsoft to put boosters out there so that if you don't have something that goes outside the building, you have that capability.

Farmers are often older. How has that impacted digital adaptation?

We're still seeing an increase. It had been slower, this adaptation, and there was this belief that farmers weren't there and weren't supportive. But what we see in our research and certainly what we've seen now is a much greater willingness to leverage tools and technology. By the way, this is the way many of them are living their lives. They're ordering things from Amazon for their families. So this is not new to them.

This has been a brutal couple of years for farmers. How are they doing?

I think you have to be an optimist to be a farmer. It can be too hot, too cold, too wet, too dry. You have tariff issues; you have strong-dollar issues. Now you have this COVID situation. You can be a brilliant farmer, brilliant, and you can still lose money.

What was your first corporate job?

I was in the oil industry for 10 years, worked for Mobil oil on the tanker, the marketing and refining side. I worked the night shift; it was me and the dudes. I was not uncomfortable there. I came in from a working-class family, and I thought of them more like my father, my uncle, who were drivers. They're raising families; you treat them with respect.

What kind of behavior in the workplace won't you tolerate? I will not abide by someone who is nasty. This is a collaborative culture. Nasty—I'm not having it. I've had situations where the good performers, really top performers, were nasty. And I don't tolerate it. They're gone. —*This interview has been condensed and edited for clarity* □

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LightBox

Revival tour

President Donald Trump prompts his audience to jeer at the media at his first rally since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, on June 20 at a Tulsa, Okla., arena that was about a third full, per fire-department estimates. At the rally—which originally had been set to take place on Juneteenth—Trump discussed the “radical left,” his commencement speech at West Point and his opponent Joe Biden, but did not mention the name of George Floyd, whose death at the hands of Minneapolis police sparked a national reckoning over systemic racism.

Photograph by Peter van Agtmael for TIME



Inheritance

At Juneteenth celebrations in Tulsa's Greenwood district, the site of one of American history's worst-ever episodes of racial violence, Deshon and Omarion wear T-shirts depicting their grandmother Leslie Randle—who was alive during the 1921 massacre, when hundreds of Black-owned homes and businesses in the area were burned and more than 300 Black people were killed. "She told us that the bodies were taken away and stacked on a hill up by [Oklahoma State University]," says Deshon, far right. "Every time we heard the stories it made us upset. But she made us listen."

Photograph by Ruddy Roye for TIME

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12

Leslie Randle
NWA
1921 TULSA MASSACRE SURVIVOR
"I WILL NEVER FORGET"

12

“There’s nothing like this in this country.”

- The New York Times



The Legacy Museum, located on the site of a former warehouse where Black people were enslaved, uses interactive media, sculpture, videography, and exhibits to draw dynamic connections across generations of Americans impacted by slavery, lynching, segregation, and mass incarceration.



The National Memorial for Peace and Justice is a sacred space for truth-telling and reflection about racial terror in America and its legacy. Set on a six-acre site, the memorial uses sculpture, art, and design to contextualize racial terror lynchings and the legacy of racial injustice.

The View

SPORTS

A NEW ERA FOR ATHLETES

By Sean Gregory

Sports are only just restarting after the COVID-19 shutdown. Yet a swell of athlete activism has already risen worldwide. Soccer stars and jockeys kneel for Black Lives Matter. College athletes fight for justice. A Black NASCAR driver seeks to banish the Confederate flag. The days of keeping a social conscience off the field seem gone forever. ▶

INSIDE

SYRIA'S ASSAD IS
LOOKING WOBBLY AGAIN

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM
AMERICA'S WORST MOMENTS

EXPLORING THE
HISTORIES BEHIND CUISINES

TheView Opener

George Floyd's death has sparked a movement that will only build momentum as more sports leagues—particularly the NBA and NFL, whose players are majority Black and wield immense influence—attempt to come back. And this resurgence of athlete activism, a spiritual descendant of Colin Kaepernick's peaceful protests during the national anthem in 2016, is destined for more than hashtags and dutiful statements. It's driven by action.

Take Bubba Wallace, the lone Black driver in NASCAR's top division. On June 8, he called for an outright ban on the ugly presence of Confederate flags at races. "Get them out of here," he said. Two days later, NASCAR banned the flag at its events and properties. After a noose was found in Wallace's garage at the Talladega Superspeedway on June 21, a sea of NASCAR drivers and crew members walked alongside and behind Wallace's No. 43 car before the next day's race. Though the FBI later determined no hate crime had been committed—NASCAR said "the garage door pull rope fashioned like a noose had been positioned there since as early as last fall"—the moment will stick with Americans longer than any sprint to the checkered flag.

COLLEGE ATHLETES, especially football players, are starting to use their considerable leverage. Schools are inviting athletes to return to campuses for workouts before they're deemed safe for the full student body: football players at Alabama, Kansas State, Clemson, Florida State, Iowa State and other schools have subsequently tested positive for COVID-19. So college athletes, many of whom are Black, are being compelled to risk their health to fuel an endeavor that generates millions of dollars for mostly white coaches and administrators, but restricts their own ability to earn income. This hypocritical system, already reeking of racial injustice and now restarting in a world where Floyd's death has highlighted the broader systemic racism in the U.S., has proved too much for college athletes to bear.

So at Clemson, football players have led

thousands of people protesting racial inequality. At Oklahoma State, star running back Chuba Hubbard called out his coach, Mike Gundy, for wearing a shirt supporting a news outlet that called Black Lives Matter a "farce." Gundy apologized. Mississippi State running back Kylin Hill tweeted on June 22 that he'd refuse to represent the school if the Confederate stripes aren't removed from the state flag. "I'm tired," Hill said. Players at the University of Texas and UCLA have threatened to boycott activities if buildings honoring segregationists aren't renamed or proper health protocols aren't in place.

"This is a moment where the outrage of players is stronger than their fear of speaking out," says Ramogi Huma, executive director of the National College Players Association and a former football player at UCLA. "This has not been the case in modern times."

Some sports stars are also doing the real

work to influence policy. LeBron James is leading the launch of a group to fight voter suppression. Malcolm Jenkins of the New Orleans Saints, co-founder of the Players Coalition, has lobbied legislators for criminal-justice reform. After Floyd's death, he wrote an op-ed in the Philadelphia

Inquirer—Jenkins spent the past six seasons playing for the Eagles—calling for a de-escalation of police violence, and on June 6 he addressed a crowd at the African American Museum in Philadelphia, making the case for a divestment from police and investment in Black business, education, housing and wellness.

"Right now, more than any other time in my lifetime, it feels like we have the ability to literally turn away from the systems that we've had for centuries, and actually start over," Jenkins tells TIME. "Everybody is starting to pay attention. All of our systems were birthed out of white supremacy. Until we turn our backs on those systems and restart America, until we understand the truth of where we are, how we got there and what our roles are, then we can get to that place of reconciliation." □



Clemson football player K.J. Henry and teammates lead a Black Lives Matter rally

SHORT READS

► Highlights from stories on time.com/ideas

Worldwide crisis

According to the U.N. Refugee Agency's latest report, nearly 80 million people have been forced from their homes by persecution and violence. Writes TIME contributing editor Angelina Jolie:

"Refugees I met as children now have their own children and still live in the same unsafe tent encampments, with aid rations dwindling."

Fighting stigma

A.J. Sass, author of the upcoming novel *Ana on the Edge*, says J.K. Rowling's comments on gender identity are a reminder of the need for authentic portrayals of transgender and nonbinary people in youth literature:

"This representation can serve as a mirror that reflects a child's own experience. It can provide much-needed comfort."

National reckoning

It is past time for the U.S. military to rename its bases named after Confederate officers, writes Senator Tammy Duckworth, who trained at one of them: **"Our Black service members—and all of our service members—deserve better."**

THE RISK REPORT

As pressure builds, will Bashar Assad's regime finally collapse?

By Ian Bremmer



SYRIA'S BASHAR Assad has been counted out before. There were times during his country's civil war, which has killed hundreds of

thousands of people and pushed more than 12 million more from their homes, when it seemed the only way forward for all the major parties involved would be for Russia and Iran, Assad's chief sponsors, to find him a new home and a suitably loyal replacement. He survived in part because of former President Barack Obama's reluctance to deepen U.S. involvement in Syria.

Today Assad's government is again fully in charge of about two-thirds of his nation's territory. The isolated city of Idlib, site of a slow-motion humanitarian catastrophe, remains beyond his grasp. Turkey's military, U.S.-backed Kurds, and jihadists remain active in other areas outside the military's control.

But beyond survival, there must be times when Assad wonders what prize he has won. Nine years of war and sanctions have reduced Syria's economy to one-third of its prewar size, and things have only gotten worse over the past year. Four in 10 Syrians have no job, and 4 in 5 live in poverty. The country's currency is nearly worthless. Prices for necessities like food and medicine have risen beyond the means of most Syrians.

As conditions have worsened, public protests have returned to at least one town under government control. There is little reliable information about the spread of COVID-19 around the nation because the government keeps the details a secret. A proposed U.N. Security Council resolution calls for expansion of the number of border crossings into the country to meet "a profound challenge to Syria's health system, socioeconomic and humanitarian situations."

IS ASSAD'S FUTURE in danger?

Warning signs are flashing. To scrape up the cash needed to pay government and military salaries, the regime has lately put the squeeze on some of the country's wealthiest businessmen, who owe their fortunes to friendly relations with the Assad regime. Some of these men have resisted. One of them, billionaire financier Rami Makhlouf, has launched a startlingly public fight over this pressure. When the government froze his assets and began arresting some of his employees, Makhlouf, who also happens to be Assad's first cousin, launched a highly unusual series of Facebook posts that called on Assad to ease the pressure or face "divine justice."

Beyond survival, there must be times when Assad wonders what prize he has won

But Assad's latest headache comes from the Trump Administration. In December, Trump signed into law the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act, which in mid-June set in motion a whole new set of sanctions targeted at those who might bail Assad out. (*Caesar* was the code

name of a photographer who escaped Syria with more than 50,000 photos that proved the government tortured and murdered its citizens.) Specific targets of the sanctions include foreigners "who facilitate the Assad regime's acquisition of goods, services or technologies that support the regime's military activities" or its oil and gas industries, as well as "those profiting off the Syrian conflict by engaging in reconstruction activities."

Don't bet on Assad's buckling. Sanctions often strengthen the regimes they're meant to undermine. Even if Assad's backers in Moscow and Tehran decide the Syrian strongman has become more trouble than he's worth, they would replace him with someone who can ensure that regime backers remain firmly in charge of the government's decisions.

Instead, the U.S. pressure will probably just pile more economic pain on those it's designed to protect: the Syrian people. □

PREDICTIONS

Future imperfect

Not everyone took Peter Turchin seriously in 2010 when he said civil unrest would sweep through the U.S. in 2020. "They had no reason to believe I wasn't crazy," says Turchin, 63, who analyzed historical cycles of instability and economic patterns to make his prediction, published at the time in the journal *Nature*.

Then 2020 arrived.

"As a scientist, I feel vindicated," Turchin says. "But on the other hand, I am an American and have to live through these hard times."

And times could get harder. Turchin says societal crises, ignited when pent-up pressures seek an outlet, typically last five to 15 years and cannot be tamped down if the root causes of unrest are not properly addressed.

Meanwhile, amid record unemployment rates, a new poll found Americans are the unhappiest they've been in 50 years—a leading driver of national instability. As millions remain jobless, Turchin says, there will be other triggers, which "may escalate all the way to a civil war."

"Unfortunately," he says, "things are not as bad as they can be."

—Melissa Chan

Turchin warned of upheaval in 2020



HISTORY

The lessons of America's worst moments

TIME asked historians to weigh in on what we can learn from the low points of U.S. history. Here are some of the teachable moments they selected; find more on TIME.com

May 18, 1896: Segregation wins in *Plessy v. Ferguson*

In some ways, the Supreme Court's 1896 decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which upheld Louisiana's statute mandating segregation in all public facilities, was the nail in the coffin. Since 1876, the courts and Congress had eroded the Reconstruction Amendments' promises to African Americans: suffrage, equal protection of the law and due process before the law. But the *Plessy* opinion and its embrace of "separate but equal" let African Americans know once and for all that despite those guarantees, their fundamental rights would not be protected.

Plessy v. Ferguson was not overturned until 1954, and only because of dedicated work by civil rights attorneys and organizers. From *Plessy*, we know that the letter of the law, and even the Constitution, is insufficient and potentially even meaningless if it is not applied fairly. We also know that some laws, like the segregation statute, contravene basic principles of the Constitution. Democracy requires that we do more than rely upon or simply follow the law; we have to insist upon virtuous laws, and passionately reject oppressive ones. History teaches us that if we sit idly by, even the most noble laws can be distorted by bigotry—and bigoted laws, left unchecked, can lead to immense suffering.

Imani Perry is a professor of African-American studies at Princeton



A Nebraska farm during the Great Depression

1933–38: Farmworkers get left out of the New Deal

AS AMERICA'S FARMWORKERS SUFFERED HUNGER, SICKNESS AND DISLOCATION during the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal legislation did little to improve their welfare—in fact, in many ways it left them worse off than they had been before. At the time, Southern Democrats, with an interest in preserving Jim Crow, dominated Congress. Many farmworkers were people of color. Consequently, unlike most urban industrial workers, farmworkers were omitted from the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, the National Labor Relations Act and Social Security Act of 1935, and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. This exclusion condemned migrant farmworkers to a life in America without a place to enact their rights.

This is still the case today. Despite their contributions as "essential workers" in our food-supply chain, people who work on farms continue to experience the enduring consequences of the federal government's refusal to afford them real security through extended labor and social protections. The impact of the New Deal on farmworkers is a reminder that policy decisions are often advanced in ways we don't recognize as inherently exclusionary, and that such policies' impacts can last far longer than the moment for which the laws were created.

Verónica Martínez-Matsuda is an associate professor of labor relations, law and history at Cornell University's ILR School

1779: Smallpox reaches the American West

AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE AMERICAN Revolution was raging in the East, a smallpox pandemic occurred in the West that affected the course of American history.

Breaking out in Mexico City in 1779, it reached what is now New Mexico and then spread along the networks by which horses had dispersed

northward, devastating thriving and wealthy Native American tribes as it traveled along the Columbia River to the northwest coast and across Canada to the shores of Hudson Bay.

The death tolls were staggering. This massive outbreak occurred in a region that was not yet "American," but American history has always been



Saving gas is urged during the oil crisis

Oct. 20, 1973: The oil embargo begins

At the time of the 1973–74 Arab oil embargo, the energy crisis was seen as a symptom of the West’s decline, akin to the end of the gold standard, Watergate, the failure of the Vietnam War and more. Americans later repurposed the tale to celebrate capitalism’s triumph over communism and OPEC—but the long-term story may turn out to be a sad one.

After the embargo, rather than rethinking our addiction to oil, Americans expended more effort finding new sources of hydrocarbons and defending existing sources in the Persian Gulf. Unfortunately, we were too successful: we found enough oil and gas to wreck our climate and created a financial incentive not to limit consumption until it’s perhaps too late. The self-defeating consequences of our response to the energy crisis suggest it’s dangerous to be obsessively focused on economic growth, or to put our generation’s well-being over that of our grandchildren.

Anand Toprani is an associate professor of strategy at the U.S. Naval War College; the views he expresses here are not necessarily those of the U.S. government

shaped by events beyond the borders of the U.S. This event is a reminder that even today, power and prosperity cannot guarantee immunity to disaster, and the heartland of America cannot escape the impact of developments thousands of miles away.

Colin G. Calloway is a professor of history and Native American studies at Dartmouth College

Aug. 28, 1955: Emmett Till is murdered in Mississippi

PERIODICALLY AN EVENT SO offends our conscience that people have no choice but to take action. The murder of Emmett Till in 1955 was such a moment. Sending a message by taking a Black life was sadly common in Jim Crow America, but when Emmett’s mother Mamie Till Mobley decided to display his lifeless body to be photographed in an open casket for the world to see, it was the catalyst that set the civil rights movement in motion.

So many participants cited that *Jet* magazine photo as motivation: the Greensboro Four who sat to demand service in a North Carolina Woolworth; the young activists of the

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee who risked their lives to ride for freedom; and Martin Luther King Jr., who delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech on the anniversary of Emmett’s death. Years later, when I met Mamie, she stressed the importance of carrying the burden of history and the weight of memory, no matter how painful or difficult. As another Black man lost to senseless violence activates our collective moral outrage, that burden remains as we strive to reach the full promise of America.

Lonnie G. Bunch III is secretary of the Smithsonian Institution



Emmett Till’s mother Mamie Till Mobley bends over the grave of her son



FOOD

Honoring the stories of American cuisines

By Padma Lakshmi

OVER 20 YEARS IN THE FOOD WORLD, I HAVE WATCHED talented chefs and leading restaurants across the U.S. build a New American cuisine. These chefs, typically white and U.S.-born, often treated ingredients like yuzu, turmeric, berbere, poblanos and za'atar as experimental inputs, not parts of other people's history. As an Indian immigrant, I realized there was more to the stories of these foods. To hear these stories, I spent the past year traveling across the U.S. talking with immigrant, Black and Native American home cooks, chefs, food historians and restaurateurs.

In El Paso, Texas, I met Kristal and Emiliano Marentes, a couple from Mexican immigrant families who had recently opened their own restaurant, Elemi. Recalling the tortillas that their mothers used to cross the border to buy in Juárez, Mexico, they decided to make corn tortillas by hand, a millennia-old process. Emiliano showed me how to make the best taco I've ever tasted, with confited mushrooms, salty quesillo cheese and beans cooked with hoja santa, avocado leaves and epazote. Stories, it turns out, add flavor. But flavor is not the most important part of this story.

"It's hard for me to think people are going to accept my tortillas before they accept my cousins," Emiliano told me. His cousins are Mexican citizens on the other side of the border, now so heavily militarized that his family rarely visits.

In investigating food, I started learning about shameful periods of U.S. history that we have yet to reckon with. In Phoenix, I met Andi Murphy, a Navajo journalist who hosts *Toasted Sister*, a podcast on Indigenous food. She told me about fry bread—fried dough, sometimes sprinkled with sugar. It dates from the 1860s, when the government forced more than

< Founded by a couple from Mexican immigrant families, Elemi is known for its homemade tortillas

10,000 Navajo people into a detention camp in New Mexico. Thousands died. To avert mass starvation, officials distributed flour, sugar and lard, which people cooked into bread.

WHEN CHEF BJ DENNIS was growing up in South Carolina, his grandfather told stories of planting rice in the yard—they would pound the rice Saturday for Sunday dinner. They were Gullah Geechee, culturally distinct coastal African Americans. Their ancestors were enslaved people from West Africa's rice-growing regions, whom white slave owners prized for their knowledge of rice paddies. Dennis introduced me to food that contained a history I had never encountered—one of perhaps a half-dozen regional African-American cuisines. For Dennis, a whole value system was wrapped into these foods, he said—"being self-sustaining and taking care of family"—and his grandfather entrusted him with carrying this on. "He said, 'One day, you're going to have to survive the old ways.'"

For me, too, growing up in New York City, food represented the old ways—our life in India and the people we left behind. Each summer when I visited my relatives, they would pack a suitcase for me filled with oily pickles, white turmeric, sambar powder, dried green mango and dried lotus root. How can American chefs talk about turmeric without knowing about the Indians like my mother who brought it here? Without understanding its role in Hindu rites, its centrality as an anti-inflammatory in ancient Ayurvedic medicine, and its part in the spice trade that propelled Europeans to the Americas?

I'm not saying you can't sprinkle turmeric into soup without paying tribute to my mom. I'm saying that professional chefs, food writers and recipe creators—the tastemakers of the food world—should stop cherry-picking what they want from a culture. They should start seeking out and listening to the real cultural experts.

Lakshmi is the creator and host of Taste the Nation, a new series on Hulu

Dennis, chef and champion of Gullah Geechee cuisine, in Charleston, S.C., in 2017



SOCIETY

Rethink how we celebrate power

By Thomas J Price

A FEW DAYS AFTER PROTESTERS PULLED DOWN a statue of British slave trader Edward Colston in Bristol, England, a statue of the Jamaican-born actor Alfred Fagon in the same city was vandalized with bleach. It wasn't a coincidence; a lot of feelings are attached to what these individuals represent.

Pulling down Colston's statue is not removing history—it is creating a historical moment. You can't hide behind words like *tradition* and *history* if they're used to neutralize any kind of discussion about change.

Around the world, statues have been used to exemplify what power looks like and to maintain systems of power. Now, the public is looking at its representations of people and delving into uncomfortable parts of history.

The response to the removal of Colston's statue has been to ask: Whom do we put there instead? There's currently a petition to instate a statue of a Black person. We could find alternative figures from history, but that's still playing the game of aggrandizing particular individuals.

We shouldn't rush the process of thinking about who gets to make these replacements. White artists are putting themselves forward, with no awareness of the irony, to create sculptures that replace ones of slave owners. That's a savior complex; there's a sense of entitlement among white creators to think they have the solution. The solution must involve the Black experience. Black artists should be looked at first to replace many of these sculptures that may be removed. We have to see the irony in taking down a statue of a slave owner and replacing it with work by an artist whose ancestors have benefited from slavery.

If we want to use sculptures in public spaces to really engage with history, then there needs to be consultation with the public on a case-by-case basis. We need to get a sense of what people feel.

But people are only going to have opinions about what they know, and so things can't end at sculpture. Education in Britain needs to be looked at from the ground up—to teach what Britain was built on, what Britain has done and what it represents. Without that understanding, we can't move forward.

As a sculptor, I have always been interested in observing other people and trying to create empathy. My initial intention wasn't to create works about race, but I realized that there is power in the figurative, and there is power in representing people who look like me. I can give a real insight to that experience.

Portraiture is based on this idea of people having the money to commission an artwork, or having done such great things that an artwork is commissioned in their honor. All the figures I make are fictional, because I'm trying to critique the whole concept of portraiture. My characters don't smile, because that is a demand placed upon people like myself in order to not seem threatening. I want to remove that weight and that psychological pressure, and show that if you're a Black person being represented in sculpture, you don't have to be an athlete, or strike a pose, or fulfill an expectation.

These figures do not conform to the expectations of dressing for success—they could be slouching, or they could be wearing a hoodie, as in one of my pieces, in reference to police shootings. What you wear as a Black man can get you killed. As a Black man, you get used to being looked at with suspicion.

AS WELL AS celebrating our historical figures, I want future sculptures to look like people I recognize, to counter the stream of limiting tropes and identities for Black people, not just in the U.K. but in the U.S. and globally as well. There needs to be an openness and

more nuanced understanding of what it means to be Black, and that's going to happen only when there are people in positions of power to commission who understand where our art comes from.

We need courage and a genuine desire to learn from and look into our past. We have an opportunity to create a more cohesive society if we choose to take it. Do we further ingrain the current system of choosing historical figures to represent the values we should aspire to? Or do we embrace representations of those who have previously been stigmatized or invisible?

It's not going to be popular at the beginning. But as a society we must make that contract with one another to pursue something more radical. Otherwise the debate around statues is all just talk.

—As told to SUYIN HAYNES



▲
The plinth of the Edward Colston statue in Bristol, surrounded by protest placards

Price is a multidisciplinary artist based in London

We're all suffering from coronavirus caution fatigue

By Jamie Ducharme

IN APRIL, THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC felt like all anyone could talk about. It was the top story on the news every night. By and large, everybody who could was staying home. The pandemic felt urgent, immediate, terrifying.

These days, the streets of New York City—the virus's stronghold in the U.S. for much of the spring—are filled with revelers drinking takeout cocktails. Las Vegas casinos are shoulder to shoulder with gamblers, and people in states across the country are again dining in restaurants, going to the gym, throwing parties—generally acting as though the pandemic is a distant memory.

It's tempting to think so, between states pressing forward with reopening plans and summer weather coaxing us out of our homes. But the data show, quite clearly, that the virus is still here, and still a threat.

Yes, daily diagnoses, hospitalizations and deaths nationwide are now well below the pandemic's peak in April—but that says more about the pandemic's brutality at its peak than its impact now. Hard-hit areas like New York and New Jersey are seeing marked improvements, but case counts are rising in roughly half of U.S. states, according to a TIME data analysis. More than 12 have recorded their highest numbers of new cases in June. Over the seven days ending June 20, an average of about 26,000 Americans were still getting sick with COVID-19 each day, and about 600 were dying. Those numbers still constitute a public-health crisis.

So why are we going back to “normal” life, even where the virus is still actively spreading? Jacqueline Gollan, an associate professor at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine,

has coined a name for this phenomenon based on her 15 years of research into depression, anxiety and decision-making: “caution fatigue.”

Gollan likens social-distancing motivation to a battery. When lockdowns were first announced, many people were charged with energy and desire to flatten the curve. Now, months in, the prolonged mix of stress, anxiety, isolation and disrupted routines has left many feeling drained. As motivation dips (and public officials give conflicting messages about what's safe), people are growing lax about social-distancing guidelines—and putting themselves and others in harm's way, Gollan says.

Even with reopening moving forward, it's crucial that people continue to follow social-distancing guidelines to avoid new spikes in cases. To help, use these tips for fighting caution fatigue.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

Get enough sleep, follow a balanced diet, exercise regularly, don't drink too much, stay (safely) socially connected, and find ways to relieve stress. “Address the reasons for the caution fatigue, [and] the caution fatigue itself will improve,” Gollan says. Think of it like quitting a bad habit, says Dr. Angela Coombs, a clinical-psychiatry instructor at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. Cutting yourself some slack for struggling may ultimately help you keep your motivation up.



RECONSIDER YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Try to think of precautions—like wearing a mask or staying 6 ft. from others—as vehicles for doing things that are important to you, Coombs says.

When you think of wearing a mask and staying 6 ft. apart as the things enabling you to safely join demonstrations protesting racial injustice and inequality, or take a walk with your best friend for the first time in months, they may feel less oppressive.



**WE ARE BEING TESTED.
AND WE WILL TEST BACK.**

This virus is testing us—and testing people on the front lines most of all. Abbott is getting new tests into their hands to deliver the critical results they need. And until this fight is over, we will never quit. Because they never quit.



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SWITCH UP YOUR MEDIA DIET

Just as we may learn to tune out the sounds outside our windows, “we get desensitized to the warnings [about coronavirus],” Gollan says. “That’s the brain adjusting normally to stimulation.” Even something as simple as checking a credible news source you don’t usually follow, or catching up on headlines from another part of the country, could help your brain reset, she says. Coombs adds that it’s important not to tune out, especially as life outside your window starts to look more and more normal. “People need information for the now,” she says. “It doesn’t mean you’re out of the woods because infection rates have gone down.”

MAKE ALTRUISM A HABIT

Social distancing is really about the common good. In keeping yourself safe, you’re also improving public health, ensuring that hospitals don’t get overwhelmed and quite possibly saving lives. “There’s something powerful about hope, compassion, caring for others, altruism,” Gollan says. “Those values can help people battle caution fatigue.” Just like anything, selfless behavior gets easier the more you do it, Gollan says.

“Try small chunks of it,” she suggests. “What can you do in the next hour, or today, that’s going to be a selfless act to others?” Donating to charity or checking in on a loved one are easy places to start.



REFRAME RISKS AND BENEFITS

Altruism may also have its limits, especially after months. So it can be useful to dwell a bit on what’s in it for you—how your behavior directly affects your chances of getting sick, and thus your chances of spreading the virus to people around you. People tend to overvalue what’s already happened and assume that if they haven’t gotten sick yet, they won’t in the future. “But if your behavior changes and you have a gradual decline in your safety behaviors, then the risk may increase over time,” Gollan says. Coombs recommends writing down all the factors at play—like your personal and family risk factors, the status of the outbreak in your area and your need for socialization—when you’re struggling with a decision.

“People don’t realize there’s so much going through their mind,” she says. “Sometimes writing out the risks involved can be helpful for people to make sense of the right decision.”

The Future of Healthcare

Why working towards healthcare equity starts with training tomorrow's physicians

It's 2020, and healthcare inequities are visible in the news on a daily basis. Gaps in healthcare accessibility are widening, the need for service-oriented medical professionals is more dire than ever, and the disparities in how COVID-19 has affected the population, and particularly its devastating impact on marginalized groups, has demonstrated that we need to revolutionize the healthcare system. But where do we even begin?

One place where we can begin solving these disparities is by rethinking the way doctors are trained. For most medical schools today, there is little training dedicated to examining the social and economic factors that influence health and the role of doctors in advocating for changes in the communities they serve. Therefore, Kaiser Permanente has decided to create a forward-thinking medical school representing its emphasis on health equity for all and a culture of inclusion that encourages diverse perspectives and backgrounds.

The opening of the Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine is the result of over a decade of envisioning the ideal marriage of a high-quality tradition, a commitment to patient-centered care, the innovative use of technology, and a focus on community health.

"We want our students to be advocates for their patients and communities," says Dr. Mark A. Schuster, the founding dean and CEO of the school. "If you write a prescription for your patient, you should find out if they can afford the monthly copay or are planning to take the daily pill every other day to stretch things out. If you tell your patient they need to reduce processed foods in favor of fresh fruits and vegetables, you need to find out if that's even an option in their neighborhood. A nutritionist in your practice might help them learn how to adapt the meals they prepare."

Dr. Schuster has worked closely with members of his leadership team, including Dr. Paul Chung, Chair of Health Systems Science, and Dr. Maureen Connelly, Senior Associate Dean for Academic and Community Affairs, to re-envision medical school for generations to come. The school used a holistic approach to admissions to welcome a class that is diverse in multiple ways. "Everyone who has the potential to be a physician deserves a shot at becoming a physician," Dr. Connelly adds. "There are many communities in this country that are underserved by the current physician workforce, and we want to train physicians who have the tools to effectively practice in those communities."

The school has also begun thinking about financial barriers that render medical school too expensive for

many students who would love to be a physician. The school begins to address these by waiving tuition for the first five graduating classes, for all four years of their study.

"We were frustrated seeing how often students would get into medical school and then not go because they couldn't afford it," says Dr. Schuster. "Or, they would come to med school planning to go into primary care in an under-resourced community, but switch to a higher paying career that they were less interested in—after reviewing their future debt during their third year of school. We need great doctors in all fields, but we'd prefer students not give up on their dreams because of debt. We're excited that Kaiser Permanente has been so generous with the tuition waivers."

Students will learn at a school where their own mental health and well-being will be integrated into their education from the very beginning. Burnout and depression are major issues for medical professionals. The school has designed an entire course around addressing these issues and is offering robust academic support. Also, students will be strongly encouraged to see the staff psychologist at least three times in the first semester to establish a relationship, with other sessions added as needed.

Another aspiration of the school is to shape students to consider the evolving role of the physician in expanding health equity, and the interrelated systems and forces that are brought to bear, in a relatively new field called Health Systems Science. "They need to become physicians who see the connections that define their potential role in health," Dr. Chung says. "And they need to learn how to lead from ahead, behind, and in between," not just as key stakeholders in the healthcare system and advocates for their patients, but also as part of communities and coalitions. Students will participate in a required service-learning course during their first two years where they will engage in customized projects in federally qualified health centers.

The clinical learning component will start within the first month of the first year, as students enter into a longitudinal integrated clerkship. They will join a care team with a physician preceptor starting with family medicine or internal medicine in the first year, with other fields added in the second year, caring for patients over a long term and learning how to support healthy outcomes.

MILITARY

The police need to learn about soft power

By James Stavridis



AMID ALL THE LONG-NEEDED NATIONAL debate following the murder of George Floyd, one element is emerging as particularly polarizing: the discussion over “defunding the police.” The phrase has come to mean a wide variety of possible actions—from shutting down entire police departments to shifting some level of funding from police to social services. It is a discussion that is long overdue and wrapped up in highly disparate viewpoints of policing in the country. The Department of Defense’s experience internationally can offer some insights to this debate.

For much of my career as a senior military officer, I was an advocate for what the military calls “soft power.” This is the application of Department of Defense resources for international activities other than combat operations (which we call “hard power”). This came into focus for me during my time as Commander of U.S. Southern Command, in charge of all military operations south of the U.S. in Central America, the Caribbean and South America. From the moment I took command, I did all I could to channel our vast military resources toward the conduct of soft power.

In practical terms, this meant reducing the dollars spent on preparations (military exercises, military equipment, live fire training and the like) and increasing our spending on things like humanitarian operations (building schools, clinics, housing infrastructure); medical diplomacy (providing hospital ships and deploying flying medical clinics); drug education; and training in the rule of law.

All of this paid strong benefits. The governments of the region applauded this enhanced soft-power version of U.S. military operations, and it became easier to compete with those on the far left (like Hugo Chávez of Venezuela and Evo Morales of Bolivia) who would often point to our “militarized approach” in the region. Of course, we continued to maintain our hard-power capability, and our work in Colombia against terrorists and in counternarcotics required us to do so. But in counternarcotics, for example, we have learned that hard power has been a failure in the so-called war on drugs. Far more effective have been education, alternative opportunities for employment and social-support networks.

In the context of defunding the police, the first lesson of the military experience is that it depends on the region. I could afford to change our priorities in Latin America where the

probability of hard combat was low. As we think about how to shift resources from hard policing to the soft-power side, it should be a very local discussion. This will be challenging as we sort out where police are necessary—against entrenched gangs, say, or violent sex-trafficking rings. But there are plenty of examples today in policing where hard-power approaches are failing and the long-term damage to communities is evident.

SECOND, AND THIS IS GOOD NEWS, soft power is much less expensive. The training and preparation of hard policing will be much more expensive than the soft power of trained counselors, social programs, counterdrug education and after-school employment opportunities. We have found that in the military.

Third, when given the opportunity to participate in soft-power operations, the vast majority of military personnel find it deeply rewarding. After I left

Latin America, I became the Supreme Allied Commander of NATO, leading the NATO mission in Afghanistan with around 150,000 troops. I discovered even there that the soft-power tools of clinics, education for girls, agricultural improvements, road building and counternarcotics were more effective and probably the most lasting thing we did in the country.

For our police departments, I believe the vast majority of officers would be willing participants in soft-power operations in their own municipalities. These

could run the gamut of partnering with social workers in response teams for domestic violence; helping conduct clinics on fitness and sports; participating in educational events alongside teachers in our schools; volunteering in mentoring programs; and working paid hours supporting homeless shelters and food kitchens. Some cities do this with great success, but too often there is a sharp divide between the hard- and soft-power sides of the equation—incorporating the police into the solution would be powerful.

No analogy is ever perfect, but soft power is really about shifting toward a policing strategy across this country that understands the need for police to stop murders but also sees that helping out a community might be the best way to do that.

Stavridis was 16th Supreme Allied Commander of NATO; his latest book is Sailing True North



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BEHIND HIS EYES
ACRYLIC ON CANVAS
CHARLY PALMER

JAQUIRA DÍAZ
ON NEVER FEELING SAFE

DAMON YOUNG
ON WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

VIET THANH NGUYEN
ON THE "MODEL MINORITY"

EDDIE S. GLAUDE JR.
ON AMERICA'S LAST CHANCE

BROKEN PROMISE

For 244 years, America has failed to live up to its ideals. Will the country answer the call to right its course?

ESSAY

WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IN CRISIS

BY JAQUIRA DÍAZ

One night during the fall of 2019, the day before the release of my first book, I was driving home alone after a reading at a bookstore near Miami when I saw flashing lights in my rearview mirror. It was after 10 p.m. on a weeknight, and there were hardly any other cars on the road.

I hadn't been speeding. I hadn't been drinking. I hadn't broken any laws. There was no discernible reason I could find for being pulled over by the police. Except for the obvious: I was driving through a wealthy white suburb, and something about me and my small Honda Civic stood out. To this police officer, I clearly did not belong there.

Hands shaking, heart pounding in my chest, I slowed and pulled over, then quickly found my driver's license, registration and proof of insurance before the cop could make his way to my car.

It took him a long time to get out of the police cruiser. The longer I sat there, under the cover of darkness, no other cars passing, no other lights in the distance, the more I shook.

There is a trauma response with which some of us are all too familiar when encountering the police— anxiety, the urge to empty our bladders. We think, *How do I make myself seem smaller, less dangerous?* We think, *How do I make him see that I'm polite, that I'm complying, that I'm not a threat?* We think, *How do I stay alive?*

I held my documents out in front of



**REMEMBER
GEORGE
STINNEY**
ACRYLIC ON
CANVAS
**CHARLY
PALMER**

me, placed the other hand on the steering wheel. I tried to look at his car in my rearview and side mirrors, but the cruiser's spotlight reflecting off them was blinding. Then the silhouette of his uniformed body approaching, his hand reaching for his side-arm, a flicker of movement, the flashlight raised, and soon nothing. I couldn't see anything except the bright-hot light in my face. But I knew, without a doubt, that he had drawn his weapon.

I WAS TAUGHT to fear the police.

In Puerto Rico, in el Caserío Padre Rivera, the government housing projects where I spent my childhood, the police were part of our everyday reality. We were a community that was over-policed, under constant surveillance. To them we were dangerous. Born into poverty, most of us Black and brown, we needed to be controlled, to be kept in line.

We learned to avoid them, and when we saw them, to hold our loved ones close. We learned that our bodies, our homes, our spaces did not belong to us, but to them.

I grew up hearing stories about los camarones, freezing, hiding, running running when I saw them pull up ready to storm the building next door.

I grew up hearing about Rey el Chino, a close friend of my father's who'd been killed by los camarones when I was a baby. According to our neighbors, the cops took him as the whole block gathered outside, beat him as the crowd watched helplessly, as they called for them to stop. Then, los camarones shot him twice in the groin and tossed him in the back of the cruiser, where he eventually bled out.

Everyone talked about it. Everyone knew. A few years later, in 1984, Pedro Conga, who'd grown up in our neighborhood and later became a salsa bandleader with international acclaim, released a single called "Rey el Chino." The song opened with two shots.

I DON'T REMEMBER what I said to the cop that night in Miami. He asked if I lived in the neighborhood. I thought of my partner, alone in the small apartment we share in Montréal, our second home. He asked where I was coming from, where I was going. How to explain that I was a writer, that I'd just come from reading from my book to a crowd of strangers. Would he believe me? I thought I would piss my pants. I held it, hard. I thought of my mother in her bed, asleep by now, the message in my voice mail when I didn't answer earlier

because I'd been running late to the event.

Whatever I said, he believed, because he said good night, walked back to his car and drove away. Left me sitting there, breathing, shaking.

I am a Black Puerto Rican woman with a white mother, with light skin, and more often than not, people don't read me as Black. Miami is a city made up of mostly white Latinxs, and the truth is, when he looked at me, this white cop did not see a Black woman, so he did not consider me dangerous. If he'd read me as Black, he might have read my Blackness as a threat. Maybe I wouldn't have made it home. Maybe my trembling hands, my inability to control my own body would have been enough for him to see me as someone to fear, someone to be kept in line. But that night, I wasn't shot by the police. I got to walk away. Shaken, yes, but alive.

I am the Black daughter of a white woman, which means that in my family tree there are colonizers as well as colonized people, and I carry this violence in my body. I see it in the mirror every day.

I AM THE BLACK DAUGHTER OF A WHITE WOMAN, WHICH MEANS THAT IN MY FAMILY TREE THERE ARE COLONIZERS AS WELL AS COLONIZED PEOPLE, AND I CARRY THIS VIOLENCE IN MY BODY. I SEE IT IN THE MIRROR EVERY DAY

IN THE U.S., whether or not people read me as Black, I'm a racialized person: I'm Latina; my first language is Spanish; I have an accent. I'm also a gay woman with a white transmasculine fiancé. We spend part of the year in Canada because my partner is not an American citizen, and we've been navigating the complicated, expensive and exhausting system of U.S. immigration. During this pandemic, with the closing of borders, travel bans and the Trump Administration's immigration proclamations, it's only gotten worse: I haven't seen my partner since March 14. We have no idea when

we'll see each other again.

Every day, the intersections of our identities as an interracial queer couple make living anywhere, moving in certain spaces, feel like a kind of negotiation. Montréal is very queer, so it feels relatively safe to be openly gay there, to hold my partner's hand in public. They don't have to worry about who they might encounter in a public restroom, because almost everywhere we go, we are surrounded by liberal, queer, gender-queer and transgender people. But in almost all of these queer safe spaces in Montréal, I am always the only person of color. In Miami, spending time in predominantly Latinx spaces often means having to deal with homophobia, transphobia and anti-Black racism.

Being openly gay with a trans partner, I've learned that simple things like using a public restroom, or just existing, can be terrifying. When

we're traveling together in the U.S., stopping at roadside gas stations on the interstate, even trying to get a hotel room, is often scary. Going through airport security checkpoints, where TSA agents almost always misgender my partner then flag them for a pat-down, is exhausting. Trying on clothes in department stores or finding queer-friendly barbers and doctors sometimes seem like impossible tasks.

My partner must always consider how they move, and for every single space they enter, if they will be safe. Often, walking down the street together or holding hands on the Metro-rail in Miami, we're met with strangers staring, random people making hateful and transphobic comments. More than once, my partner has been attacked in public changing rooms—once violently beaten by a group of teenage girls, and another time by a group of women demanding to see their genitals. We're always thinking about who is watching, who is waiting outside that bathroom stall. I'm always thinking about what might happen on the days when they go out alone. What if I'm not there one day? Or what if I am there, but that is not enough?

MY FAMILY CAME to Miami from Puerto Rico chasing the promise of a better life. My father believed he could take us out of our home in el caserío, work to lift his family from poverty. He believed that his children would go to school, that we would have health insurance, live happily. He believed that we'd be safe.

The truth is, some of us have always been in crisis. Some of us have never felt safe. Some of us have always been navigating systems of power and oppression in our homes, in our workplaces, in our schools, so we were not surprised by the last presidential election, because while some of America woke up to reality in November 2016, or even just last month, the rest of us have been waking up in this America since we were born or arrived here.

Over the course of the past few months, some of us have felt more targeted than ever. While the world watches, more and more videos of Black people being murdered are shared on

social media, countless stories of protesters tear-gassed, shot, beaten, missing, dying in police custody, found hanging from trees, and the cops who killed Breonna Taylor still haven't been arrested. While the world watches, a famous author with millions of social-media followers writes a transphobic statement to defend transphobic tweets, transgender health protections are reversed by the Trump Administration, Black trans women are brutally murdered one after another, and there's still no justice for Tony McDade, for Riah Milton, for Dominique Fells, for Nina Pop, for Layleen Polanco, for Zoe Spears. Sometimes this feels like too much to bear.

ON JUNE 15, I sat in my living room talking to my partner on video. We talked while I waited for the Supreme Court decision on Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which protects workers from discrimination on the basis of sex. Shortly after 10 a.m., I saw the news: the Supreme Court had ruled that firing someone for being gay or trans was a violation of Title VII. I burst into tears, leaning back on the sofa, overwhelmed, completely shocked. It felt strange to get good news. It was a relief.

We have always been in crisis. But while the nationwide protests, led by Black women and Black LGBTQ people, are fueled by the fight for Black liberation, more people have been energized to protest all types of oppression. A growing number of Americans are becoming aware of their

own roles in systemic racism, how they've been complicit, how they've benefited from systems of oppression and how they can be allies in the fight for Black liberation and LGBTQ rights. Three days after the Supreme Court's Title VII decision, the court ruled that DACA recipients can continue to live and work in the U.S. without being deported.

The movement continues to rise, moving from the streets into classrooms, boardrooms, courtrooms, human-resources departments, publishing, media, film, television, retail, food and service. America is changing. The world is watching. And Election Day is coming.

Díaz is the author of the memoir Ordinary Girls



▲
*The author,
at 14, in
Miami Beach*

ESSAY

NOW WHAT, AMERICA?

BY DAMON YOUNG

The whiplash-inducing white-guilt dramaturgy currently captivating America, which segued from national protests for police reform into an all-encompassing referendum on *literally everything racist*, reached a crescendo on the afternoon of Friday, June 19.

I was off that day, because the company I work for made it a holiday. Because it happens to be the day, 155 years ago, that Union Army General Gordon Granger declared that all enslaved Black people in Texas were now free too.

Since then, Juneteenth has shifted from a day Black Texans spent BBQ-ing and storytelling to a day that some Black Americans celebrate, some of us acknowledge, and some of us don't even know exists. The latter is a damning indictment of the American educational system. If the schools I attended were my only resource for learning about slavery, I would've thought that Abraham Lincoln personally went block to block, like an Amazon truck, to deliver freedom—and I went to “good” schools.

But in 2020, Juneteenth became another way for America to signal that it's finally really, really, really serious about this racism thing. Brands released statements. Businesses declared holidays. Taylor Swift retweeted the Root. Some of

my friends even shared that they received random funds, through Venmo and Cash App, from white people they happen to know. And then, at 2:52 p.m. E.T., the Americanization of this complex and emotional day reached a peak. This is when Snapchat, through its official Twitter account, tweeted an apology for the Juneteenth Lens—a filter where it asked users to smile to break a chain superimposed behind the user's head. At this rate, by the time you read this, Juneteenth might have already grown sentient and replaced Joe Biden as the presumptive Democratic nominee for President.

I do not know what is happening in America right now. The velocity of the collective national willingness to acknowledge anti-Black racism has been unsettling. Eerie. What feeling other than a deep and paralyzing disorientation are we supposed to possess when NASCAR (NASCAR!) decides to ban the Confederate flag from its stadiums? (My first

IT SEEMS AS IF WHITE PEOPLE ARE SEEING, FINALLY, THAT WHITE SUPREMACY KILLS THEM TOO

thought when hearing about that? “Well, I guess there must be two NASCARs.”) But while the *what* remains cloudy, the *why*—why this is happening right now—is more clear.

I STILL HAVEN'T WATCHED the footage of George Floyd's last nine minutes on earth. The widely disseminated screen grab of Derek Chauvin kneeling on Floyd's neck, like how you'd maybe kneel on the pavement to get a better camera angle for a portrait photo, was enough for me. And the way he died—not just that he was killed, but *how*—matters. As brutal as witnessing a video-captured shooting can be, the *Bang! Bang! Bang!* happens so quickly that processing exactly what you just saw takes some time. This was





**EMINENT
DOMAIN**
ACRYLIC ON
CANVAS
**CHARLY
PALMER**

different. *Depraved indifference* is one of those terms that might be used in a courtroom to describe what happened there, but what Derek Chauvin did transcends legal jargon. It was just *depraved*. Evil.

If this had happened in 2019, or even January of this year, I'm certain there would have been national protests. But what's different now—what has changed each of our lives, forever; why people around the world are in the streets—is COVID-19. We are currently in a global pandemic that has killed more than 100,000 Americans, and our death rates don't appear to be dropping as much as other countries' have. And the abject mismanagement of our national response to this virus is largely due to white supremacy. White supremacy is why a destructive, petty, ignorant and

criminally unfit man is our President. White supremacy is how a belief in science has somehow become a partisan issue. Lunacy-inducing white supremacy accounts for the absurd theater of American men and women threatening and terrifying baristas while angrily refusing to don masks, because of some nebulous concept of "freedom."

What COVID's devastation—and the bizarre response to it in some pockets of America—has done is make the tracks and tentacles of white supremacy less concealable and spinnable and more plain. We're essentially in the midst of two pandemics, and it seems as if white people are seeing, finally, that white supremacy kills them too. We (humans) are incentive-based beings, and there's no greater incentive than remaining alive.

UNFORTUNATELY, FOR THEM, for us, for everyone, there's no easy solution here. No microwavable absolution. No quick fix for a foundational rot. Removing Confederate monuments is a noble gesture, I guess. But what about the slave owners whose faces are on our money? How do we reckon with that? A company's statement of support for Black Lives Matter is cool. But what about the decades of discrimination and pay inequities at that same company? The random cash white people are Venmo-ing to us is awesome. (I haven't received any myself, though my fingers are still crossed.) But how do you begin to remedy the wealth gap where Black families have 10¢ for every dollar possessed by white families? There's no industry, no institution, no person in America unaffected by anti-Blackness, and no hashtag to retweet or holiday to finally acknowledge to make it better.

That said, as cynical as I want to be—as I need to be to protect myself—what's happening now is a start. But it's just that. A start. Whether America has the will and the rigor and the stamina to see this through is yet to be seen, and I won't hold my breath waiting for it. But I did enjoy Juneteenth off. Did some work around the house and went for a nice walk. So thanks for that, at least.

Young is the author of What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Blacker



**WHERE ARE WE
TO GO?**

**HOW ARE WE
TO RESPOND
WHEN WE
ARE SHOWN**

OVER AND OVER AND OVER

**THAT OUR LIVES
DO NOT
MATTER?**

OUR LIVES MATTER.

**BEING WHITE IN AMERICA
IS NOT NEEDING TO STATE YOUR LIFE MATTERS.**

**AND WHEN YOUR LIFE MATTERS,
YOU HAVE POWER.**

NOW IS THE TIME TO USE IT.

**NOT BEING RACIST IS NOT ENOUGH.
NOW IS THE TIME TO BE ANTI-RACIST.**

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**HOW YOU USE YOUR POWER
IS A CHOICE.**

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THE MODEL MINORITY TRAP

ASIAN AMERICANS HAVE EMBRACED A COUNTRY THAT PASSED A LAW TO KEEP THEM OUT. THE REAL AMERICAN DREAM WOULD UNITE ALL OF US IN JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY

BY VIET THANH NGUYEN





The face of Tou Thao haunts me. The Hmong-American police officer stood with his back turned to Derek Chauvin, his partner, as Chauvin knelt on George Floyd's neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds and murdered him.

In the video that I saw, Tou Thao is in the foreground and Chauvin is partly visible in the background, George Floyd's head pressed to the ground. Bystanders beg Tou Thao to do something, because George Floyd was not moving, and as he himself said, he could not breathe.

The face of Tou Thao is like mine and not like mine, although the face of George Floyd is like mine and not like mine too. Racism makes us focus on the differences in our faces rather than our similarities, and in the alchemical experiment of the U.S., racial difference mixes with labor exploitation to produce an explosive mix of profit and atrocity. In response to endemic American racism, those of us who have been racially stigmatized cohere around our racial difference. We take what white people hate about us, and we convert stigmata into

pride, community and power. So it is that Tou Thao and I are "Asian Americans," because we are both "Asian," which is better than being an "Oriental" or a "gook." If being an Oriental gets us mocked and being a gook can get us killed, being an Asian American might save us. Our strength in numbers, in solidarity across our many differences of language, ethnicity, culture, religion, national ancestry and more, is the basis of being Asian American.

But in another reality, Tou Thao is Hmong and I am Vietnamese. He was a police officer and I am a professor. Does our being Asian bring us together across these ethnic and class divides? Does our being Southeast Asian, both our communities brought here by an American war in our countries, mean we see the world in the same way? Did Tou Thao experience the anti-Asian racism that

makes us all Asian, whether we want to be or not?

Let me go back in time to a time being repeated today. Even if I no longer remember how old I was when I saw these words, I have never forgotten them: ANOTHER AMERICAN DRIVEN OUT OF BUSINESS BY THE VIETNAMESE. Perhaps I was 12 or 13. It was the early 1980s, and someone had written them on a sign in a store window not far from my parents' store. The sign confused me, for while I had been born in Vietnam, I had grown up in Pennsylvania and California, and had absorbed all kinds of Americana: the *Mayflower* and the Pilgrims; cowboys and Indians; Audie Murphy and John Wayne; George Washington and Betsy Ross; the Pledge of Allegiance; the Declaration of Independence; the guarantee of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; all the fantasy and folklore of the American Dream.

Part of that dream was being against communism and for capitalism, which suited my parents perfectly. They had been born poor to rural families, and without much formal schooling and using only their ingenuity and hard work, had become successful merchants. They fled communist Vietnam in 1975, after losing all of their property and most of their fortune. What they carried with them—including some gold and money sewn into the hems of their clothes—they used to buy a house next to the freeway in San Jose and to open the second Vietnamese grocery store there, in 1978. In a burst of optimism and nostalgia, they named their store the New Saigon.

I am now older than my parents were when they had to begin their lives anew in this country, with only a little English. What they did looms in my memory as a nearly unimaginable feat. In the age of coronavirus, I am uncertain how to sew a mask and worry about shopping for groceries. Survivors of war, my parents fought to live again as aliens in a strange land, learning to read mortgage documents in another language, enrolling my brother and me in school, taking driver's-license examinations. But there was no manual telling them how to buy a store that was not advertised as for sale. They called strangers and navigated bureaucracy in order to find the owners and persuade them to sell, all while suffering from the trauma of having lost their country and leaving almost all their relatives behind. By the time my parents bought the store, my mother's mother had died in Vietnam. The news nearly broke her.

Somehow the person who wrote this sign saw people like my mother and my father as less than human, as an enemy. This is why I am not surprised by the rising tide of anti-Asian racism in this country. Sickened, yes, to hear of a woman splashed with acid on her doorstep; a man and his son slashed by a knife-wielding assailant at

FACING RACISM

Asian Americans share stories of harassment and assault during the pandemic

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HARUKA SAKAGUCHI

TEXT BY ANNA PURNA KAMBHAMPATY

Diseases and outbreaks have long been used to rationalize xenophobia: HIV was blamed on Haitian Americans, the 1918 influenza pandemic on German Americans, the swine flu in 2009 on Mexican Americans. The racist belief that Asians carry disease goes back centuries. In the 1800s, out of fear that Chinese workers were taking jobs that could be held by white workers, white labor unions argued for an immigration ban by claiming that “Chinese” disease strains were more harmful than those carried by white people.

Today, as the U.S. struggles to combat a global pandemic that has taken the lives of more than 120,000 Americans and put millions out of work, President Donald Trump, who has referred to COVID-19 as the “Chinese virus” and more recently the “kung flu,” has helped normalize anti-Asian xenophobia, stoking public hysteria and racist attacks. And now, as in the past, it's not just Chinese Americans receiving the hatred. Racist aggressors don't distinguish between different ethnic subgroups—anyone who is Asian or perceived to be Asian at all can be a victim. Even wearing a face mask, an act associated

with Asians before it was recommended in the U.S., could be enough to provoke an attack.

Since mid-March, STOP AAPI HATE, an incident-reporting center founded by the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council, has received more than 1,800 reports of pandemic-fueled harassment or violence in 45 states and Washington, D.C. “It's not just the incidents themselves, but the inner turmoil they cause,” says Haruka Sakaguchi, a Brooklyn-based photographer who immigrated to the U.S. from Japan when she was 3 months old.

Since May, Sakaguchi has been photographing individuals in New York City who have faced this type of racist aggression. The resulting portraits, which were taken over FaceTime, have been lain atop the sites, also photographed by Sakaguchi, where the individuals were harassed or assaulted. “We are often highly, highly encouraged not to speak about these issues and try to look at the larger picture. Especially as immigrants and the children of immigrants, as long as we are able to build a livelihood of any kind, that's considered a good existence,” says Sakaguchi, who hopes her images inspire people to at least acknowledge their experiences.

Amid the current Black Lives Matter protests, Asian Americans have been grappling with the anti-Blackness in their own communities, how the racism they experience fits into the larger landscape and how they can be better allies for everyone.



“Cross-racial solidarity has long been woven into the fabric of resistance movements in the U.S.,” says Sakaguchi, referencing Frederick Douglass’ 1869 speech advocating for Chinese immigration and noting that the civil rights movement helped all people of color. “The current protests have further confirmed my role and responsibility here in the U.S.: not to be a ‘model minority’ aspiring to be white-adjacent on a social spectrum carefully engineered to serve the white and privileged, but to be an active member of a distinct community that emerged from the tireless resistance of people of color who came before us.”

—With reporting by
SANGSUK SYLVIA KANG

**JUSTIN TSUI,
HARLEM,
MANHATTAN**

“I didn’t think that if he shoved me into the tracks I’d have the physical energy to crawl back up,” says Tsui, a registered nurse pursuing a doctorate of nursing practice in psychiatric mental health at Columbia University. Tsui was transferring trains on his way home after picking up N95 masks when he was approached by a man on the platform.

The man asked, “You’re Chinese, right?” Tsui responded that he was Chinese American, and the man told Tsui he should go back to his country, citing the 2003 SARS outbreak

as another example of “all these sicknesses” spread by “chinks.” The man kept coming closer and closer to Tsui, who was forced to step toward the edge of the platform.

“Leave him alone. Can’t you see he’s a nurse? That he’s wearing scrubs?” said a bystander, who Tsui says appeared to be Latino. After the bystander threatened to record the incident and call the police, the aggressor said that he should “go back to [his] country too.”

When the train finally arrived, the aggressor sat right across from Tsui and glared at him the entire ride, mouthing, “I’m watching you.” Throughout the ride, Tsui debated

whether he should get off the train to escape but feared the man would follow him without anyone else to bear witness to what might happen.

Tsui says the current antiracism movements are important, but the U.S. has a long way to go to achieve true equality. “One thing’s for sure, it’s definitely not an overnight thing—I am skeptical that people can be suddenly woke after reading a few books off the recommended book lists,” he says. “Let’s be honest, before George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, there were many more. Black people have been calling out in pain and calling for help for a very long time.”



**JILLEEN LIAO,
WILLIAMSBURG,
BROOKLYN**

Liao was on a grocery run on April 19 when she stopped to adjust her mask. A tall older man in a Yankees cap crossed the road toward her and walked in her direction. “Next time, don’t bring your diseases back from your country,” he told her.

“He was so close I could see the lines and wrinkles on his face,” says Liao. Frightened,

she waited until he was several yards away to correct him and say, “I’m American, sir. Have a nice day!” At the time, Liao was carrying four grocery bags. Now she makes multiple grocery trips a week out of fear that carrying too many bags could put her in a position where she couldn’t defend herself. She also rides her skateboard to create more distance between herself and other pedestrians.

“Scapegoating is both

a timeless and universal tool, so we shouldn’t be surprised COVID-19 racism is coinciding with an election year,” she says. “Especially as marginalized people, we can’t be afraid to speak out about our experiences. I believe community building starts with relationship building—however messy or imperfect that process might look. The Black Lives Matter movement continues to show us a new world is possible.”



a Sam's Club; numerous people being called the "Chinese virus" or the "chink virus" or told to go to China, even if they are not of Chinese descent; people being spat on for being Asian; people afraid to leave their homes, not only because of the pandemic but also out of fear of being verbally or physically assaulted, or just looked at askance. Cataloging these incidents, the poet and essayist Cathy Park Hong wrote, "We don't have coronavirus. We are coronavirus."

LOOKING BACK, I can remember the low-level racism of my youth, the stupid jokes told by my Catholic-school classmates, like "Is your last name Nam?" and "Did you carry an AK-47 in the war?" as well as more obscene ones. I wonder: Did Tou Thao hear these kinds of jokes in Minnesota? What did he think of Fong Lee, Hmong American, 19 years old, shot eight times, four in the back, by Minneapolis police officer Jason Anderson in 2006? Anderson was acquitted by an all-white jury.

Confronted with anti-Asian racism from white people, the Hmong who came to the U.S. as refugees in the 1970s and 1980s were often resettled in diverse urban areas, some in predominantly Black communities where they also confronted racism. "Stories abounded within our community of battery, robberies and intimidations by our Black neighbors," Yia Vue wrote recently. "Hmong people live side by side with their African-American neighbors in poorer sections of town, with generations of misunderstanding and stereotypes still strongly entrenched on both sides." Yet when Fong Lee was killed, Black activists rallied to his cause. "They were the loudest voices for us," Lee's sister Shoua said. "They didn't ask to show up. They just showed up."

Unlike the engineers and doctors who mostly came from Hong Kong, Taiwan, China and India—the model minority in the American imagination—many Hmong refugees arrived from a rural life in Laos devastated by war. Traumatized, they were resettled into the midst of poverty and a complicated history of racial oppression of which they had little awareness. Even the Hmong who condemn Tou Thao and argue for solidarity with Black Lives Matter insist that they should not be seen through the lens of the model-minority experience, should not be subject to liberal Asian-American guilt and hand-wringing over Tou Thao as a symbol of complicity. Christian minister Ashley Gaozong Bauer, of Hmong descent, writes, "We've had to share in the collective shame of the

model minority, but when have Asian Americans shared in the pain and suffering of the Hmong refugee narrative and threats of deportation?"

Like the Hmong, the Vietnamese like myself suffered from war, and some are threatened by deportation now. Unlike many of the Hmong, a good number of Vietnamese refugees became, deliberately or otherwise, a part of the model minority, including myself. The low-level racism I experienced happened in elite environments. By the time I entered my mostly white, exclusive, private high school, the message was clear to me and the few of us who were of Asian descent. Most of us gathered every day in a corner of the campus and called ourselves, with a laugh, or maybe a wince, "the Asian invasion." But if that was a joke we made at our own expense, it was also a prophecy, for when I returned to campus a couple of years ago to give a lecture on race to the assembled student body, some 1,600 young men, I realized that if we had not quite taken over, there were many more of us almost 30 years later. No longer the threat of the Asian invasion, we were, instead, the model minority: the desirable classmate, the favored neighbor, the nonthreatening kind of person of color.

Or were we? A couple of Asian-American students talked to me afterward and said they still felt it. The vibe. The feeling of being foreign, especially if they were, or were perceived to be, Muslim, or brown, or Middle Eastern. The vibe. Racism is not just the physical assault. I have never been physically assaulted because of my appearance. But I had been assaulted by the racism of the airwaves, the ching-chong jokes of radio shock jocks, the villainous or comical japs and chinks and gooks of American war movies and comedies. Like many Asian Americans, I learned to feel a sense of shame over the things that supposedly made us foreign: our food, our language, our haircuts, our fashion, our smell, our parents.

What made these sentiments worse, Hong argues, was that we told ourselves these were "minor feelings." How could we have anything valid to feel or say about race when we, as a model minority, were supposedly accepted by American society? At the same time, anti-Asian sentiment remained a reservoir of major feeling from which Americans could always draw in a time of crisis. Asian Americans still do not wield enough political power, or have enough cultural presence, to make many of our fellow Americans hesitate in deploying a racist idea. Our unimportance and our historical status as the perpetual foreigner in the

**THE SLUR OF
THE 'CHINESE
VIRUS' HAS
REVEALED HOW
FRAGILE OUR
ACCEPTANCE
AND INCLUSION
WAS**

U.S. is one reason the President and many others feel they can call COVID-19 the “Chinese virus” or the “kung flu.”

THE BASIS of anti-Asian racism is that Asians belong in Asia, no matter how many generations we have actually lived in non-Asian countries, or what we might have done to prove our belonging to non-Asian countries if we were not born there. Pointing the finger at Asians in Asia, or Asians in non-Asian countries, has been a tried and true method of racism for a long time; in the U.S., it dates from the 19th century.

It was then that the U.S. imported thousands of Chinese workers to build the transcontinental railroad. When their usefulness was over, American politicians, journalists and business leaders demonized them racially to appease white workers who felt threatened by Chinese competition. The result was white mobs lynching Chinese migrants, driving them en masse out of towns and burning down Chinatowns. The climax of anti-Chinese feeling was the passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the first racially discriminatory immigration law in American history, which would turn Chinese entering the U.S. into the nation’s first illegal immigrant population. The Immigration and Naturalization Service was created, policing Chinese immigration and identifying Chinese who had come into the U.S. as “paper sons,” who claimed a fictive relation to the Chinese who had already managed to come into the country. As the political scientist Janelle Wong tells me, while “European immigrants were confronted with widespread hostility, they never faced the kind of legal racial restrictions on immigration and naturalization that Asian Americans experienced.”

American history has been marked by the cycle of big businesses relying on cheap Asian labor, which threatened the white working class, whose fears were stoked by race-baiting politicians and media, leading to catastrophic events like the Chinese Exclusion Act and the internment of Japanese Americans in 1942. The person who wrote that sign I remember seeing as a child, blaming the Vietnamese for destroying American businesses, was simply telling a story about the yellow peril that was always available for fearful Americans.

The reality was that downtown San Jose in the 1970s and 1980s was shabby, a run-down place where almost no one wanted to open new businesses, except for Vietnamese refugees. Today, Americans rely on China and other Asian countries for cheap commodities that help Americans live the American Dream, then turn around and blame the Chinese for the loss of American jobs or the rise of American vulnerability to economic competition.

It is easier to blame a foreign country or a



**ABRAHAM
CHOI,
MIDTOWN,
MANHATTAN**

Choi was in a Penn Station bathroom on March 13 when a man stood behind him and started coughing and spitting on him. “I was shocked more than angry,” Choi says. “Why would he do that?”

“You Chinese f-ck,” the man said. “All of you should die, and all of you have the Chinese virus.” Choi waited for the man to leave and then reported the situation to a police officer. “I was told that

spitting wasn’t a crime, and that it wouldn’t be worth the paperwork I would have to go through to take any sort of action,” he says. Not knowing what else to do, Choi later anonymously recounted the story on Reddit, but he was hesitant to come forward in fear that his family might become the target of future attacks. Because of the shame he felt from the incident, he didn’t even share the story with his parents. But when attacks against Asian Americans kept occurring,

Choi felt that he needed to speak up. “This whole thing made me into more of an introvert. I’m worried about my kid. I don’t want her to face this kind of racism,” he says. “It should just be love that we hold for one another.”

Choi says the events of recent weeks have made him more passionate about fighting racism than ever before. “I will not stand silent until everyone in the U.S. can be considered equal.”



Ida Chen (24)
1st Gen Chinese

**IDA CHEN,
EAST VILLAGE,
MANHATTAN**

“Hey, Ms. Lee, I’d be into you if you didn’t carry the virus,” a man called after Chen on March 30. Chen told him off, but he turned his bike around and followed her for three blocks, shouting to her that “no one is into ‘ching chongs’ anyway” and that “this is why Asian men beat their wives.”

Afraid she would be in physical danger, Chen dialed 911 and put the phone on speaker,

sharing her exact location and the details of the situation. The dispatcher said that they would send someone to look for the man, who disappeared, but she was never contacted again.

Since then, Chen has been doing everything she can to avoid similar situations. “The other day, I walked 40 blocks to avoid taking the

bus or the subway. I’d rather be out in the open where I can run away if I have to,” she says. “I wear big sunglasses, and my hair is ombré blond, so I wear a hat to cover the black hair so you can only see the blond.”

In recent weeks, Chen says older family members have told her not to involve herself in “Black-white battles.” But, she explains, “In my opinion, oppression of one minority group results in oppression of all minority groups eventually.”



Abraham Choi (27)
2nd Generation Korean-American



**REJ JOO,
ASTORIA, QUEENS**

Joo was on his way to the post office when a Latino man wearing a cap labeled PUERTO RICO mumbled, “Chinese,” at him. Joo turned around, and the man continued: “I was gonna see if you were Chinese. I was gonna put on my mask if you were Chinese.”

“First of all, I’m not Chinese,” Joo responded. “Second, you should wear a mask anyway.

Do you understand how ignorant you sound? You’re a man of color, and it’s gotta be hard for you during this time. Why do you want to cause other people stress too?”

The man said he was sorry, that it was his mistake. Joo attributes being able to get an apology to his work as a program manager at the Center for Anti-Violence Education. “We’ve been helping people come up with strategies to intervene when they

witness or experience hate-based violence or harassment,” says Joo.

Joo says it wasn’t the first time he’d heard racist comments from other men of color. “When you’re lashing out at each other, you don’t see the big picture,” he explains. Still, he hasn’t thought much about the incident lately. “The increased level of attention given to anti-Blackness is a must and a critical part of working toward eradicating racism overall,” he says.



minority, or even politicians who negotiate trade agreements, than to identify the real power: corporations and economic elites who shift jobs, maximize profit at the expense of workers and care nothing for working Americans. To acknowledge this reality is far too disturbing for many Americans, who resort to blaming Asians as a simpler answer. Asian Americans have not forgotten this anti-Asian history, and yet many have hoped that it was behind them. The slur of the “Chinese virus” has revealed how fragile our acceptance and inclusion was.

In the face of renewed attacks on our American belonging, the former presidential candidate Andrew Yang offered this solution: “We Asian Americans need to embrace and show our Americanness in ways we never have before . . . We should show without a shadow of a doubt that we are Americans who will do our part for our country in this time of need.” Many Asian Americans took offense at his call, which seemed to apologize for our Asian-American existence. Yang’s critics pointed out that Asian Americans have literally wrapped themselves in the American flag in times of anti-Asian crisis; have donated to white neighbors and fellow citizens in emergencies; and died for this country fighting in its wars. And is there anything more American than joining the police? Did Tou Thao think he was proving his belonging by becoming a cop?

None of these efforts have prevented the stubborn persistence of anti-Asian racism. Calling for more sacrifices simply reiterates the sense that Asian Americans are not American and must constantly prove an Americanness that should not need to be proven. Japanese Americans had to prove their Americanness during World War II by fighting against Germans and Japanese while their families were incarcerated, but German and Italian Americans never had to prove their Americanness to the same extent. German and Italian Americans were selectively imprisoned for suspected or actual disloyalty, while Japanese Americans were incarcerated en masse, their race marking them as un-American.

ASIAN AMERICANS are caught between the perception that we are inevitably foreign and the temptation that we can be allied with white people in a country built on white supremacy. As a result, anti-Black (and anti-brown and anti-Native) racism runs deep in Asian-American communities. Immigrants and refugees, including Asian ones, know that we usually have to start low on the ladder of American success. But no matter

how low down we are, we know that America allows us to stand on the shoulders of Black, brown and Native people. Throughout Asian-American history, Asian immigrants and their descendants have been offered the opportunity by both Black people and white people to choose sides in the Black-white racial divide, and we have far too often chosen the white side. Asian Americans, while actively critical of anti-Asian racism, have not always stood up against anti-Black racism. Frequently, we have gone along with the status quo and affiliated with white people.

And yet there have been vocal Asian Americans who have called for solidarity with Black people and other people of color, from the activist Yuri Kochiyama, who cradled a dying Malcolm X, to the activist Grace Lee Boggs, who settled in Detroit and engaged in serious, radical organizing and theorizing with her Black husband James

Boggs. Kochiyama and Lee Boggs were far from the only Asian Americans who argued that Asian Americans should not stand alone or stand only for themselves. The very term *Asian American*, coined in the 1960s by Yuji Ichioka and Emma Gee and adopted by college student activists, was brought to national consciousness by a movement that was about more than just defending Asian Americans against racism and promoting an Asian-American identity.

Asian-American activists saw their movement as also being anti-war, anti-imperialism and anticapitalism. Taking inspiration from the 1955 Bandung Conference, a gathering of nonaligned African and Asian nations, and from Mao, they located themselves in an international struggle against colonialism with other colonized peoples. Mao also inspired radical African Americans, and the late 1960s in the U.S. was a moment when radical activists of all backgrounds saw themselves as part of a Third World movement that linked the uprisings of racial minorities with a global rebellion against capitalism, racism, colonialism and war.

The legacy of the Third World and Asian-American movements continues today among Asian-American activists and scholars, who have long argued that Asian Americans, because of their history of experiencing racism and labor exploitation, offer a radical potential for contesting the worst aspects of American society. But the more than 22 million Asian Americans, over 6% of the American population, have many different national and ethnic origins and ancestries and times of immigration or settlement. As a result, we often have divergent political viewpoints. Today’s Asian

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Americans are being offered two paths: the radical future imagined by the Asian-American movement, and the consumer model symbolized by drinking boba tea and listening to K-pop. While Asian Americans increasingly trend Democratic, we are far from all being radical.

What usually unifies Asian Americans and enrages us is anti-Asian racism and murder, beginning with the anti-Chinese violence and virulence of the 19th century and continuing through incidents like a white gunman killing five Vietnamese and Cambodian refugee children in a Stockton, Calif., school in 1989, and another white gunman killing six members of a Sikh gurdwara in Wisconsin in 2012. The murder of Vincent Chin, killed in 1982 by white Detroit autoworkers who mistook him for Japanese, remains a rallying cry. As do the Los Angeles riots, or uprisings, of 1992, when much of Koreatown was burned down by mostly Black and brown looters while the LAPD watched. Korean-American merchants suffered about half of the economic damage. Two Asian Americans were killed in the violence.

All of this is cause for mourning, remembrance and outrage, but so is something else: the 61 other people who died were not Asian, and the majority of them were Black or brown. Most of the more than 12,000 people who were arrested were also Black or brown. In short, Korean Americans suffered economic losses, as well as emotional and psychic damage, that would continue for years afterward. But they had property to lose, and they did not pay the price of their tenuous Americanness through the same loss of life or liberty as experienced by their Black and brown customers and neighbors.

Many Korean Americans were angry because they felt the city's law-enforcement and political leadership had sacrificed them by preventing the unrest from reaching the whiter parts of the city, making Korean Americans bear the brunt of the long-simmering rage of Black and brown Angelenos over poverty, segregation and abusive police treatment. In the aftermath, Koreatown was rebuilt, although not all of the shopkeepers recovered their livelihoods. Some of the money that rebuilt Koreatown came, ironically, from South Korea, which had enjoyed a decades-long transformation into an economic powerhouse. South Korean capital, and eventually South Korean pop culture, especially cinema and K-pop, became cooler and more fashionable than the Korean immigrants who had left South Korea for the American Dream. Even if economic struggle still defined a good deal of Korean immigrant life, it was overshadowed by the overall American perception of Asian-American success, and by the new factor of Asian capital and competition.

This is what it means to be a model minority:



**JAY KOO,
FINANCIAL
DISTRICT,
MANHATTAN**

"I wondered if I should've given my girlfriend an extra kiss before I left that night, if I should've spent more time with my brother," says Koo, who was followed by two men after dropping off his brother at the emergency room at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital on March 24. The men called him racial slurs and yelled, "You got the virus. We have to kill you." Wanting to appear strong and confident, he turned

around and moved his book bag in front in case he needed to defend himself. "Unfortunately, Asians are often targeted for violent attacks because Asians are stereotyped as weak and non-confrontational," he says. He escaped by fake-coughing and saying, "I just got back from the ER. You want this virus?"

Friends and family have asked him the races of the men who confronted him, but he says it doesn't matter. "The men acted out of reflex in quoting President

Donald Trump and stated that I have the 'Chinese virus,' which propped up the Chinese as the scapegoat."

Koo turned to history to process the incident. "I was reminded that the recent attacks against Asian-American communities due to COVID and the murder of George Floyd are connected and rooted in racist histories," he says. "We can never truly be free unless we are all free, or as Dr. King states, 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.'"





**HARUKA SAKAGUCHI,
FLATBUSH,
BROOKLYN**

Before Sakaguchi started this photo project, she was waiting in line to enter a grocery store on March 21 when a man came up behind her, hovering and making her feel uncomfortable. She politely asked him for some space, to which he responded, “What’d you say to me, chink?” He then proceeded to cut in front of her.

“Before the Black Lives Matter protests, I had contextualized

my incident as an act of aggression by a single individual—a ‘bad apple,’ so to speak,” she says. “But after witnessing the unfolding of the antiracism movements and encountering heated debates between police abolitionists and those who cling to the ‘few bad apples’ theory, I came to realize that I too had internalized the ‘bad apple’ narrative. I gave my aggressor—an elderly white man—the benefit of the doubt.

“As an immi-

grant, I have been so thoroughly conditioned to think that white Americans are individuals that I wrote him into an imagined narrative in a protagonist role, even while he had so vehemently denied me of my own individuality by calling me a ‘chink.’ The protests have brought public attention to the idea that individuality is a luxury afforded to a privileged class, no matter how reckless their behavior or how consequential their actions.”



to be invisible in most circumstances because we are doing what we are supposed to be doing, like my parents, until we become hypervisible because we are doing what we do too well, like the Korean shopkeepers. Then the model minority becomes the Asian invasion, and the Asian-American model minority, which had served to prove the success of capitalism, bears the blame when capitalism fails.

Not to say that we bear the brunt of capitalism. Situated in the middle of America's fraught racial relations, we receive, on the whole, more benefits from American capitalism than Black, brown or Indigenous peoples, even if many of us also experience poverty and marginalization. While some of us do die from police abuse, it does not happen on the same scale as that directed against Black, brown or Indigenous peoples. While we do experience segregation and racism and hostility, we are also more likely to live in integrated neighborhoods than Black or Indigenous people. To the extent that we experience advantage because of our race, we are also complicit in holding up a system that disadvantages Black, brown and Indigenous people because of their race.

Given our tenuous place in American society, no wonder so many Asian Americans might want to prove their Americanness, or to dream of acceptance by a white-dominated society, or condemn Tou Thao as not one of "us." But when Asian Americans speak of their vast collective, with origins from East to West Asia and South to Southeast Asia, who is the "we" that we use? The elite multiculturalism of colored faces in high places is a genteel politics of representation that focuses on assimilation. So long excluded from American life, marked as inassimilable aliens and perpetual foreigners, asked where we come from and complimented on our English, Asian immigrants and their descendants have sought passionately to make this country our own. But from the perspective of many Black, brown and Indigenous people, this country was built on their enslavement, their dispossession, their erasure, their forced migration, their imprisonment, their segregation, their abuse, their exploited labor and their colonization.

For many if not all Black, brown and Indigenous people, the American Dream is a farce as much as a tragedy. Multiculturalism may make us feel good, but it will not save the American Dream; reparations, economic redistribution, and defunding or abolishing the police might.

If Hmong experiences fit more closely with the failure of the American Dream, what does it mean for some Asian Americans to still want their piece of it? If we claim America, then we must claim all of America, its hope and its hypocrisy, its profit and its pain, its liberty and its losses, its imperfect union and its ongoing segregation.

To be Asian American is therefore paradoxical, for being Asian American is both necessary and insufficient. Being Asian American is necessary, the name and identity giving us something to organize around, allowing us to have more than "minor feelings." I vividly remember becoming an Asian American in my sophomore year, when I transferred to UC Berkeley, stepped foot on the campus and was immediately struck by intellectual and political lightning. Through my Asian-American studies courses and my fellow student activists of the Asian American Political Alliance, I was no longer a faceless part of an "Asian invasion." I was an Asian American. I had a face, a voice, a name, a movement, a history, a consciousness, a rage. That rage is a major feeling, compelling me to refuse a submissive politics of apology, which an uncritical acceptance of the American Dream demands.

But the rage that is at the heart of the Asian-American movement—a righteous rage, a wrath for justice, acknowledgment, redemption—has not been able to overcome the transformation of the movement into a diluted if empowering identity. In its most diluted form, Asian-American identity is also open to anti-Black racism, the acceptance of colonization, and the fueling of America's perpetual-motion war machine, which Americans from across the Democratic and Republican parties accept as a part of the U.S.

WE MUST CLAIM ALL OF AMERICA, ITS HOPE AND ITS HYPOCRISY, ITS PROFIT AND ITS PAIN, ITS LIBERTY AND ITS LOSSES, ITS IMPERFECT UNION AND ITS ONGOING SEGREGATION

MY PRESENCE here in this country, and that of my parents, and a majority of Vietnamese and Hmong, is due to the so-called Vietnam War in Southeast Asia that the U.S. helped to wage. The war in Laos was called "the Secret War" because the CIA conducted it and kept it secret from the American people. In Laos, the Hmong were a stateless minority without a country to call their own, and CIA advisers promised the Hmong that if they fought along with them, the U.S. would take care of the Hmong in both victory and defeat, perhaps even helping them gain their own homeland. About 58,000 Hmong who fought with the Americans lost their lives, fighting communists and rescuing downed American pilots flying secret bombing missions over Laos. When the war ended, the CIA abandoned most of its Hmong allies, taking only a small number out of the country to Thailand. The ones who remained behind suffered persecution at the hands of their communist enemies.

This is why Tou Thao's face haunts me. Not

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Hannah Hwang (23)
2nd Generation Korean American

**HANNAH HWANG,
BROOKLYN**

“I don’t want to speak to you. You’re Chinese. Please get me somebody else to work with,” a customer told Hwang, an essential employee at a bank. The social-distancing measures put in place, including a window by the entrance so customers don’t have to step fully inside,

have at times magnified the racism she has faced. “I’ve felt like a zoo animal, having glass separating us while they’re pointing and yelling at me,” says Hwang, who asked that her exact location not be shown because of privacy concerns.

As the wave of Black Lives Matter protests began, she initially felt guilty about focusing on

what she had personally endured. “I can handle racially charged slurs thrown at me. Yet that only led me to acknowledge that my experience is not in any way less valid,” she says. “Instead, I pivoted my mentality in acknowledging my privilege and recognizing the critical role Asian Americans play in standing in solidarity with the Black community.”



just because we may look alike in some superficial way as Asian Americans, but because he and I are here because of this American history of war. The war was a tragedy for us, as it was for the Black Americans who were sent to “guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest Georgia and East Harlem,” as Martin Luther King Jr. argued passionately in his 1967 speech “Beyond Vietnam.” In this radical speech, he condemns not just racism but capitalism, militarism, American imperialism and the American war machine, “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today.” In another speech, he demands that we question our “whole society,” which means “ultimately coming to see that the problem of racism, the problem of economic exploitation and the problem of war are all tied together.”

Little has changed. The U.S. is still a country built on war and for war. This is why “Vietnam,” meaning the Vietnam War, continues to haunt this country, stuck in a forever war. And this is why Tou Thao’s face haunts me. It is the face of someone who shares some of my history and has done the thing I fear to do when faced with injustice—nothing. Addressing Tou Thao, the poet Mai Der Vang, also Hmong, wrote in her poem “In the Year of Permutations”: “Go live with yourself after what you didn’t do.” Thao was “complicit in adding to the/perpetration of power on a neck... Never truly to be accepted/ always a pawn.” While the life of a Hmong-American police officer descended from refugees is different from that of a stereotypical model-minority Chinese-American engineer or a Vietnamese-American writer like me, the moral choices remain the same. Solidarity or complicity. Rise against abusive power or stand with our back turned to the abuse of power. If we as Asian Americans choose the latter, we are indeed the model minority, and we deserve both its privileges and its perils.

Our challenge is to be both Asian American and to imagine a world beyond it, one in which being Asian American isn’t necessary. This is not a problem of assimilation or multiculturalism. This is a contradiction, inherited from the fundamental contradiction that ties the American body politic together, its aspiration toward equality for all, bound with its need to exploit the land and racially marked people, beginning from the very origins of American society and its conquest of Indigenous nations and importation of African slaves. The U.S. is an example of a successful project of colonization, only we do not call colonization by that name here. Instead, we call successful colonization “the American Dream.” This is why, as Mai Der Vang says, “the American Dream will not save us.”

“Asian Americans” should not exist in a land where everyone is equal, but because of racism’s persistence, and capitalism’s need for cheap, racialized labor, “Asian Americans” do indeed exist. The end of Asian Americans only happens with the end of racism and capitalism. Faced with this problem, Asian Americans can be a model of apology, trying to prove an Americanness that cannot be proved. Or we can be a model of justice and demand greater economic and social equality for us and for all Americans.

IF WE ARE DISSATISFIED with our country’s failures and limitations, revealed to us in stark clarity during the time of coronavirus, then now is our time to change our country for the better. If you think America is in trouble, blame shareholders, not immigrants; look at CEOs, not foreigners; resent corporations, not minorities; yell at politicians of both parties, not the weak, who have little in the way of power or wealth to share. Many Americans of all backgrounds understand this better now than they did in 1992. Then, angry protesters burned down Koreatown. Now, they peacefully surround the White House.

Demanding that the powerful and the wealthy share their power and their wealth is what will make America great. Until then, race will continue to divide us. To locate Tou Thao in the middle of a Black-Hmong divide, or a Black-Asian divide, as if race were the only problem and the only answer, obscures a fatal statistic: the national poverty rate was 15.1% in 2015, while the rate for African Americans was about 24.1% and for Hmong Americans 28.3%.

The problem is race, and class, and war—a country almost always at war overseas that then pits its poor of all races and its exploited minorities against each other in a domestic war over scarce resources. So long as this crossbred system of white supremacy and capitalist exploitation remains in place, there will always be someone who will write that sign: ANOTHER AMERICAN DRIVEN OUT OF BUSINESS BY [FILL IN THE BLANK], because racism always offers the temptation to blame the weak rather than the powerful. The people who write these signs are engaging in the most dangerous kind of identity politics, the nationalist American kind, which, from the origins of this country, has been white and propertied. The police were created to defend the white, the propertied and their allies, and continue to do so. Black people

**DEMANDING THAT THE
POWERFUL AND THE
WEALTHY SHARE THEIR
POWER AND THEIR
WEALTH IS WHAT WILL
MAKE AMERICA GREAT**

know this all too well, many descended from people who were property.

My parents, as newcomers to America, learned this lesson most intimately. When they opened the New Saigon, they told me not to call the police if there was trouble. In Vietnam, the police were not to be trusted. The police were corrupt. But a few years later, when an armed (white) gunman burst into our house and pointed a gun in all our faces, and after my mother dashed by him and into the street and saved our lives, I called the police. The police officers who came were white and Latino. They were gentle and respectful with us. We owned property. We were the victims. And yet our status as people with property, as refugees fulfilling the American Dream, as good neighbors for white people, is always fragile, so long as that sign can always be hung.

But the people who would hang that sign misunderstand a basic fact of American life: America is built on the business of driving other businesses out of business. This is the life cycle of capitalism, one in which an (Asian) American Dream that is multicultural, transpacific and corporate fits perfectly well. My parents, natural capitalists, succeeded at this life cycle until they, in turn, were driven out of business. The city of San Jose, which had neglected downtown when my parents arrived, changed its approach with the rise of Silicon Valley. Realizing that downtown should reflect the image of a modern tech metropolis, the city used eminent domain to force my parents to sell their store. Across from where the New Saigon once stood now looms the brand-new city hall, which was supposed to face a brand-new symphony hall.

I love the idea that a symphony could have sprung from the refugee roots of the New Saigon, where my parents shed not only sweat but blood, having once been shot there on Christmas Eve. But for many years, all that stood on my parents’ property was a dismal parking lot. Eventually the city sold the property for many millions of dollars, and now a tower of expensive condominiums is being built on the site of my parents’ struggle for the American Dream. The symphony was never heard. This, too, is America.

So is this: the mother of Fong Lee, Youa Vang Lee, marching with Hmong 4 Black Lives on the Minnesota state capitol in the wake of George Floyd’s killing. “I have to be there,” she said. She spoke in Hmong, but her feelings could be understood without translation.

“The same happened to my son.”

Nguyen is a Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and a University Professor at the University of Southern California

CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE

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Opportunity to be nourished

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**EUGENIE GREY,
PROSPECT
LEFFERTS
GARDENS,
BROOKLYN**

Grey was out walking her dog on March 17 when she was body-slammed by a stranger. The aggressor also kicked Grey's dog, which howled in pain. In the moments before the attack, Grey was bent over, picking up her dog's waste, and her hood fell over her head. She couldn't see the stranger approaching and was

already in a vulnerable position.

Grey was the only one on the block wearing a mask at the time, and her eyes were visible above it—"That's probably what immediately identified me as Asian to them," she says. Later, she shared the incident on Instagram, using her platform to spark conversation and bring awareness to the issue. "In my last post about the racism I've experienced during this virus hysteria, I expressed gratitude that at least I wasn't

assaulted. I guess I can't claim that anymore," wrote Grey, who urged her nearly 400,000 followers to "take the time to be extra empathetic and kind to strangers to hopefully make up for their treatment from the rest of the world."

"As horrifying, triggering and deplorable as what happened to me was, it was the one and only time I actually felt like there could be bodily harm inflicted on me," she says. "Some people live in fear of that all the time."

**DOUGLAS KIM,
WEST VILLAGE,
MANHATTAN**

In early April, Kim opened an Instagram direct message from a concerned customer. It was an image of his West Village restaurant, Jeju Noodle Bar, the first noodle restaurant in the U.S. to achieve Michelin-star status. The words “Stop eating dogs” were scrawled in Sharpie across the eatery’s windowpane. Disheartened, Kim went in the next day and scrubbed it off.

Even before then,

Jeju Noodle Bar was closed not just for dine-in customers, but also for takeout and delivery because of concern for employee safety. “Our employees were scared,” says Kim. “They were worried about using public transportation, not because they were scared of getting the virus but because they were getting awful looks from strangers and hearing the other stories.”

Kim says there’s a common thread between what happened at his restaurant and the

incidents of police brutality around the U.S. that have led to ongoing protests and calls for change. “When you look at the larger picture, it all comes from one thing: racism,” he says. “As human beings, we should all be united. We should be all together. It’s good that we are trying to get together and fix things. Asian people coming together with Black Lives Matter protests.”



POLICY

12 WAYS TRUMP HAS DEEPENED INEQUALITY

BY ABBY VESOULIS

THE LONG FIGHT TOWARD EQUALITY IN THE U.S. IS OFTEN recounted by listing banner acts of Congress and the Supreme Court. Every child learns about the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. But behind those bright headlines, another, less flashy battle for civil rights unfolds. In Executive Orders and court appointments and in the great, hulking machinery of the U.S. regulatory state, presidential administrations have outsized influence over how laws and federal programs are structured, implemented and enforced. While those administrative decisions often take effect without fanfare, they determine how public policy actually works. Who receives benefits and whether marginalized groups truly get equal protection under the law are shaped by the bureaucratic details of rulemaking and lower court injunctions.

For decades, these powerful levers of the federal administrative state have been used to keep people oppressed. Even as Black Americans were waging and winning battles in the civil rights movement during the 1950s and '60s, federal rules prevented them from accessing the same benefits afforded white

citizens. A Depression-era pair of federal programs designed to promote homeownership were implemented in a way that effectively excluded Black people from accessing loans. The postwar GI Bill followed a similar path: while lifting millions of white veterans into the middle class by helping them access college and buy homes, the way the law was implemented effectively prevented thousands of Black servicemen from obtaining the same.

Trump's Administration has been characterized by a similar disconnect. Trump claims to have done more than anyone else for the Black community, citing a low Black unemployment rate prior to the COVID-19 recession and the First Step Act, a bipartisan bill reducing federal prison sentences. But behind the scenes, the Administration has quietly rolled back existing rules and issued new ones that have the effect of eliminating protections and opportunities for Black people, migrants, Native Americans, transgender people and other marginalized groups. Here are 12 examples. — *With reporting by* HALEY SWEETLAND EDWARDS *and* JULIA ZORTHIAN

WEAKENING SHIELDS FOR PAYDAY-LOAN RECIPIENTS



When Candice Russell needed an unexpected medical procedure in 2014, she had no way to pay for it. She'd recently separated from her husband, and her wages as a Texas bartender weren't cutting it. So she borrowed \$450 from a payday lender. After a year and a half and two subsequent payday loans she had hoped would finally get her out of the red, she realized she was

\$10,000 in the hole. "Every time I got to a point where I thought I had gotten myself out of it, something would inevitably happen," says Russell, now 37.

It's a common experience for low-income Americans: a vicious cycle of using one payday loan to service another. Up to 12 million Americans take out payday loans each year, according to a 2016 fact sheet by Pew Charitable Trusts.

The averages describe a borrower who is in debt for five months out of the year and spends \$520 on fees to take out the same \$375 loan over and over. Black Americans are especially vulnerable: because they are less likely to have stable credit, they are 105% more likely than other Americans to seek these loans, according to Pew.

The Obama-era Consumer Financial

Protection Bureau (CFPB) issued a rule to protect these borrowers, requiring payday lenders to ensure people could repay loans before issuing advances. "I don't think it's brain surgery to say that if somebody is in trouble and then you give them a loan and charge them a 390% interest rate [they'll] end up trapped in debt," says former CFPB director Richard Cordray.

But the Trump Administration, backed by the loan industry, is trying to repeal the rule, arguing that payday lenders help Americans who need access to emergency cash. Cordray says the repeal will have the opposite effect. "This is one of the most glaring examples of how this Administration's focus has been on protecting financial companies at the expense of consumers."

SHUTTING TRANSGENDER PEOPLE OUT OF HOUSING

In May 2019, Trump's Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) proposed a new rule allowing federally funded single-sex and sex-segregated homeless shelters to deny entry to transgender people on the basis of privacy, safety, practical concerns or

religious beliefs. The proposal weakens an Obama-era requirement that shelters accommodate trans individuals. Shelters could also use the Trump rule, which has not yet been finalized, to require trans women to share bathrooms and sleeping quarters with men.

LGBTQ advocates say the impact would be profound: roughly one-fifth of transgender Americans have experienced homelessness, according to the National Center for Transgender Equality. Black trans women are particularly at risk of

violence, especially when living on the streets, says Kayla Gore, a Black trans woman and an organizer at the Transgender Law Center.

In 2019, at least 19 Black transgender women were violently killed, according to the Human Rights Center.

Gore, who has been homeless and was stabbed in 2013, says HUD's proposal is not one to overlook. "[It] sends a message to people who have ill will toward us that we're not protected [and] that our lives hold no value," she says.

Working to block access to birth control

Contraceptives treat medical issues like ovarian cysts and reduce the risk of unplanned pregnancies. Certain types, like IUDs, can cost as much as \$1,300 to insert. In 2011, the Obama Administration issued guidance requiring insurers to cover contraception, but rules pushed by the Trump Administration would expand exemptions for employers who object on religious or moral grounds. If Trump prevails in an upcoming Supreme Court decision, more than 100,000 women could lose access to their birth control.

CONSTRUCTING NEW BARRIERS FOR MIGRANTS

Getting a green card is likely getting harder—especially for people from poor countries. In January, a divided Supreme Court gave the Trump Administration permission to enforce a new rule that gives U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) officers greater authority to deny certain green-card and visa applicants who have limited financial resources.

Since 1999, an individual who was "primarily dependent" on the government to sponsor their income or to pay for their institutionalized care has been considered a "public charge." Federal officials would consider that dependency when deciding whether to allow them to live in the U.S. But the Trump Administration has made that rule even more stringent, expanding the definition of a *public charge* to include applicants relying on combinations of certain benefits like Medicaid, food stamps or housing assistance for more than 12 months in a 36-month period, and even those whose circumstances suggest they may need aid in the future.

Many migrants who applied for green cards after Feb. 24, 2020, will be scored on their English, educational attainment, health and income. Factors like medical conditions could be weighed negatively against an applicant, while an income of at least 250% of the poverty line would be weighed in a household's favor. Refugees and asylum seekers would

not be subject to the guidelines, but confusion surrounding the rule change has led some migrants to shun government services altogether. Experts say this may have resulted in immigrants' going without necessary COVID-19 treatment.

The policy change seems to give broad new discretionary powers to immigration officers over who does and who does not get to lawfully live in America. It's too soon to tell how many migrants will be denied green cards as a result of these new criteria, but the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) projects the rule will have an outsize effect on those from poor countries with predominantly Latino populations. While just 27% of recent green-card holders from Europe, Canada, Australia and New Zealand would have had two or more negative factors, 60% of recent green-card holders from Central America and Mexico would have as many. "I would assume, based on what I've observed and heard under [Acting Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security Ken] Cuccinelli, that USCIS would take a hard line on this and that the adjudicators would be issued instructions to deny based on public charge tests wherever possible," says Randy Capps, MPI's director of research for U.S. programs.

Poor migrants who applied for green cards after February are waiting with bated breath—and hoping that he's wrong.

LIMITING ACCESS TO FOOD STAMPS

In the midst of a pandemic that has so far claimed 120,000 American lives and 45 million American jobs, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is doubling down on an effort to implement a rule change that would kick 688,000 people off the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), better known as food stamps.

Since 1996, SNAP has limited most able-bodied adults without dependents to three months of food stamps within a three-year period unless they have a job or are in a work-training program. But for areas experiencing high joblessness, there's long been a workaround: states can grant regional waivers exempting people from the work rule. Over the past 22

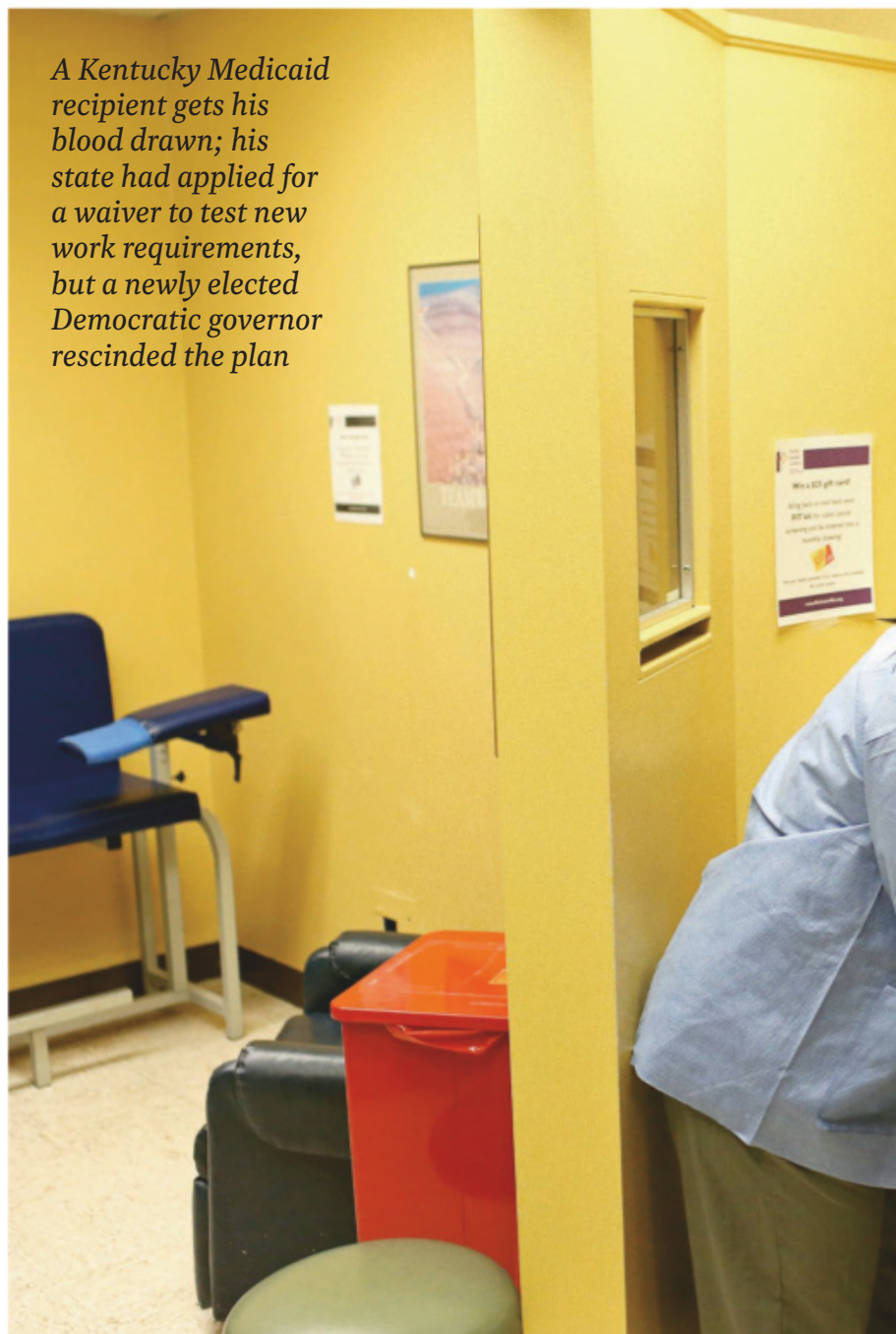
years, every state except Delaware has used these waivers to keep residents fed. But in December, the Trump Administration finalized stricter criteria for waivers, requiring that a region's average unemployment rate be at least 6% for the previous 24 months, and at least 20% above the nation's average, to qualify.

Citing COVID-19, a judge blocked the change, but the USDA appealed in May. If the USDA prevails, the stricter rules wouldn't start until the public-health emergency ends—but that could be long before the economy rebounds. "If they had any decency or compassion," Ohio Representative Marcia Fudge said at the time, "they would abandon this appeal immediately."

Pushing to reduce access to future benefits

The federal poverty line for a family of four is \$26,200, but in 2019, Trump's Office of Management and Budget issued a notice that it was considering changing how inflation calculates into the measure. One suggested change would slow the growth of the federal poverty line over time, stripping millions of low-income Americans, including seniors and people with disabilities, of benefits like Medicaid and prescription-drug funds over 10 years, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

A Kentucky Medicaid recipient gets his blood drawn; his state had applied for a waiver to test new work requirements, but a newly elected Democratic governor rescinded the plan



TRYING TO TIE ACCESS TO BASIC HEALTH CARE TO WORK

Styna Lane suffers from chronic illnesses that leave her susceptible to joint dislocations, fainting spells and anaphylactic reactions. The 29-year-old from Ohio requires a chest port and relies on Medicaid to cover her prescriptions and treatments, which total more than \$4,000 a month. But starting next year, she could lose her Medicaid coverage.

The Trump Administration invited states to apply for waivers that

allow them to tie coverage to work requirements, and over a dozen, including Ohio, have done so. Though people with disabilities should be exempt, some who suffer from chronic illness are in a gray area. "I know people will combat it with 'Well, if you're genuinely that ill, you'll have no problem getting the exemption.' But that's just not how our system works," says Lane, who was previously denied a disability exemption for



Shifting an additional burden to rape survivors

About 21% of women reported being sexually assaulted during college, according to a government-funded study of the 2014–15 school year. But this spring, even as COVID-19 shut down campuses, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos finalized regulations that may lead fewer survivors to report attackers to their schools. Under the updated rules governing Title IX, institutions have less legal liability for campus assault and harassment and will be required to allow both parties in a case to undergo cross-examinations at a live hearing.

BLOCKING TRANS TROOPS FROM THE MILITARY

With a trio of tweets in 2017, Trump declared he was rolling back an Obama-era policy that permitted transgender Americans to openly serve in the military. The Armed Forces “cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption,” Trump wrote.

But implementing the new policy turned out to be more complicated than posting it on social media. What ensued was a series

of court orders that barred the change. The Administration pushed forward anyway and was granted approval from the Supreme Court to proceed on an interim basis. Now anyone who has medically transitioned or is currently transitioning is disqualified from enlisting. Individuals who are currently serving in the military but were diagnosed with gender dysphoria after April 2019

must serve in the sex they were assigned at birth, seek out a series of complex waivers or leave. (The policy exempts existing service members who transitioned before the rule went into effect.)

House Democrats have challenged the rule—as has public opinion: 71% of adults now support the right of openly transgender people to serve, according to Gallup.

food stamps. “Unfortunately, a lot of people slip through those cracks.”

The Administration says the work requirements will improve the health of recipients and help them “rise out of poverty and government dependence.” But research from the Kaiser Family Foundation suggests that most people on Medicaid who can work already do: 63% of Medicaid recipients ages 19 to 64 have jobs. An additional 12% are caretakers, 11% are disabled, and 7% are students. For the most part, those who fall outside those categories face significant barriers to getting work, such as lack of transportation, education

or Internet access. Intent aside, Lane says, the message in making Medicaid conditional is crystal clear: “[It indicates] that I’m only worth as much as I could contribute in a standardized financial sort of way.”

From 2018 to 2020, courts have blocked the Medicaid work requirement in four states. Some courts have ruled that it defeats the primary legislative purpose of Medicaid, to provide health coverage to the poorest Americans.

Most states have put the work requirements on hold, pending the outcome of multiple court battles.

Reducing Native Americans' land

Since taking office, Trump has consistently sided with the oil and gas industry over environmental and Native American interests. In December 2017, he backed local Republican officials and cut the size of a Utah land monument by 85% to cultivate it for recreation. Multiple Indigenous tribes claim roots to the land. The same year, the President issued an Executive Order revoking a tribal advisory council's power in decisions impacting part of the Bering Sea. "The message," says Natalie Landreth of the Native American Rights Fund, "is that Native American priorities were not important."

Protesters in Washington, D.C., march against Trump's attempts to restrict travel from predominantly Muslim countries in October 2017



DETERRING TRAVELERS FROM PREDOMINANTLY MUSLIM COUNTRIES

Judges blocked Trump's first two efforts to enact broad travel restrictions on countries with large Muslim populations, ruling that the President's moves likely violated federal immigration statutes. But in June 2018, the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 in favor of Trump's third attempt, allowing him to impose travel restrictions on individuals from seven countries, five of which have Muslim majorities.

Since then, the U.S. State Department has all but stopped issuing visas to people from Libya, Iran, Somalia, Syria and Yemen. (The ban also applies to North Koreans, who are mostly unable to travel to the U.S., and a handful of Venezuelan officials and their families.) The

Trump Administration says the travel restrictions were necessary to secure America's borders.

But critics say the move was designed to paint Muslims as uniquely threatening in a country where right-wing terrorists have been responsible for more deaths since the 9/11 attacks than jihadists. The new restrictions also affect the communal aspect of the Islamic faith, says Robert McCaw of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. "There are many intergenerational households that are disrupted when children cannot connect with grandparents, aunts and uncles," he says. "And that is an attack on the family structure of Muslims in America."

OBSTRUCTING ACCESS TO ABORTION

While the U.S. awaits a Supreme Court decision, expected this summer, that will determine whether it was legal for Louisiana to impose severe restrictions on abortion providers, social conservatives already

have something to celebrate. In February, a U.S. appeals court ruled in favor of a new Trump Administration regulation that forbids family-planning centers that receive federal funding to refer pregnant women for

abortions. The funding program, called Title X, provides patients with affordable access to birth control, HIV tests and cancer screenings.

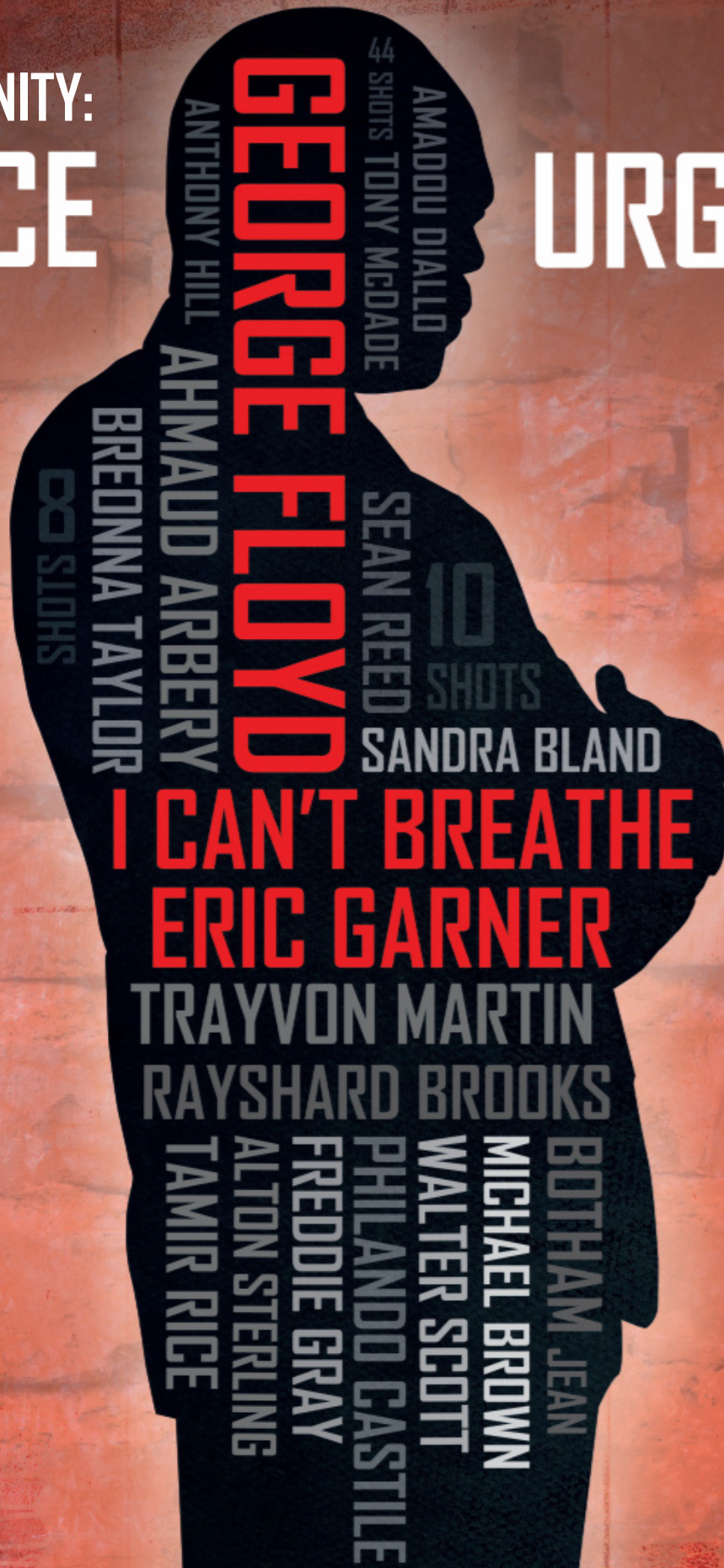
As a result of the policy change, scores of clinics have left Title X in protest. Crit-

ics argue the new rule imposes bureaucratic hurdles on patients who rely on the program, 22% of whom are Black and 33% of whom are Hispanic or Latino. "Your access to reproductive health care depends on your ZIP

code, depends on your income and depends on a host of factors that are beyond your control," says Gretchen Borchelt of the National Women's Law Center. "The Trump Administration's attacks are just making that worse."

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POLICY

BLACK, DISABLED AND AT RISK

BY ABIGAIL ABRAMS

MARCUS-DAVID PETERS HAD JUST LEFT his day job teaching high school biology and arrived at his second job at a hotel, where he worked as a part-time security guard, when he apparently experienced a psychiatric episode. He left the hotel naked, got into his car, then veered off the side of a highway in Richmond, Va. A police officer, Michael Nyantakyi, who had seen the vehicle crash, saw Peters climb out, and attempted to subdue him with his Taser. When Peters advanced, Nyantakyi fired two shots into the belly of the unarmed, unclothed 24-year-old, killing him.

Peters had no criminal record, his family said he had no history of mental illness or drug use, and his death, like those of many killed by police around the country, left those who knew him in anguish. “People ask me all the time, ‘What do you think caused him to have a mental break?’ And I say, ‘We’ll never know, because he was killed,’” says Peters’ sister, Princess Blanding. “It was easier to take out the threat, which was his brown skin, than to try to help him.” Richmond’s top prosecutor later concluded that the May 2018 shooting was justified.

While there is no reliable database tracking how many people with disabilities are shot by police each year, studies show that it’s substantial—likely between one-third and one-half of total police killings. And in the renewed national debate over racial injustice sparked by George Floyd’s killing at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer in May, those deaths should loom large. Advocates for both racial justice and disability rights say Black Americans are especially at risk.

Black people are more likely than white people to have chronic health conditions, more likely to struggle when accessing mental-health care and less likely to receive formal diagnoses for a range of disabilities. By dint of how others react to their complexion, they are also nearly



three times as likely as white people to be killed by police. The combination of disability and skin color amounts to a double bind, says Talila A. Lewis, a lawyer at Helping Educate to Advance the Rights of Deaf Communities, because the government uses “constructed ideas about disability, delinquency and dependency, intertwined with constructed ideas about race to classify and criminalize people.”

The danger for people with mental illnesses and disabilities is also born of police departments’ “compliance culture,” says Haben Girma, another lawyer and activist. “Anyone who immediately doesn’t comply, the police move on to force,” she says. The approach doesn’t work when police interact with someone who doesn’t react in the way they expect. Girma, who is both Black and deaf-blind, says that for her, the danger is hardly abstract. “Someone might be yelling for me to do some-

▲
A memorial to Marcus-David Peters sits at the base of a defaced Robert E. Lee statue on Monument Avenue in Richmond, Va., on June 20

thing and I don’t hear. And then they assume that I’m a threat,” she says.

To address the problem, advocates promote a range of remedies—many dovetailing with the nascent national movement to rethink public safety. They want to decrease the total interactions police officers have with disabled people, redirect funds to other support services, and rethink law-enforcement systems and protocols to better protect people. The demands lend specificity and substance to the protest cries to “defund the police,”



drawing attention to the tragedies that follow when armed first responders encounter a situation that demands not enforcement or coercion but care.

SOME DEPARTMENTS are trying. In recent years, police agencies around the country have offered their forces crisis-intervention trainings, which are designed to help officers safely and calmly interact with people with disabilities and de-escalate confrontations with the mentally ill. But the quality of these training programs is all over the board, and the priority remains elsewhere. A 2016 report from the Police Executive Research Forum found that nationwide, police academies spend a median of 58 hours on firearm training and just eight hours on de-escalation or crisis intervention.

In 2015, the Arc, one of the country's largest disability-rights organizations,

launched its own program to teach law-enforcement officers, lawyers, victim-services providers and other criminal-justice professionals how to identify, interact with and accommodate people with disabilities. "We're talking about having a community really understand each other, and what that can look like," says Leigh Ann Davis, who leads the Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability. The program has now trained 2,000 people in 14 states.

But training programs, regardless of quality, are not enough, activists say. As protests continue nationwide and demands to defund or abolish the police gain steam, some advocates are pushing for more radical models that seek to avoid bringing people with disabilities, or those experiencing mental-health crises, into contact with the police. In Eugene, Ore., for example, the White Bird Clinic runs what's known as CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets), a program that reroutes 911 and non-emergency calls relating to mental health, substance use or homelessness to a team of medics and crisis-care workers. That team responds to such calls instead of—

not alongside—police. The CAHOOTS program, which launched in the late '80s, receives roughly 24,000 calls each year; 17% of Eugene police calls are redirected to CAHOOTS, a boon to police departments, which can better use resources combatting crimes.

Police unions have criticized CAHOOTS and similar programs on the grounds that it's dangerous for medics and crisis-care workers to respond to calls without armed officers. But Tim Black, the CAHOOTS operations coordinator, says that's mostly not the case. His teams work closely with the Eugene police department, and last year, just 150 of the 24,000 calls directed to CAHOOTS required police backup.

"There's a really constructive relationship that we have with law enforcement because they see us as the expert," Black says. "They trust us to engage in all sorts

of situations that they're not equipped to handle. But they also trust us to provide them with feedback and oversight when we see things that aren't going well because they know that it's coming from the place of understanding."

Olympia, Wash.; Denver; and Oakland, Calif., have developed programs modeled after CAHOOTS, and Black says other cities are beginning to call for advice too. In New York City, a coalition of civil rights and social-service organizations has proposed a pilot program for two precincts in which EMTs and crisis counselors would respond to mental-health calls instead of police. The coalition wants to devote \$16.5 million to the pilot over five years. (New York spends nearly \$11 billion on police-related costs each year.)

"A police response is not the kind of response you want when people are in a mental-health crisis," says Carla Rabinowitz, advocacy coordinator for the mental-health nonprofit Community Access and the coalition's project leader. She notes that at least 17 New Yorkers experiencing mental-health crises were shot by police in the past five years. "It's much better to have a peer and an EMT who can talk to the person, figure out what is going on in the person's life, offer them resources."

Meanwhile, in Richmond, Blanding, whose brother Peters was killed near his car, is using the current, galvanizing prominence of race and criminal justice to push the reforms she has been seeking since his death. Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney recently released a plan "for reimagining public safety" in the city that includes a civilian review board and a version of the family's idea for a crisis alert that would involve mental-health experts responding to a mental- or behavioral-health crisis, in addition to other policy changes.

Blanding says she is glad to see progress, but won't celebrate until the city implements a system that ensures "having a mental-health crisis does not become a death sentence." □

**'IT WAS EASIER
TO TAKE OUT
THE THREAT,
WHICH WAS HIS
BROWN SKIN,
THAN TO TRY TO
HELP HIM.'**

PRINCESS BLANDING,
sister of Marcus-David
Peters

ECONOMY

THE WIDENING RACIAL WEALTH GAP

BY ALANA SEMUELS

MINNEAPOLIS SEEMED FULL OF OPPORTUNITY when Roxanne O'Brien moved there in 1987. She was just a kid, but her mother, a teacher, had heard that the school system was stellar and that it was looking for Black teachers. She faced some racism—a neighbor forbade her son from playing with O'Brien because she was Black—but overall, the city seemed like a place where a Black family could succeed. Minnesota was, and still is, majority white, but it was also among the first states in the nation to outlaw school segregation, and its political leaders, including Hubert Humphrey, Eugene McCarthy and Walter Mondale, helped usher in some of the legislative accomplishments of the civil rights era.

But over time, O'Brien, now 37, noticed that Minneapolis seemed to have backslid on many of its commitments to integration. “We’re still segregated,” says O'Brien, a plaintiff in a class-action lawsuit against the state that alleges public-school students are being denied an adequate education because of segregation by race and socioeconomic status in the Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts. “Everybody thinks that something was solved back in the '60s, but no, it wasn't really solved, it just changed form.” (The parties in the lawsuit are currently in mediation.)

Minneapolis has become the center of attention on racial issues because of its policing problems, but the city is also illustrative of a larger issue. Because of policy decisions made at the federal, state and local levels, it, like many places in America, has become more segregated, not less, over the past three decades. It's a major reason Black Americans have been left behind in the nation's economic growth.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment among Black people in the U.S. was far higher than among white people (6.0% vs. 3.1% in January), and



People wait outside the Kentucky Career Center, which assists the unemployed, on June 19 in Frankfort

median household incomes were substantially lower (\$40,258 vs. \$68,145 as of 2017). As the outbreak exploded, this disparity continued: unemployment among Black workers rose to 16.8% in May, from 16.7% in April, as white unemployment fell to 12.4% from 14.2%.

The numbers reflect the long-term consequences of segregation, which has contributed to denying Black Americans the jobs, salaries and other opportunities that are key to upward mobility. “If you live in a segregated neighborhood, every single bad thing in the world happens to you: you don't get a loan for housing, and the schools lead to jail,” says Myron Orfield, a law professor at the Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity at the University of Minnesota who has extensively documented the resegregation of the Twin Cities. “If you go to an integrated neighborhood, none of these things happen.”

In the Twin Cities, the number of schools in which more than 90% of students are people of color increased from 21 in 1998 to 102 in 2018. The region re-

versed its commitment to housing integration too, Orfield says, abandoning a plan created in the 1970s that required suburbs to provide a “fair share” of affordable housing. The Twin Cities built 73% of new subsidized housing in the suburbs from 1971 to 1979. But from 2002 to 2011, 92% of subsidized very-low-income housing was built in the central cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

OF COURSE, segregation is not just a Twin Cities problem. It worsened in schools nationwide after legal decisions in the 1990s allowed hundreds of school districts to be released from court-ordered desegregation plans created in the wake of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision. By 2016, 18.2% of public schools were 90% to 100% nonwhite, compared with 5.7%



of schools in 1988, according to the Civil Rights Project at UCLA.

Today, housing in many regions is also as segregated as it was decades ago. Subsidized housing has been concentrated in high-poverty neighborhoods, while affluent suburbs passed zoning laws blocking low-income housing.

Roxanne O'Brien has seen the effects of this firsthand. Her neighborhood, which is majority Black, saw a spike in foreclosure rates from 2004 to 2008, driven primarily by the large number of subprime loans. O'Brien says her mother lost her home to foreclosure. Her two eldest children attended Nellie Stone Johnson elementary school, which according to the lawsuit was 96% children of color; 93% of students received free or reduced-price lunch. The lawsuit says public schools like Nellie Stone Johnson deprived children of extracurricular activities, science equipment, art classes, computers and other "necessities and accoutrements of an adequate education."

One thing the public-school system did have was cops known as school-

VIEWPOINT

IN DEFENSE OF VIRTUE SIGNALING

BY JAMIL ZAKI AND MINA CIKARA

The killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Rayshard Brooks offer new reminders of ongoing anti-Black violence and have outraged millions. This time, though, calls for racial justice have spread further than usual. Public sentiment has changed dramatically—in two weeks, American voters' support for Black Lives Matter increased as much as it did in nearly the previous two years.

Symbolic change is also surging. Statues of bigots and slavers have toppled from Antwerp to Virginia. NASCAR banned Confederate flags, and the television show *Cops* was canceled. Virtually every major company has released statements on antiracism.

Some of these displays seem authentic; others ring hollow. Consider companies that tweet out "Black Lives Matter" but have 100% white corporate leadership, or the NFL commissioner—who released a statement condemning racism but did not name Colin Kaepernick.

In the context of anti-racism, shallow support like this is called optical allyship. More broadly, it is one flavor of virtue signaling. Since this term was coined in 2015, people have used it to shame others for moral grandstanding: advertising their moral

positions for the purpose of self-promotion. This sort of virtue signaling seems like selfishness covered in a thin shell of goodness, a way to score social points rather than by doing the work of real reform.

It's critical to question people whose most radical act is temporarily changing their profile picture. It's critical they follow their words with action; the time for talk has passed. But focusing solely on virtue signalers obscures their most important role. Like radio waves, the signals they send are received by someone, and those receivers matter too.

Two key insights about social behavior are relevant here. First, people conform to others' actions and opinions; they often say what others say and do as others do. Second, when it comes to many issues, most people don't know what most people think—meaning that conformity involves a surprising amount of guesswork. Imagine 100 individuals in a pitch-black gym, each trying to join the rest of the crowd in a chaotic multiplayer game of Marco Polo. People will gravitate toward whoever they can hear, clumping around the loudest voices. Opinions can work this way: when a particular viewpoint gets

a lot of attention, people assume it's popular and shift toward it. We receive signals, and are changed by them.

As social norms shift, individuals shift with them: adopting popular opinions and behaviors, and dropping ones that fall out of style. Norms are especially powerful as they gain steam.

This clarifies why signaling is so important. Not every person tweeting support for a righteous cause will follow through. But no matter their motives, when many people speak out, their voices have a powerful effect on receivers. The past few weeks have made it clear that anyone opposed to racial justice is indeed in the minority. Collective outrage has become a social norm; coupled with the leadership of local organizers, it has yielded a phenomenal groundswell.

We can and should use people's signals as anchors, holding them accountable for acting accordingly. But we should also realize the power that signals have in and of themselves, in helping people locate one another on the path to change.

Zaki is a professor of psychology at Stanford University and author of The War for Kindness; Cikara is a professor of psychology at Harvard University

VIEWPOINT

SYMBOLIC GESTURES OF SUPPORT AREN'T ENOUGH

BY PAMELA NEWKIRK

For 8 min. 46 sec., “I can’t breathe,” the plaintive refrain of a prone and pleading George Floyd, commanded the screen of a ViacomCBS video. Amid nationwide protests after Floyd’s death and polls showing widespread support for Black Lives Matter, the video was among hundreds of corporate efforts to co-opt a rallying cry of the movement. Leaders in the arts, finance, publishing, fashion, entertainment and sports proclaimed, “Black lives matter,” participated in #BlackOutTuesday and pledged millions of dollars to groups devoted to racial justice.

Largely left unspoken is how many of these institutions routinely exclude or marginalize people of color. Black people, who make up 13% of the U.S. population, represent just 3% of workers at the top 75 tech firms and 1.8% of law partners. Between 1985 and 2014, the proportion of Black men in management at U.S. companies with 100 or more employees crept from 3% to 3.3%. And while people of color are roughly 40% of the population, they make up around 4% of *Fortune* 500 CEOs.

Rather than diversifying their workforces, boards and leadership teams, many institutions have financed pricey diversity efforts that con-

sistently fail to increase racial representation. For instance, Facebook, which on June 1 pledged \$10 million to organizations that combat racial inequity, has devoted millions to diversity initiatives, to little avail. Its latest diversity report shows that the proportion of Black and Hispanic employees combined went from 8.4% in 2018 to 9% in 2019. Instead of investing in more studies and anti-bias training, the tech industry could enlist the growing number of Black and Latinx graduates with computer-science and engineering degrees, and redirect resources to underserved urban schools.

Institutions should conduct audits of employee demographics along racial and gender lines and across job categories to detect and disrupt patterns of bias that have metastasized in unequal hiring, salaries, promotions and, in the case of cultural organizations, offensive iconography. They should also set timelines and incentivize diversity the same way they do profits and innovation. Research shows that greater racial diversity would improve both.

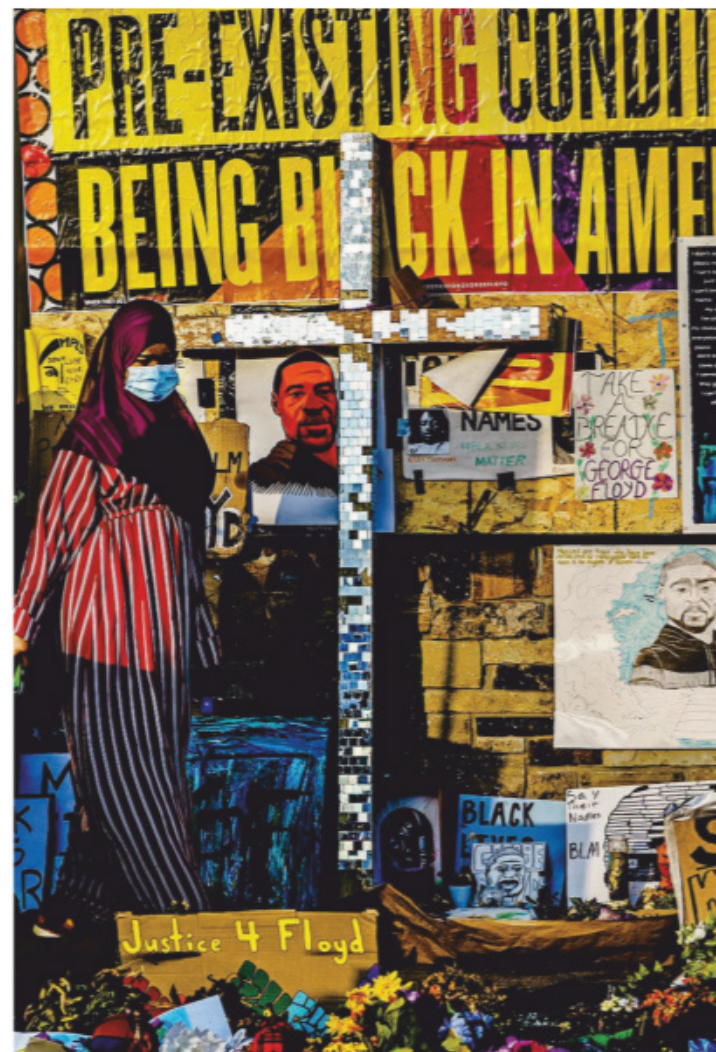
On June 4, *Vogue* editor Anna Wintour emailed colleagues, saying the magazine had not “found enough ways to elevate and give space to Black

editors, writers, photographers, designers and other creators” and “made mistakes too, publishing images or stories that have been hurtful or intolerant.” Those oversights are all too common in every influential field.

Racial injustice is not an abstraction, and institutions can root it out in their midst. But this requires an honest encounter with our airbrushed history, pervasive racial illiteracy and systemic inequities. It is not enough for NFL commissioner Roger Goodell to condemn “systematic oppression of Black people,” or apologize for not listening to players earlier. He must reassess practices that have allowed coaches and executives to remain overwhelmingly white in a league in which players are nearly 70% Black.

The lightning speed with which Confederate statues are toppling and police reforms are being made illustrates that achieving racial justice does not require more time and strategies—only will. The gradualism that has defined racial progress must be superseded by the swift systemic change that a wide swath of America finally agrees is overdue.

Newkirk is a professor of journalism at NYU and the author of Diversity, Inc.: The Failed Promise of a Billion-Dollar Business



resource officers, provided by the Minneapolis police department. (The school district recently announced it was canceling its contract with the police department in the wake of George Floyd’s death.) O’Brien’s son, J’siris, now 17, felt targeted by these officers, and once got sprayed with Mace by officers as they tried to break up a fight, she says.

A Minneapolis school district spokesman said he could not comment on individual students for privacy reasons, but added the district is working with the state to create equity in education.

SEGREGATION DOESN’T STOP at school. For much of the 20th century, if you were not white, it was nearly impossible to get hired for most well-paying jobs, and if you did, the salary was almost certain to be lower than what white workers received. Even in the early 2000s, when economists sent out fictitious résumés to employers, they found that those with “white” names like Emily and Greg got 50% more callbacks than those with “African-American-sounding” names like Lakisha and Jamal.

Black Americans trying to build wealth through the most traditionally



▲
A memorial to George Floyd on June 13 near the site where Floyd died in Minneapolis

American means—homeownership—have faced additional obstacles. The Federal Housing Administration refused for decades to guarantee mortgages in and near majority-Black neighborhoods. Black families are still denied mortgages at a higher rate than white families; in 2017 the gap between Black and white homeownership was the highest in 50 years.

Audreyia Thibodeaux, who lives near Houston, has traced her family history back centuries. Her ancestors couldn't accumulate wealth because of the dearth of opportunities—they were sharecroppers and servants, she says. When her grandmother's family was able to buy a three-bedroom home, the entire family crowded in, including Thibodeaux's many aunts and uncles; it was where Thibodeaux—who learned recently that George Floyd was an aunt's nephew—lived until 1995.

The cycle has been repeated through the generations. Thibodeaux's parents

bought a home in a segregated area of Hempstead, Texas, in 1996, but at a high interest rate—10%. At the time, average interest rates on mortgages were closer to 8%. Thibodeaux attributes her parents' high rate to racism, and surveys support her contention. Black Americans typically have a harder time getting approved for home loans than applicants of other races, and they are often targeted by high-risk lenders who charge higher rates.

Thibodeaux's parents are still paying off the loan and couldn't help her pay for college, so Thibodeaux took out loans to get a college degree and a master's degree in counseling. She now owes \$145,000 for her education. She was laid off from a counseling job in November. "Black life is hard—our stress levels are different, our anxiety levels are different, we were legally stripped of wealth," she says. "We should be a protected class, with policies and guidelines that speak to us as a group, and then maybe we can move this country forward."

Government efforts to ameliorate wealth disparities have been largely ineffective and in some cases have heightened segregation. In 1986, as part of the Tax Reform Act, the federal government created a Low-Income Housing Tax Credit to incentivize creation of affordable housing, which could help build more diverse neighborhoods where Black and white families alike had access to good schools and jobs. But it let states decide how to assign those tax credits, and many did not prioritize integration. They instead concentrated low-income housing in poor neighborhoods, worsening segregation.

Where we live as children follows us into adulthood. A landmark study in 2018 of 20 million children born from 1978 to 1983 found that Black boys who had grown up in neighborhoods with low poverty, low levels of racial bias and high rates of fathers present had significantly higher incomes in adulthood than those who did not come from these neighborhoods. But only about 5% of Black children in the study grew up in such conditions, researchers found.

Segregation also restricts access to good jobs, making it harder for Black families to build wealth. As the nation invested in highways, making it easier for affluent families and big employers

to move to the suburbs starting in the 1960s and 1970s, Black workers were left behind. A few years ago, I talked to a man named Brastell Travis, who was 21 and living on Chicago's South Side. It's where the Acme Steel plant and General Mills factory once provided job opportunities, until both closed. Despite holding a certificate in welding, Travis couldn't find jobs in his field because they were all in the suburbs, a place he couldn't get to without a car. Instead, he took a job stocking groceries.

His predicament helps explain why almost no progress has been made in reducing income and wealth inequalities between Black and white households over the past 70 years. The median wealth—essentially the net worth—of Black households in 2016 was \$15,000. For white households, it was \$140,000.

THERE ARE SOME EFFORTS under way to help Black Americans buy homes in diverse neighborhoods. Community land trusts, for instance, let low-income families buy homes on land owned by nonprofits, which vow to use the land for the good of the community. This lets homeowners gain equity and ensures that the property remains affordable for future buyers.

But it will take generations to eradicate the wealth gap that America's long history of segregation has created. Parker Gilkesson, 27, grew up hearing stories of family members like her grandfather, who tried to buy a home in Bowie, Md., in the 1950s but could not find anyone willing to sell to a Black person. As an adult, Gilkesson was determined to not let history repeat itself. Besides, rents were rising in Washington, D.C., where she works, and she worried that she'd soon get displaced.

Through the Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America, which helps nontraditional buyers, Gilkesson was able to buy in Baltimore. She is proud to have achieved the dream that so many of her ancestors were denied. But even Gilkesson's success is testament to the factors that continue to segregate America. Her new home is in a predominantly Black neighborhood—the white or mixed neighborhoods, she says, were way out of her price range. —*With reporting by* ALEJANDRO DE LA GARZA □

ESSAY

THE COUNTRY THAT REFUSED TO CHANGE

BY EDDIE S. GLAUDE JR.

Police violence against Black people in this country is as American as bald cypress trees and Southern magnolias. In each generation we have to experience the haunting ritual of a Black family grieving in public over the loss of a loved one at the hands of the police.

Recent years have been particularly tough. Cell-phone videos have brought us a torrent of cruel images of Black death. Perhaps that is the source of the intensity of our current moment.

The videos of George Floyd and Rayshard Brooks dying have combined with the vulnerability caused by COVID-19 and the feeling that the country is broken to bring us all to the brink of madness and, apparently, to the precipice of significant change. An odd admixture, but an understandable consequence of our troubled times. We now face a moral reckoning: Americans have to decide whether this country will truly be a multiracial democracy or whether to merely tinker around the edges of our problems once again and remain decidedly racist and unequal.

We have been here before. Martin Luther King Jr. and countless others risked everything to persuade the country to live up to its stated ideals and to

rid itself of the insidious view that white people mattered more than others. They marched. They suffered the billy stick, fire hoses and police dogs. They watched as friends and fellow travelers ended up at the bottom of the Mississippi River. And they witnessed King's dream shattered to pieces like windowpanes facing hurricane-force winds.

America's betrayal of the civil rights movement gave way to urban explosions across the country, declarations of Black Power and interminable debates about the slogan's meaning. White politicians stoked white resentments as the "silent" majority shouted that they were the true victims; rioted in hard hats against anti-Vietnam War protesters; violently resisted forced busing; and eventually elected Ronald Reagan, a man as notorious among Black activists as the segregationist Alabama Governor George Wallace. More than a decade after King's murder, Reagan's election represented



**BALDWIN
BLOOMS**
ACRYLIC ON
CANVAS
**CHARLY
PALMER**

a stark reassertion of the value gap—the idea that white lives matter more than others? In that moment of reckoning, the country made its choice and sealed Black America's fate for two more generations.

James Baldwin, the great American writer and critic, witnessed it all. He traveled the South as early as 1957 and saw the promise of the movement's early days. He experienced the rage caused by betrayal and clenched his teeth as the country doubled down on its ugly commitments. As he said in his last ever interview, with Quincy Troupe, in 1987, "Ronald Reagan represent[ed] the justification of their history, their sense of innocence ... the justification, in short, of being white." With cancer ravaging his body in his last years, Baldwin was a despairing witness desperate to tell the story of how the country had arrived at such a moment. As the nation today faces yet another moral reckoning, it would do us well to listen to Jimmy tell the story of how we failed when faced with a similar choice, and how we can still muster the faith to begin again.

IN 1979, BALDWIN WANTED to write an essay about the South for the *New Yorker*. He would retrace his footsteps from his 1957 trip and tell the story of what had happened since those fateful days. It would be an essay about fractured memories, the trauma of loss (of the murders of Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and King) and America's betrayal—an extension of what he had explored seven years earlier in his powerful book *No Name in the Street*. Then, Baldwin had sought to pick up the pieces after the assassination of King in 1968, which threw him into a deep depression. He attempted suicide in 1969 and for a period found himself flailing. *No Name* represented his effort to make sense of what had happened and to announce his survival.

No Name in the Street is an extraordinary achievement. If *The Fire Next Time*, Baldwin's powerful polemic published in 1963, was prophetic, *No Name* was his own reckoning. It was his answer to how we might respond to the collapse of the Black-freedom movement and to the country's failures. At the level of form, the book mirrors the fragmenting of memory by trauma. He anticipates the beginnings of mass incarceration and offers a

scathing criticism of the way the criminal-justice system crushed Black people with intention. "If one really wishes to know how justice is administered in a country," he writes, "one does not question the policemen, the lawyers, the judges, or the protected members of the middle class. One goes to the unprotected ... and listens to their testimony."

As Baldwin imagined it, this essay would take up these themes once again and extend the account through the decade of the '70s. He would show that the true "horror is that America ... changes all the time, without ever changing at all." Baldwin, however, never wrote the essay. Instead, he worked with an English

THE CURRENT CRISIS AROUND POLICING AND THE PROTESTS IN THE STREETS CONFRONT US WITH THE UGLINESS OF WHO WE ARE AS A NATION

filmmaker, Dick Fontaine, and his partner, Pat Hartley, to produce a documentary film about his return to the South. *I Heard It Through the Grapevine* would capture on film the tragic aftertimes of the Black-freedom struggle on the eve of the election of Reagan in 1980.

The film opens with Baldwin sitting in his brother's apartment looking over photographs of the civil rights movement. As he turns the page, we hear the voice-over of his whiskey- and cigarette-coated baritone:

"It was 1957 when I left Paris for Little Rock, Ark. 1957. This is 1980, and how many years is that? Nearly a quarter of a century. And what has happened to all those people—children I knew then, and what has happened to this country

and what does this mean for the world? What does this mean for me? Medgar, Malcolm, Martin dead. These men were my friends ... But there is another roll call of unknown, invisible people who did not die, but whose lives were smashed on the freedom road."

In some ways the film is a return to the scene of the crime—an exploration of the heroic efforts of those Baldwin described elsewhere as "spiritual aristocrats" and the tragic consequence (for them and for us) that followed from the choices made by a nation that refused to change.

As I was researching my new book, *Begin Again*, I visited the Harvard Film Archive, where the Dick Fontaine Collection is housed. I was able to examine the research and production materials for the film and read transcriptions of interviews that were left on the cutting-room floor. One interview stood out, and I am still haunted by the intensity of the exchange.

At the historic Dooky Chase's restaurant in New Orleans, Baldwin sat down with civil rights leader Ben Chavis. In 1972, with nine others, Chavis was wrongfully convicted on charges of arson and conspiracy in Wilmington, N.C., in the midst of a campaign to desegregate the city's schools. The group would become known as the Wilmington 10, and between them they were sentenced to a total of 282 years in prison. After Jimmy Carter was elected President, Baldwin wrote an open letter in the *New York Times* urging him to rectify the injustice. "I am not so much trying to bring to your mind the suffering of a despised people ... as the state and the fate of a nation of which you are the elected leader." North Carolina Governor James Hunt commuted their sentence in 1978 but refused to pardon them. Baldwin sat down with Chavis some two years later and asked him to tell his story.

As Chavis recounted the traumatic story of the police and the Ku Klux Klan in Wilmington, I felt the rage in Baldwin's responses leaping from the page. Jimmy kept describing what was happening and what had happened as genocide. Then he offered words that seem as relevant today as they were then: "What we are dealing with really is that for Black people in this country there is no legal code at all. We're still governed, if that is the word I want, by the slave code. That's the nature of the



crisis. [Y]ou haven't got to have anything resembling proof to bring any charge whatever against a difficult, bad nigger."

WHEN I SPOKE to Chavis in early June about the interview, he said you could see the rage in Baldwin's eyes as he spoke. "You know, Jimmy didn't just express himself with his pen and his voice. His eyes damn near started protruding."

Fontaine and Hartley didn't include the scene in the finished film. Chavis told me that he didn't know the transcript existed, and that he has never seen the documentary. But he had an idea why the directors might have left the interview on the cutting-room floor. With Reagan's election, Chavis recalled, "There was a lot of hopelessness in Black America at the time." And Fontaine and the film crew seemed to disagree with what he and Baldwin were saying or, more accurately, how they were saying it. "At one point the film crew cut off the camera," Chavis said, "and said, 'I think we need to take a break.' Jimmy said, 'No we don't!'" By the time they'd wrapped the interview,

▲
A protester holds a candle following Rayshard Brooks' death in Atlanta, on June 15

Chavis said with a mischievous chuckle, Fontaine and Hartley "were physically and emotionally exhausted."

In the end, *I Heard It Through the Grapevine* was Baldwin's attempt to tell the story of the ruins—of what happened after the country refused to change. He was angry, but he still held on to the faith that we could be otherwise. As he told Chavis, "They have never confessed their crimes, and they don't know how to confess their crimes ... If you can't confess, you can't be forgiven, and if you can't be forgiven, you can't get past it. That is the sin against the Holy Ghost ... The only way to get past it is to confess."

Baldwin and Chavis' conversation took place as white America slammed the door shut on the opportunity for the fundamental transformation the civil rights movement had occasioned. The Reagan years would undo so much. We

are now facing what those years have wrought. The ghosts still haunt, but we now have a chance again to choose a new America. We have some difficult days ahead. The current crisis around policing and the protests in the streets confront us with the ugliness of who we are as a nation. As Baldwin knew, that ugliness cuts deep—to the marrow of the bone. In such moments, in fact throughout our days, Baldwin insisted that we tell ourselves the truth about what we have done and what we are doing. We cannot stick our heads back in the sand or seek comfort in our national illusions or our so-called innocence. This moral reckoning requires confession and repair. If we fail this time, and it may well be our last chance, ours will be the latest addition to the ruins.

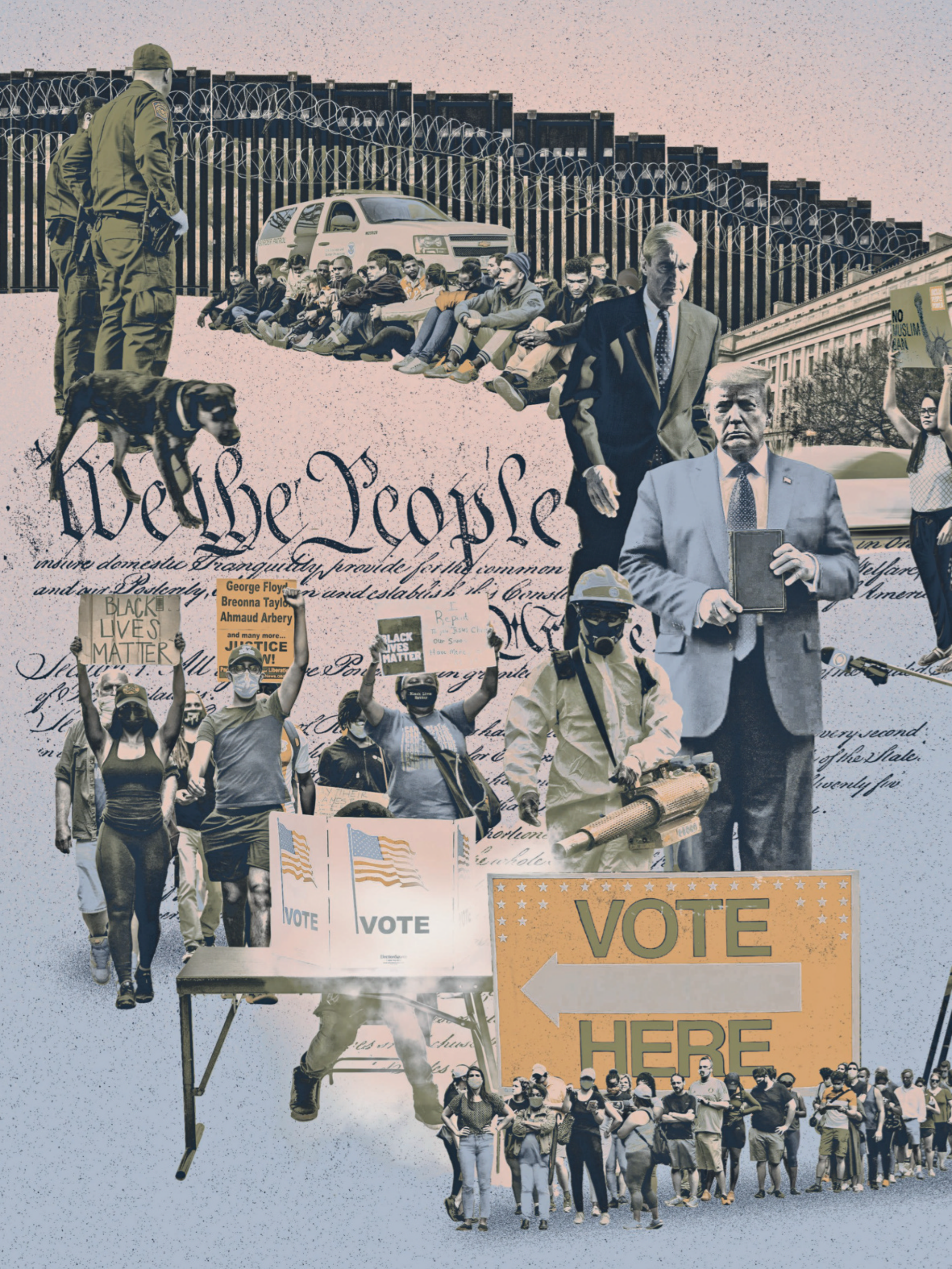
*Glaude is the author of the forthcoming **Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own**. He is the James S. McDonnell Distinguished University Professor at Princeton University*



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and many more...
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Trench Warfare

**By battling Trump in court—
and winning—a nonprofit
shores up democracy**

By Molly Ball

BLACK-CLAD SECURITY FORCES ARMED WITH RIOT SHIELDS advance on a mass of peaceful demonstrators. Rubber bullets and gas canisters fly. The embattled head of state, flanked by his top prosecutor and general, emerges from his estate to stake a claim for order. The scene looked like something out of a banana republic, but it unfolded in Washington's Lafayette Square on June 1. And soon after, an obscure nonprofit got a call from a state attorney general's office, asking the perennial questions of the Donald Trump era: *Can he do that? How can we stop that from happening here?*

These are questions the nonprofit Protect Democracy was founded to answer. When the call came in (from a state the group declines to name), its lawyers got to work on an analysis of the Insurrection Act of 1807, aiming to equip local leaders to fight back if the Administration seeks to send in the military over their objections, as President Trump has threatened to do. And they began rounding up bipartisan signatories for a statement on behalf of Department of Justice veterans decrying Attorney General Bill Barr's conduct.

Since the beginning of the Trump presidency, Protect Democracy has cast itself in the role its name suggests: defender of America's system of government against the threat of authoritarianism. Started by two former Obama White House lawyers who were concerned that the new President would undermine the rule of law, the group has filed lawsuits to block Trump's retaliation against critics and to curtail his use of emergency powers. It has organized groups of civil servants to speak out against what they say is Trump's politicization of law enforcement. And it has built bipartisan congressional support to rein in presidential powers.

Protect Democracy has notched some big wins. The group's

ILLUSTRATION
BY MAX-O-MATIC
FOR TIME

lawsuits invalidated Trump's emergency declaration for the southern border and blocked the Administration from making it harder for low-income green-card holders to become citizens. They successfully argued in New York federal court that the President's retaliation against media outlets may violate the Constitution, and helped ensure that a defamation lawsuit brought by a former mistress could proceed in state court. Their advocacy has gotten states to reform election procedures and Congress to act to limit Executive power.

It's an impressive record for a three-year-old startup. "They are innovative, imaginative, energetic and extremely effective," says Benjamin Wittes, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and editor in chief of Lawfare, whose work with the group led to the release of the Watergate prosecutors' road map that had been sealed for more than 40 years.

The June 1 spectacle at Lafayette Square seems to have brought some reticent figures closer to Protect Democracy's view of things. Former President George W. Bush and former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis were among those who spoke out in favor of the protesters. "When you see military helicopters above the streets of D.C., using tactics from war zones, using tear gas on peaceful protesters exercising their First Amendment rights," says Ian Bassin, co-founder and executive director of Protect Democracy, "these things so match what people imagine when they think of the toppling of democracies that it struck a chord."

From the beginning, however, Protect Democracy has argued the onset of authoritarianism in America would come not with a flash-bang grenade but with the whimper of institutions gradually succumbing to the erosion of long-standing norms. Ideas that seemed far-fetched three years ago have become routine: a President who declares himself immune to congressional or judicial oversight; whose Attorney General seeks to exempt the President's friends from responsibility while prosecuting his political enemies; whose lawyers argue in open court that he could, in fact, shoot someone on Fifth Avenue without consequence. The events of recent days appear to validate the group's concerns, with Trump's former National Security Adviser accusing him of corrupting the electoral process and the Administration firing a U.S. prosecutor whose office was investigating the President's close associates. Trump continues to sow doubt about the integrity of the upcoming election, recently declaring on Twitter that it would be "the most RIGGED Election in our nations history."

As the election nears, Protect Democracy is focused on securing the Nov. 3 contests against foreign and domestic meddling. The group, which is officially nonpartisan, is funded by foundations and individual donors, including the LinkedIn founder Reid Hoffman and Boston-based investor Seth Klarman, who

before Trump was the GOP's largest donor in New England. Protect Democracy is lobbying and advising states on election procedure with an eye to ensuring a legitimate result. Yet the group is also looking beyond Trump, seeing him as a symptom of a system whose weakened defenses leave it open to abuse, and figuring out what can be done to strengthen American democracy in the future, regardless of who is in the White House next year.

Protect Democracy has organized former Justice Department officials to speak out against Barr, left, and President Trump

IF YOU BELIEVED your government was slouching toward dictatorship, what would you do about it? The answer, to judge from

Protect Democracy's routine, can seem mundane. On a recent Monday, 55 people are assembled as squares on a screen in a Google Meet video chat. Long before COVID-19 turned nearly all white collar workers into video-chat adepts, Protect Democracy was a work-from-anywhere organization, its 66 employees scattered from coast to coast. (Bassin is based in the Bay Area, co-founder Justin Florence in Boston; the group maintains a lease on a WeWork space in D.C.)

But the topics on such calls reach to the highest levels of government. "I'm working on a letter calling on the Justice Department inspector general to open an investigation into Barr's involvement in Lafayette Square," Justin Vail, a lawyer for Protect Democracy, tells the team. Vail, a former Obama White House and Democratic Senate aide, tells the group he's assembled more than a thousand signatories, former federal prosecutors from Republican and Democratic Administrations.

These sorts of current and former government insiders are disdained by the President and his allies as "the deep state"—petty bureaucrats dedicated to undermining Trump's necessary disruption of the status quo. But a competent, nonpolitical civil service is an important component of democracy. In America, officials from the President to the lowest-ranking soldier swear an oath pledging loyalty not to any ruler, Administration or party, but to the Constitution itself.

For many civil servants, that nonpartisanship has traditionally extended from one Administration to the next, and even past their time in government. "It's hard to overstate how unusual—basically unprecedented—it is to have former career officials speaking out in this way," says Ben Berwick, who spent six years in the DOJ's Civil Division during the Obama Administration. He left a few months after Trump took office, and became one of Protect Democracy's earliest hires. The group has now massed hundreds of DOJ alums on a series of letters like the one Vail is preparing. Among the most high-profile was one stating that any ordinary American who

Protecting democracy



Ian Bassin, 44,
Protect Democracy
co-founder and
executive director;
associate White House
counsel, 2009–2011



Justin Florence, 41,
Protect Democracy
co-founder and
legal director;
special assistant and
associate counsel
to the President,
2013–2014



committed the acts described in Robert Mueller’s Russia report would have been prosecuted for obstruction of justice, and another deploring Barr’s extraordinary move to request a lighter sentence for former Trump campaign aide Roger Stone.

The group says such letters have brought concrete changes. “We have seen [current Justice officials] resign, withdraw from cases, object and file internal complaints” as a result, Vail says. “It’s a reminder that people on the outside support them having the courage to stand up and continue to work with integrity.” As the group was preparing its 2,500-signatory letter on the Stone case, Barr publicly distanced himself from the President—a sign, the group says, that he was feeling pressure in his ranks. The department subsequently backtracked on its sentencing recommendation. On June 23, a former prosecutor testified to Congress that Stone’s softened sentence had been the result of “heavy pressure from the highest levels of the Department of Justice to cut Stone a break” because of “his relationship to the President.”

Protect Democracy’s founders, Bassin and Florence, both served in the White House counsel’s office during the Obama Administration. By the time Trump took office, both had left government and moved on to other things—Bassin to international antipoverty work, Florence to a comfortable gig at a top law firm. But as the new President’s actions set off alarm bells, the two began corresponding. They realized that there was no single organization doing what they were talking about: safe-

guarding basic principles, like checks and balances, and the idea that no one is above the law, against a perceived threat to democracy itself.

Bassin and Florence began consulting scholars who study authoritarianism abroad, hoping on some level that experts would say they were out of their minds. But the scholars shared the same worries. “The scary thing was that no one rolled their eyes; nobody said, ‘Oh, come on, really, you’re being hysterical,’” Bassin says.

Experts pointed to places like Poland and Turkey, where authoritarian leaders won elections and turned their countries into what scholars of the region describe as “Potemkin democracies” by curtailing civil rights and undermining popular control of the government. “Democracies today die in a much more subtle fashion than they used to,” says Harvard political scientist Steven Levitsky, co-author

of the book *How Democracies Die*. “It’s pretty rare to see the generals all at once seize power, dissolve the constitution, and imprison dissidents and the press. Instead you see elected leaders gradually—imperceptibly to many citizens—transform the machinery of government to protect their friends and harass and punish their enemies.”

Bassin recalls one early, telling example. Under Obama, one of his jobs had been to advise Executive Branch officials on how to follow rules set out in thick binders and handed down from Administration to Administration starting with President Eisenhower’s in the 1950s. Many weren’t laws so much as norms and

**‘DEMOCRACIES TODAY DIE
IN A MUCH MORE SUBTLE
FASHION THAN THEY USED TO.’**

—STEVEN LEVITSKY, Harvard political scientist

Nation

codes intended to embody the spirit of public service. Among the precepts, for example, is a 14-page memo dating to the Carter Administration that lays out specific rules for when and how White House officials could contact the Justice Department, to avoid the perception of politics influencing law enforcement. In February 2017, then White House chief of staff Reince Priebus contacted the FBI to ask the agency to publicly refute a *New York Times* report about contacts between Trump associates and Russian agents, and the White House openly acknowledged he had made the contact. It was already clear back then—before Trump fired FBI Director James Comey, before Mueller began his investigation, before Ukraine and impeachment and everything else—that the new Administration was not interested in the binders and memos, the rules and norms, that had prevailed for generations.

Bassin and Florence wanted their organization to be bipartisan. “It really is something that Republicans and Democrats, all people of good faith, should be able to agree on, that the President is not a monarch who is above accountability of any kind,” says Jamila Benkato, who joined the group after clerking for a federal judge in California. But most of the group’s early hires were liberals. Even Trump-skeptical conservatives wanted to give the new President a chance to grow into the job. And the group has struggled to establish a public identity that transcends its liberal roots.

Yet the mission has attracted some Republicans. Protect Democracy’s employees include a former GOP presidential campaign operative and consultant for the Koch brothers’ political outfit; a former clerk to the conservative federal judge Edith Brown Clement; and a former GOP Senate staffer and writer for the conservative *Weekly Standard*. In March, the group assembled 37 former Republican members of Congress and Administration officials to file a friend-of-the-court brief in *Trump v. Vance*, arguing that the President’s accountants must comply with a subpoena for documents related to his hush-money payments to alleged mistresses.

“From a conservative standpoint, it’s clear to me that the President is offending the rule of law generally and the Constitution specifically,” says Stuart Gerson, who headed the DOJ’s Civil Division under President George H.W. Bush. Gerson worked with Protect Democracy on its successful lawsuit in a conservative court in Texas, which thwarted Trump’s attempt to build his border wall without permission or funding from Congress. “I’m an apostle of the unitary executive—I argued all the war-powers cases in the Bush Administration,” Gerson



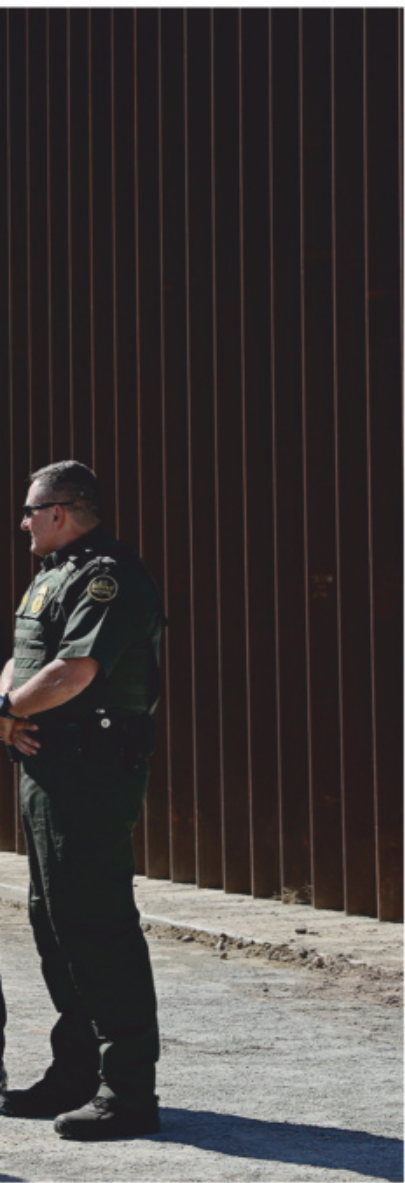
▲
Trump tours a section of the border wall in Otay Mesa, Calif., on Sept. 18, 2019

says of the idea that the Constitution gives the President expansive powers over the workings of the Executive Branch. “But that [doctrine] puts the President in charge of the Executive Branch, not the other two.”

SOMETIME IN THE COMING WEEKS, the Supreme Court is set to rule on *Trump v. Vance* and two related cases having to do with the validity of subpoenas into the President’s private conduct. The cases will test the idea that no one is above the law, by resolving whether a President can be investigated and held accountable for any activities, even those that precede or have nothing to do with the office. Protect Democracy’s advocates say the cases are part of a broader set of questions about presidential power, which they have been fighting to constrain.

One of Trump’s first moves as President was the creation of an election-integrity commission, which sought to examine allegations of voting abuse, like his baseless claim that the 2016 election was tainted by millions of illegal votes. Working with other advocacy groups, Protect Democracy sued based on a technicality—the Administration’s failure to follow the Paperwork Reduction Act, which mandates the procedures for establishing such commissions—and informed states they were not required to provide the Administration with the voter data it sought. The commission, Protect Democracy argued, represented not a good-faith effort to secure the vote but an attempt to sow doubt based on a nonexistent problem. Within a few months, the commission was shuttered.

Later that year, when Trump pardoned Joe Arpaio, the former Maricopa County, Arizona, sheriff convicted of contempt of court for racially profiling Latinos, Protect Democracy filed



a brief arguing the pardon was unconstitutional. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit agreed to appoint a private attorney to argue the matter. And when the Administration released a report claiming that immigrants were responsible for most acts of terrorism—information Trump cited in his 2017 address to Congress—the group sued based on an obscure statute, the Information Quality Act, that’s typically used by Big Business to dispute environmental regulations. It was a legally creative approach to a vexing question: If the government decides to simply make up statistics, does the public have any recourse? While that litigation is still pending, the Justice Department admitted in court that the terrorism report was inaccurate.

When the former *Apprentice* contestant Summer Zervos sued Trump for defamation in 2017 after he called her a liar for ac-

cusings him of sexual assault, Protect Democracy filed the only outside brief, arguing the President was not immune from civil lawsuits. It was a little-noticed case, but one the group thought could establish a dangerous precedent. In ruling Zervos’ suit could go forward, the court drew extensively on Protect Democracy’s arguments. It is the first time a court has ruled the President is subject to civil lawsuits in state court.

In October 2018, Protect Democracy filed another lawsuit on behalf of PEN America, a journalists’ organization, arguing that Trump was violating the First Amendment by revoking press credentials to punish journalists and threatening media businesses’ bottom lines: stalling the proposed merger of CNN’s parent company, raising postal rates on Amazon (whose founder, Jeff Bezos, owns the *Washington Post*) and threatening to revoke broadcast licenses. In March, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York ruled the suit could go forward.

OVER THE COURSE of this presidency, Protect Democracy has broadened its purview, on the theory that threats to American democracy do not begin or end with Trump, and that many of the weaknesses he is exploiting predate him. Presidents of both parties have steadily expanded executive power, while Congress has willingly ceded more and more of its constitutional authorities. Protect Democracy has worked with both parties in Congress to reclaim some power from the Executive Branch, teaming up

with GOP Senator Mike Lee on a bill putting new limitations on presidential emergency powers. The legislation advanced out of committee on a bipartisan 11-2 vote. Protect Democracy is also collaborating with advocates who have been working for years to reassert congressional authority over war powers; the group filed lawsuits to force the Administration to release the memos justifying its military strikes on Syrian chemical-weapons sites and the Iranian general Qasem Soleimani.

In 2018, Protect Democracy broke away from its federal work and intervened in recounts under way in two states, Georgia and Florida, where candidates were overseeing elections in which they were also competing. In Georgia, their lawsuit helped prompt gubernatorial candidate Brian Kemp to resign as secretary of state. Since then, the group has sought to find and fix weaknesses in voting systems, lobbying and advocating for new voting machines in South Carolina and Pennsylvania. It has also tackled voter suppression, using an old statute aimed at the Ku Klux Klan to stop a Trump ally from harassing Latino voters in Virginia and working with a North Carolina group, Forward Justice, to bring a lawsuit that would force the state to re-enfranchise felons.

More than a year ago, Protect Democracy formed a bipartisan election task force to examine such threats and recommend responses. Ironically, one of the crises they originally decided not to plan for was a potential pandemic. Now, as COVID-19 has thrown states’ election plans into doubt, the group has made a set of recommendations for moving forward with mail balloting and other changes.

For now, Protect Democracy says it wants to ensure that the November election is free and fair, producing a result that can be widely accepted as legitimate regardless of who wins. Whenever Trump leaves office, the group envisions a brief window for Congress to pass reforms, similar to the burst of legislation that followed President Nixon’s resignation. The organization has been gearing up for this with a “100 days agenda” of recommendations for the next President, including

changes to election systems, prohibitions on election interference and campaign-finance reform.

In a democracy, the people are the ultimate check on power. Protect Democracy’s central argument is that institutions don’t protect themselves; people have to be activated to use the tools the system provides. In a timely meta-

phor, the group’s leaders compare authoritarianism to a virus sweeping the globe: first you treat the patient by activating the body’s immune system to fight off the illness; over time, you formulate a vaccine to provide immunity in the future.

“When Ian and I first started talking about this, we thought it would be an organization that lasted however long Trump was in office, then folded up shop,” says Florence, the group’s co-founder and legal director. “What we’ve learned is that we’re seeing a moment that requires a generation-long response. Ultimately, we’ve got to rebuild our institutions to make our system more resistant to a future authoritarian-minded leader.” — *With reporting by* LESLIE DICKSTEIN *and* JOSH ROSENBERG □

THE INSTITUTIONS OF DEMOCRACY DON'T PROTECT THEMSELVES, THE GROUP SAYS



S I N K OR S W I M

*Disinfecting the pool area
at the newly reopened
Riu Concordia Hotel in
Mallorca's Platja de Palma*



EUROPE'S RECOVERY FROM COVID-19 DEPENDS ON THE RETURN OF SUMMER VACATIONS

**BY LISA ABEND/PALMA DE MALLORCA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAOLO VERZONE FOR TIME**

From the hotel terrace where he ate breakfast, Phil Pelzer could almost pretend nothing had changed. Yes, the *maitre d'* had aimed a temperature gun at his head before allowing him near the buffet. And he wouldn't usually serve himself eggs in gloves and a mask.

But the friendly waitresses still addressed him in halting German, and the sun still warmed his pale, tattoo-covered arms. For Pelzer, a plumber from Alsdorf, Germany, who has long taken his annual vacation on the Spanish island of Mallorca, the important things were still in place. "There's still sun, there's still sand," he said. "Maybe it's not quite so much fun as before, but it's still a holiday."

On that wan enthusiasm rests a continent's hopes. Pelzer and his family were among the 400 or so German tourists who traveled on June 15 to Mallorca as part of a pilot program run in collaboration between the tour company TUI and the Balearic Islands' regional government. It was originally conceived as a way for both the vacation hot spot and the tour company to test their preparedness to once again receive visitors after months of lockdown. But even before the Pelzers boarded the plane in Düsseldorf, Spain had decided it couldn't afford to wait to learn the results. On June 21, spurred by both economic necessity and its neighbors' rush to open, the Spanish government formally ended its state of emergency and opened its borders again to European tourists.

As much of Europe abandoned its

mandatory quarantines and followed suit, the pilot program was watched across the continent with acute interest and no little anxiety. TUI had sold out the two flights in a matter of hours. But would that level of interest be sustained? Would it be enough to offset the loss of American and Asian tourists whose return might still be months away? Would it be safe for both the visitors and the locals who received them? And would making them safe—with all the personal protective equipment and social distancing required—turn a relaxing break into something more closely akin to a hospital stay?

As Europe begins its recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, countries are attempting to find a middle ground between protecting public health from a virus that still poses a threat and reviving moribund economies. Perhaps no sector faces higher stakes than tourism. It was, after all, travel that supercharged the pandemic, allowing a virus to move from the markets of Wuhan, China, to the ski resorts of Italy, the conference halls of Germany, and the ports of Japan and California. And in the absence of a vaccine, it's clear that tourism's necessary components—not just its airplanes and cruise ships but also its hotels, restau-

rants, museums and festivals—remain important vectors for the virus's potential transmission.

Yet in Europe especially, tourism is also critical to the economy. In the 27 nations that make up the European Union, up to 11% of the collected GDP derives directly from tourism (compared with 2.6% in the U.S.). In Paris alone, tourism represents the single largest industry, bigger even than services or fashion, and the 38 million who visit the city annually keep nearly 12% of all working Parisians employed. "It's been a cliff, *vertigineux*," says Paris Deputy Mayor Jean-François Martins of the drop-off brought about by the lockdowns. "There will be millions and millions of Paris visitors missing from the beginning of the crisis until we get back to normal."

The pain stretches up and down the food chain, from stalwart airlines like Lufthansa and SAS that are teetering on the brink of bankruptcy to small companies like Athens Insiders, which organizes everything from afternoon tastings at Athens markets to weeklong archaeological tours. "When Greece locked down in mid-March, we had 100% cancellations," says Anthia Vlassopoulou, the CEO and a co-owner of the 18-person company. Because it caters primarily to American tourists, she doesn't expect any of them back until 2021. "We predict revenues will be down 90% for the year," Vlassopoulou says. "Our only hope is persuading our clients to postpone their trips rather than canceling them so that we don't have to refund their deposits."

Government bailouts and unemployment subsidies have kept many—though by no means all—enterprises on life support during these past few months, but as countries pull back assistance, the projections are dire. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, Europe is on track to lose 18.4 million tourism-related jobs and \$1 trillion in GDP in 2020. It might seem trivial in the context of a global health emergency, but finding ways for Europeans like Phil Pelzer and his family to safely enjoy a summer vacation could provide a lifeline to millions of people.

It could also be crucial to Europe's future. Just like the debt crisis of a decade ago, the coronavirus poses a threat to an already fragile European unity.



▲
German tourists arrive at the Riu Bravo Hotel in Platja de Palma during a pilot reopening on June 15

The economic and political bloc relies on multilateral cooperation, open borders and free movement of people—all of which were tossed out the window during the worst of the crisis. As they cautiously reopen, each European country is taking its own approach to border controls and health protocols. But rebuilding a tourist economy is something they must do together. If they succeed, European unity might just come out stronger.

AS THE CORONAVIRUS began to proliferate outside China, Europe was among the first places to feel its full impact. Although the first cases were detected in France, Italy quickly became an epicenter and the first European country to impose a draconian lockdown. There and in a few other countries like Spain,

France and the U.K., infection and mortality rates spiraled almost out of control. Other countries, like Germany, have had relatively high infection rates but managed to avoid the devastating rate of mortality through a combination of extensive testing and quick action. And then there are a handful of places like Denmark and Greece that, through a still mysterious combination of good policy and good luck, have managed to avoid the full brunt of the disease.

The majority of countries in Europe are now well past the peak of their outbreaks. During the spring, when it became clear that the summer season would be limited at best, many began

‘Maybe it’s not quite so fun as before, but it’s still a holiday.’

—PHIL PELZER, VACATIONER

investigating the creation of so-called corridors or bubbles that would allow citizens of areas that appeared to have the virus under control to travel safely. “The idea is to create ‘green zones’ that would first unite geographic areas where the virus was under control and economic activity could be restored,” says Bary Pradelski, an economist at France’s National Centre for Scientific Research. He and colleague Miquel Oliu-Barton wrote an article on the European policy think-tank site VoxEU in late April that would prove influential in how both France and Spain approached their reopenings. The plan, he says, would be to “bridge those zones with others in a similar situation.”

The Baltic states, for example, united in mid-May to allow citizens of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia to visit one another’s countries unimpeded. More recently, Denmark opened its doors to Germans, Norwegians and Icelanders—though not its neighbors in Sweden, which has substantially higher infection

World

and mortality rates. The E.U.'s leadership endorsed the approach, noting in a report on May 13 that "handled correctly, safely, and in a coordinated manner, the months to come could offer Europeans the chance to get some well-needed rest, relaxation and fresh air, and to catch up with friends and family in their own member states or across borders." But as Pradelski points out, that coordination hasn't been entirely forthcoming. "The earliest zoning just conformed to national borders, which had nothing to do with the realities of the virus," he says. "Now we're seeing bilateral agreements, but we hope they're just the starting point." He hopes the E.U.'s executive body will set Union-wide benchmarks for testing and border controls. "Unless we find common standards, people are not going to feel safe. And then there will not be enough demand for tourism."

But these will always be guidelines; ultimately, individual member states call the shots over their own borders. As a result, the current situation is a sometimes bewildering patchwork of exemptions. Austria, for example, has chosen to bar visitors from Spain, Portugal, Sweden and the U.K. Greece requires a test for the virus from anyone arriving from Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and Sweden, among others. Even Denmark, which on June 18 announced it was opening its borders, continues to bar entrants from Sweden, one of the few countries in Europe still seeing new case numbers rise. All member states are currently haggling over which non-E.U. countries sufficiently meet health and other criteria to be permitted in July and beyond. (And it doesn't look good for the U.S.)

The dire economic situation doesn't necessarily encourage member states to cooperate and may, in fact, be fostering a sense of competition. Being first out of the gate was certainly part of the calculation for Mallorca's pilot program. "We wanted to verify the protocols we had put into place," says Iago Negueruela, the minister of tourism for the Balearic Islands' regional government, "because we knew that as islands coming out of this in the summer, we would be [popular with tourists]. But we also wanted to do it because it allows us to position ourselves, with regard to Europe as a safe

"To meet a transnational crisis by closing borders was idiotic."

—IRENE CARATELLI, PROFESSOR AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ROME

destination. The fact of being first has its own potential."

In some ways, Mallorca, the largest of the Balearics, is the perfect microcosm for a Europe attempting to recover from the pandemic. A relatively early and near total shutdown allowed the chain of Balearic Islands in which it sits to avoid the kind of carnage experienced in Madrid and Barcelona, but the island's outsize reliance on tourism—34.8% of the

GDP—makes it highly vulnerable to whatever comes next. And because neither American nor Asian tourists travel to Mallorca in great numbers (Germany and the U.K. are its biggest markets), it offers a clear reflection of how the rest of the continent might welcome visitors from a range of nearby countries.

"It matters that we were the first to do this," Negueruela said after the first flights landed. "We were on the news





◀ Visitors admire a fresco at the Vatican Museum on June 1; Italy's tourist attractions have attracted mostly local crowds

single market from being splintered by levels of wealth and economic growth. The so-called frugal four—Austria, Sweden, the Netherlands and Denmark—continue to resist supporting the more indebted (and tourism-reliant) countries to their south. But more crucially, Germany, the bloc's largest economy, which insisted on punishing austerity reforms for hard-hit economies post-2010, has softened its hawkish stance and backed a joint recovery plan. "It's starting to seem now, paradoxically, that this is the kind of crisis that could trigger the European Union to go in a more federalist direction," Caratelli says.

YET THE SIMPLE REALITIES of travel in this pandemic age aren't doing the E.U. any favors. One of the most visible benefits of the E.U. for ordinary citizens—the freedom of movement across open borders—has, at least for the time being, disappeared. Passengers on the two packed planes that landed in Palma de Mallorca on June 15 from Germany had to fill out two separate lengthy forms before they could disembark, then undergo temperature scans, interviews and the kinds of passport checks not seen within most of Europe in decades.

Once they made it through all the checkpoints at the Mallorca airport, the pilot-program travelers encountered a wide gamut of protocols intended to keep them, as well as locals, healthy. Some of these were invisible; at the two Riu hotels where they were lodged, occupancy had been cut to 50%, with entire wings set aside in case it became necessary to quarantine anyone; cleaning personnel wiped down surfaces with color-coded cloths and disinfected rooms with a powerful antiviral. Other measures were highly visible; in addition to undergoing temperature checks every time they entered the dining room, guests had to wear masks in public areas and avail themselves of one of the 70-odd bottles of hand sanitizer placed around each hotel.

in every country last night, and we're seeing it have a bandwagon effect, with more flights being announced and more hotels opening. There is a kind of competition with other regions and countries, so it's good to be out there first."

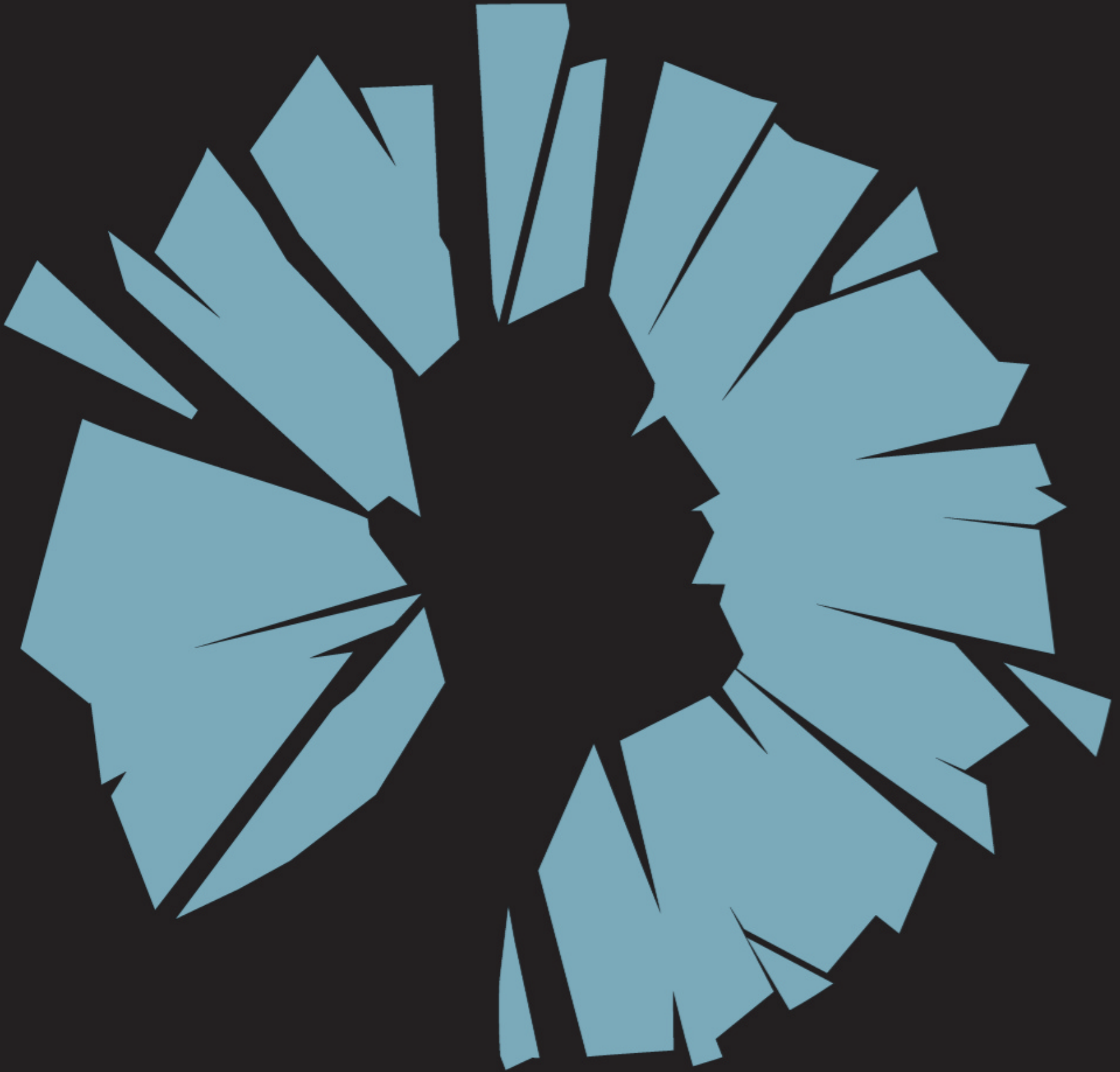
But internecine rivalry for the same diminished pool of visitors isn't the only divide the crisis has opened. In March, wealthy northern countries refused to send medical aid to the harder-hit south or to issue joint bonds that could mitigate recovery costs. Italy, in particular, was furious. In April, European Commissioner Ursula von der Leyen apologized to the country for the E.U.'s lack of solidarity, but the damage had already

been done. "At the beginning of this crisis, COVID-19 showed all the European Union's weaknesses," says Irene Caratelli, the director of the program in international relations at the American University of Rome. "To meet a transnational crisis by closing national borders was idiotic. It seemed that we're only European when we're growing economically. When there are costs, the national borders come back up."

Caratelli has been encouraged, however, by more recent collaborations. At the end of May, the Commission proposed a €750 billion (\$845 billion) aid package to jump-start the recovery in the hardest-hit countries and protect the

**IF SOMEONE BREAKS
INTO YOUR HOUSE**

CALL THE POLICE





**IF YOUR HOUSE
IS ON FIRE**

CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

**IF YOUR TEEN HAS
A DRUG PROBLEM**

GO TO DRUGFREE.ORG

World

For Txema Delgado, who has been working as a pool attendant at the Riu Concordia for four years, the new routines mean a lot more work. He now has to thoroughly disinfect every deck chair after it's used and wipe down every handrail within five minutes of a guest's touching it. "But I don't mind," he says. "I think it reduces the guests' fear. They seem very calm and happy, almost like nothing's happened."

Out on the boardwalk, Christian Laforcade would like to be able to say the same thing. With his signature bandanna wrapped around long curly hair, he has overseen the venerable beachfront restaurant Zur Krone since 2007, cheerfully serving bratwurst and aioli to the German tourists who are the primary visitors to Platja de Palma, the resort area east of the city. Laforcade reopened the restaurant in May to serve whatever locals were around. "I'm the brave one," he said with a smile as he gestured down an otherwise abandoned boardwalk. "Or the crazy one."

And he couldn't hide his economic concerns. "In this business you make most of your money in just a few months. By October, it's over," he said. "We've lost March, April and May entirely. And June is not looking good. Normally this time of year we'd be serving 60 to 80 breakfasts a day. How many have I served today? Zero." Pedro Martin, who owns another restaurant, La Celta, two doors down, said he would be staying closed for the foreseeable future. "I don't trust it yet," Martin said about when he might reopen. "I won't trust it until we see the planes in the sky and we know that those planes are full."

Business owners may be desperate for the streets of Palma to be filled with drinking, carousing tourists—but other locals aren't so sure. A schoolteacher who works in Magaluf, Montse Guasch says she personally doesn't miss the kind of *turismo de borrachera* (drunk tourism) the town is known for. She's also delighted that she is able to snag an outdoor table at a city center bar during peak hours. She is aware tourism has to return for the good of the local economy, she says. "I just hope it comes back different: higher quality, more respectful, more sustainable for the environment."

She is hardly alone. In the years

leading up to the pandemic, another kind of crisis was building throughout Europe as tourist numbers surged uncontrollably. Tour buses, low-cost airlines and gigantic cruise ships delivered masses of sightseers to historic city centers, disrupting local housing markets, damaging the environment and turning entire neighborhoods into no-go zones for residents. Now, with the rupture that the pandemic has brought, many see an opportunity to reduce tourism's negative impact and remake it into something more sustainable.

Perhaps in no place is that case stronger than Venice, where tourist numbers have been so great that the municipal government tried imposing turnstiles at the city's main entryways to control access. Vacillating administrations have never managed to apply long-standing proposals to restrict the number of short-term rental apartments or to redirect cruise ships. But where they failed, the virus has succeeded. "For the first few weekends it was only people in the [local] region who were allowed," says

'If tourism was like this for the rest of our lives, it would be amazing.'

—FRANCESCO SEMENZATO, CO-FOUNDER OF VENICE IS NOT DISNEYLAND

Francesco Semenzato, a co-founder of *Venezia Non è Disneyland* (Venice Is Not Disneyland), a citizens' platform that draws attention to the impact of mass tourism on the city. "And lots of them came ... they saw it as an opportunity to take back their city. Even now, when it's open to other Europeans, it feels different. Before it was a lot of day-trippers and people who came just to check Venice off their list. Now you can tell that people are interested in what is really here. If tourism was like this for the rest of our lives, it would be amazing."

Although Semenzato doesn't place much hope in the local government's backbone to impose change, he

hopes that one of the pandemic's by-products—a chance to experience their city as a real, livable place—will give Venetians the will to fight for stricter regulations. His sentiments are shared by Paris' deputy mayor. "We can take the decision to make this crisis an opportunity to reinvent tourism," Martins says. "We want to go from mass tourism to tourism that melts into the mass." To that end, the city is weighing measures that include a ban on giant tour buses and a limit on districts with Airbnb apartments.

Whether there will be enough collective will to see these kinds of measures through during a time of economic hardship and even recession remains





▲
A lifeguard keeps watch from behind a face mask at a half-deserted Platja de Palma beach on June 16

unclear. But many countries are trying to buffer the potential losses by promoting the staycation—and opening up the potential of summer vacations to the underprivileged. Italy is issuing vouchers of up to €500 (\$565) to families that earn below €40,000 (\$45,100) a year and choose to travel domestically, while Spain just launched an expensive, if somewhat melodramatic, ad campaign heralding the glories of a holiday at home. “This summer will be the

opportunity of a lifetime,” Martins says. “You can go to the Louvre, and no one will be there!”

Of course, all these recovery measures could quickly come to a halt if cases surge again. Those fears were on the mind of one employee at the Riu hotels, even as she expressed relief to be working again. “Just today they announced an outbreak at a meatpacking plant in Germany—1,000 people infected,” said the hotel worker, who requested anonymity in order to speak freely. “What if one of those people comes here? I have my parents and children to take care of. I worry a lot about getting sick.”

For his part, Phil Pelzer felt safe.

“The hotel seems to be taking a lot of precautions. And we’ve been wearing masks back in Germany, so that didn’t bother me,” he said, as he and his family headed off to pick up their rental car for a day they planned to spend touring the island’s interior. In many ways, he represents the kind of tourist Europe is banking its hopes on: family-oriented, more interested in sightseeing and lounging on the beach than in getting wasted and, above all, willing to spread some cash around. “I don’t know if I’d say it’s my dream vacation,” he said. “But we’re still having fun.” —*With reporting by VIVIENNE WALT/PARIS and MADELINE ROACHE/LONDON* □

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Time Off



PARADIGM SHIFT
Networks are trying to reflect the fight for racial justice. Can they keep up with the public?

INSIDE

LAVERNE COX GOES DEEP ON TRANS REPRESENTATION

JON STEWART RETURNS WITH A POLITICAL COMEDY

HAMILTON ARRIVES ON THE SMALL SCREEN

ILLUSTRATION BY NOA DENMON FOR TIME

Time Off is reported by Leslie Dickstein and Josh Rosenberg

TELEVISION

TV scrambles to keep up with social change

By Judy Berman

IN EARLY JUNE, ALL 19 DISCOVERY NETWORKS CHANNELS aired the two-part special *OWN Spotlight: Where Do We Go From Here?* The programs, which drew nearly 11 million viewers plus 6.7 million on YouTube, consisted solely of an extensive, socially distant conversation between Oprah Winfrey and a panel of Black politicians, artists, activists and public intellectuals about the reinvigorated Black Lives Matter movement, culminating with the participants outlining their “asks.” Stacey Abrams stressed the need for fair elections. The Rev. William J. Barber II, leader of the Poor People’s Campaign, called for an end to poverty. On a somewhat different note, Color of Change executive director Rashad Robinson wanted to see crime TV shows stop ignoring systemic racism. “You see tons of Black and brown characters,” Robinson observed. “But it’s a world where Black and brown people exist, but racism seems not to exist.” This, he said, fuels “demands for fixing Black people and Black families instead of fixing the systems that harm and hurt us.”

Robinson’s organization has proved prescient on the issue of race and policing on TV. When Fox canceled the long-running reality series *Cops* in 2013, it was amid pressure from Color of Change; revived on Spike TV and then Paramount Network, which canceled it again on June 9, the show is now probably gone for good. A&E nixed its similar but more popular and perhaps also crueler *Live PD* the next day. Years into the Black Lives Matter movement and decades after the civil rights movement began the work today’s activists are continuing, the pace of progress is accelerating. In the political realm, the result has been the repeal of a New York law shielding police disciplinary records, a city-council vote in Minneapolis to disband the police department responsible for George Floyd’s death and mainstream voices calling for radical changes in policing.

Other sectors of public life—and the entertainment world in particular—are, amid a pandemic that has already paralyzed so many industries, scrambling to keep up. For TV, that has meant highlighting and opening access to existing titles that take on issues of racial justice, as well as filling COVID-related holes in schedules with specials like Oprah’s. It has also meant re-evaluating current programs from *Law & Order* to *Paw Patrol*, purging casts and crews of apparent racists and, for streaming services with film libraries that span more than a century, auditing archives for offensive material. Not all of these choices are as urgent as the decision to end reality shows that glorify cops and exploit Black suffering. But the messiness doesn’t make this reckoning any less crucial for an industry that shapes how Americans see ourselves—and one another.

THE CURRENT INCARNATION of Black Lives Matter has come at a time when networks that would normally be transitioning to lighter summer schedules are instead faced



‘When you say, “I don’t see color,” you also make people of color invisible.’

JEMELE HILL,
in A+E Networks’
The Time Is Now: Race and Resolution

with production delays and captive, still-quarantined audiences. This could explain why ABC found space to rerun *Let It Fall*, its documentary on race in L.A. in the decade leading up to the Rodney King verdict. Many channels made last-minute announcements of special Juneteenth lineups; FX’s featured *Atlanta*, *black-ish* and films like *Selma*, while HBO made *Watchmen*—a superhero opus on race, power and policing—available to the public and several broadcast networks touted extensive news coverage of the holiday.

We’re also seeing a lot of stopgap programming focused on racism, Blackness and law enforcement, everywhere from BET to Court TV. And as it’s become clear that we’re living through a singular moment, standard coverage strategies have given way to the kind of candid discussions that used to be rare outside of activist circles.

A+E Networks aired *The Time Is Now: Race and Resolution*, which put boldface names like Jemele Hill and NAACP president Derrick Johnson in



◀ Oprah moderated a remote panel of Black thought leaders in an OWN Spotlight

Instead, industry giants are touting their commitment to Black voices through curation: just about every major streaming service is promoting a Black Lives Matter collection on its home page. PBS, Showtime and Starz, along with smaller streaming services like the art-house-focused Criterion Channel, are offering a selection of relevant titles to nonsubscribers at no cost. This may all be savvy business, to the extent that it nets each brand good publicity or new customers, but it's hard to complain when the result is a free education in Black cinema, history and social justice.

MORE COMPLICATED QUESTIONS arise when these same companies take it upon themselves to audit the canon—as HBO Max did when it pulled down *Gone With the Wind* following a Los Angeles *Times* op-ed in which *12 Years a Slave* screenwriter John Ridley called it “a film that, when it is not ignoring the horrors of slavery, pauses only to perpetuate some of the most painful stereotypes of people of color.” The platform promised the movie would “return with a discussion of its historical context and a denouncement of those very depictions.” Outrage ensued, with some making accusations of censorship. That reaction felt excessive; the unabridged film is still available to rent on multiple platforms. (Also: HBO Max is a month old.) And for all its Technicolor majesty, *Gone With the Wind* is kind of a special case. Beyond its racist caricatures, it paints the antebellum South as a lost paradise where Black people are happily enslaved.

Still, I watch enough old movies to appreciate both how much value they have and how many would come into question if streaming services started combing through their catalogs for historical bigotry. Additional context and analysis should always be welcome; screening hateful propaganda from D.W. Griffith's pro-KKK *The Birth of a Nation* to Leni Riefenstahl's Nazi opus

Triumph of the Will is unconscionable without proper framing. Yet the fact remains that both of these films are available to watch for free on various open video-sharing platforms. (While YouTube banned *Triumph* last year for violating its hate-speech policy, Riefenstahl's Nazi-era *Olympia* remains on the site.) It's no secret, either, that YouTube has spent the past few years playing Whac-a-Mole with contemporary white supremacists. Even if striking films like *Gone With the Wind* from history were desirable, it probably wouldn't be possible.

What HBO Max has done isn't censorship—but it's worth wondering to what extent it's brand management rather than a heartfelt response to Ridley's plea. As physical media disappears in the long wake of brick-and-mortar video stores' demise and commercial streaming services become de facto public film and TV archives, it's corporations that end up policing the canon. No matter who holds the rights to any given property, historians, critics and audiences deserve to have a voice in how their culture is, or isn't, preserved. For corporations, what's good for posterity might not always be what's good for business. Color of Change currently has a campaign asking Netflix to remove all cop shows from its platform. You don't have to disagree with the goals of that mobilization to worry about a profit-motivated streaming service making moral and aesthetic choices that could reverberate for generations.

This is all a lot to process, amid a much larger movement of which media representations are only one small part. And responses to Black Lives Matter from both traditional TV and the streaming arena are bound to keep pouring in over the next several months. For now, at least, it seems that the most productive gestures have focused not on relitigating the past but on embracing the entertainment industry's power to influence the present and the future—through ongoing efforts to champion Black creators as well as through thoughtful programming on race in America. For a movement that has generated so much overdue forward momentum, no trajectory could be more appropriate. □

conversation with “a virtual audience filled with real Americans.” There were touching scenes: a white mother who'd raised her children to “not see race” admitted how much she had to learn. Even more heartening, though, were the moments when things got raw. When a white ex-cop asked why Black-on-white murder isn't always framed as racist violence, the actor and comedian Amanda Seales was palpably disturbed by his ignorance of structural racism: “You are literally comparing a regular person and a regular person to a literal police institution that was . . . created within the context of racism,” she replied. White naiveté has trumped Black anger on this topic for so long that it was remarkable to hear Seales get the last word.

Winfrey's *Where Do We Go From Here?* was, by contrast, pretty polite. Yet it felt crucial that everyone on the panel was Black; it prevented the guilt and hurt feelings of white people from derauling the conversation.

No one really expects programming this timely from streaming services.



TELEVISION

True crime redeemed in *I'll Be Gone in the Dark*

By Judy Berman

MICHELLE MCNAMARA'S SHOCKING DEATH ON APRIL 21, 2016, left two stories unfinished. There was the crime journalist's yearslong investigation into a serial rapist and murderer she called the Golden State Killer, who terrorized California in the 1970s and '80s—and about whom she was at work on her first book. And there was the fractured narrative of McNamara's private life: the loving family unit she'd created with comedian Patton Oswalt and their young daughter in one compartment, and the traumatic history that fueled her furtive late-night research hidden in another.

After writing about the case on her popular blog True Crime Diary and in *Los Angeles* magazine, McNamara spent her final years working out her obsession with the Golden State Killer on the page. When she died, Oswalt enlisted fellow crime writer Billy Jensen to help her researcher Paul Haynes collate the manuscript that would become *I'll Be Gone in the Dark*—a best seller and instant classic. But it wasn't until after its publication, in 2018, that DNA evidence led to the killer's arrest. In a fantastic HBO docuseries that shares the book's title, director Liz Garbus (*What Happened, Miss Simone?*) carries on the collective effort to finish McNamara's work, fusing mystery and biography into an unusually empathetic true-crime story that feels complete at last.

I'll Be Gone in the Dark has many elements endemic to the genre: the expert interviews, the ghostly re-enactments, the closeups of police reports. Garbus retraces McNamara's steps, beginning with a horrific string of attacks in late-'70s Sacramento by a perp then known as the East Area Rapist,



McNamara was “trying to make sense of violence and despair,” according to Oswalt

who preyed on women and teen girls in their homes. As part of his ritual, he rifled through their belongings, gulped beer from their fridges and threatened to kill any man present who tried to stop him. But Sacramento was neither his first stop nor his last. He made his way down the coast in later years—and developed a taste for killing. By the time he claimed his last known victim, in 1986, the Golden State Killer had committed at least 50 rapes and 10 murders.

YOU CAN FIND the basic facts about the man behind all that violence on Google, if you don't already know them. That so many people who watch the series will come in with knowledge of the Golden State Killer might explain why it avoids true crime's most egregious suspense-building clichés, from teasing cliffhangers to scores that make *Jaws* look subtle. Yet this is also a way of resisting exploitation. Like McNamara, Garbus gives weight to the victims' suffering without making a spectacle of it. Viewers get to know several of the women beyond one harrowing night, through undiagnosed PTSD, marriages that faltered, secrets kept even from family in a culture that stigmatized survivors.

This core of respect for shared humanity differentiates Garbus' as well as McNamara's tellings from so much true crime, and justifies weaving the personal into the procedural. In the show, that means not just quoting McNamara's insights into abuse and addiction, but also forming a portrait of her through conversations with the people who knew her—particularly Oswalt, who provided access to home movies, text messages and journals. It's a fitting tribute that Garbus draws out the painful experiences that connected McNamara to her fellow citizen detectives, granting humanity even to talking heads. “Murderers lose power the moment we know them,” McNamara wrote. *I'll Be Gone in the Dark* suggests that for survivors, the opposite is true.

'Inside everyone lurks a Sherlock Holmes.'

MICHELLE MCNAMARA,
in an email to
her editor

I'LL BE GONE IN THE DARK premieres
June 28 on HBO

QUICK TALK

Laverne Cox

For most of America's cinematic history, transgender characters were depicted as villains, victims or the butt of jokes. In *Disclosure*, a Netflix documentary streaming now, actor-activist Laverne Cox and other trans trailblazers explore Hollywood's problematic past—and why things are finally changing.

How are the lives of trans people still shaped by these harmful depictions?

The thing that has been perpetuated in film—and is also being perpetuated in public policy right now—is that the sex we're assigned at birth is the crux of things. The underlying

representation is that we're not really who we say we are. That is what is getting us killed. That is what is getting legislation created to target us. So that's what we have to undo—this disavowal of the womanhood of trans women and the manhood of trans men and the validity of nonbinary identities.

How can depictions translate into real-life problems?

When you have references like Buffalo Bill from *Silence of the Lambs*, a serial killer who skinned women to wear their flesh, or spectacles like *The Jerry Springer Show*—where trans folks disclose to their romantic partners that they're trans, and fights ensue—people are taught to have a violent reaction to us, or that our presence is something to be laughed at.

How far has the entertainment industry come? Film still has a long way to go. But television has been a beautiful place of growth. The difference is that trans people are writing more and directing more, and trans actors are being listened to more, as experts in our own stories. So we are getting more nuanced stories, more human stories, different stories.

Where does Hollywood need to go from here?

We need more mentorship, to cultivate talent so we can work in multiple areas of the business and, ideally, be elevated to positions of power.

There have recently been demonstrations to highlight violence against Black trans women, related to the Black Lives Matter movement.

How do you feel about that? It feels overdue. That is the result of years of activism. And tens of thousands of people coming out to support Black trans lives mattering—I wept when I saw the footage. We got here with a lot of pushback, a lot of not being happy with being erased, and that's what we must continue to do—to push for more representation and policy changes. Hearts and minds need to change too. —KATY STEINMETZ



Cox, 48, appears in and executive-produced the new documentary film



The Baby-Sitters Club in 2020

TELEVISION

Adventures in babysitting

Ann M. Martin's *Baby-Sitters Club*, a staple of 1990s girl culture, might not seem equipped for these cataclysmic times. So it's a wonderful surprise that a TV reboot from first-gen fans Rachel Shukert (*Glow*) and Lucia Aniello (*Broad City*) works so well, striking a shrewd balance of earnestness and humor, fidelity to beloved characters and awareness of how much has changed since their heyday.

Just a few minor tweaks bring the 13-year-old sitters up to date without betraying their essences. An inclusive-for-its-time cast of characters further diversifies. Type-A Kristy leans into #girlboss feminism. Recovering California hippie Dawn deploys terms like *socio-economic stratification*.

The show still finds time to tackle eternal tween issues (divorce, puberty) with the wit that defines the creators' other projects. They have said they aimed for a "multigenerational" story, and it shows. Whether you're looking for gentle, progressive kids' TV or soothing nostalgia, with sly cultural references and a supporting cast that includes Alicia Silverstone, this *Baby-Sitters Club* delivers. —J.B.

THE BABY-SITTERS CLUB

comes to Netflix on July 3



MOVIES

A Washington satire in America's heartland

By Stephanie Zacharek

THE INS AND OUTS OF POLITICS HAVE BECOME SO EXTREME in recent years that they're almost impossible to parody. But even so, political comedies are always tricky. They tend to tell us things we already know, and still we nod sagely and chuckle appreciatively, as if we really *have* learned something new. Even the most clever political satire can run aground, and Jon Stewart's *Irresistible* is a case in point. It's perfectly entertaining as you're watching, but when it's over, you might not feel any smarter—or humbler—than you did going in.

Gary Zimmer (Steve Carell) is a wheeler-dealer Democratic political consultant who sets out to restore his debilitated party's luster after the 2016 election. From his perch in Washington, he sees a video of an impassioned speech given by a modest, principled farmer and Marine vet at a town-hall meeting in Deerlaken, Wis., a community in sharp decline. (An earlier title card has alerted us that the general locale is RURAL AMERICA, HEARTLAND USA.) Jack Hastings (Chris Cooper) strides into the meeting and stands up to Deerlaken's Mayor Braun (Brent Sexton), who's about to pass a resolution that would cause further suffering to the town's citizens, particularly its immigrants. Impressed by Jack's plainspoken, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* vibe, Gary decides to play God, politically speaking, by persuading Jack to run for mayor of Deerlaken: his aim is to “road-test a more rural-friendly message” and, hopefully, secure a blue foothold in a red state.

Gary's cynicism, steeped in the truth that Big Money is what keeps the political gears turning, is the movie's chief joke. For a while, it's funny. At one point, he boasts that his

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D.C. strategist Zimmer (Carell) gets outside of his comfort zone

Midwestern discovery Jack is “a cross between MacArthur and elk jerky.” And as he brings Jack around to meet liberal donors, a jarring irony emerges: while these people throw money around for political gain, communities like Jack's, in need of a jump start, languish.

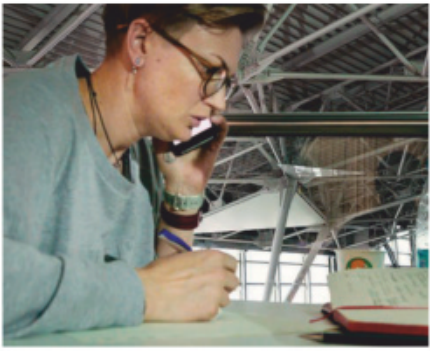
AS A WRITER AND DIRECTOR, Stewart is clever and nimble. The script is filled with zingers, and Carell—who worked as a writer and correspondent for Stewart's *The Daily Show* in the early 2000s—has fun slinging them. This is Stewart's second film as a director (his debut was the earnest, intelligent 2014 *Rosewater*), and as you know if you ever watched *The Daily Show* during his years as host, his brain is always in overdrive. But that's part of the problem here: *Irresistible* has a super-smarty-pants vibe that's admirable until it becomes exhausting. Even if you completely agree with the assessment Stewart delivers in the story's surprise capper, his style is so sanctimoniously jaunty that it might still wear you down.

But *Irresistible* does offer some brainy pleasures along the way, chief among them Rose Byrne's performance as Gary's Republican counterpart and nemesis Faith Brewster. Faith arrives in Deerlaken, hot on Gary's heels, to take over the incumbent mayor's campaign with a vengeance, invading this world of flannel and trucker's caps in needle-sharp stilettos and an assortment of statement-sleeve tops. She lies outright and laughs about it, knowing that once the media picks up a story, even a comically false one, it becomes its own kind of truth. And the hate-love between her and Gary is strong. In one scene, he unlocks the door of the modest room he's rented in Deerlaken, only to find her lounging on his bed in a silk kimono, lying in wait like a viper. These two are a match made in Washington hell. Together, they're the movie's greatest gag, the tawdry purple that you get when you mix red and blue.

'I think there are different ways to be in the conversation. I consider a career to be a conversation.'

JON STEWART, in the *New York Times*, on life after having a talk show

IRRESISTIBLE is available on streaming platforms from June 26



Activist Olga Barinova

MOVIES

LGBTQ bravery in Chechnya

In 2017, the world began hearing reports that authorities in the Russian republic of Chechnya were kidnapping, torturing and in some cases killing members of the LGBTQ community. In his stirring—and often disturbing—documentary *Welcome to Chechnya*, director David France (*How to Survive a Plague*) makes the case that these human-rights violations haven't abated; if anything, they've intensified.

Welcome to Chechnya focuses on a group of activists who provide safe houses for people in need, as well as securing visas to get them out of Russia. One of the documentary's chief figures is Maxim Lapunov, who was arrested, beaten and tortured by police in the Chechen capital of Grozny in 2017. Lapunov took the extraordinary step of filing a criminal complaint, and although the case was denied by the Russian courts, he continues his fight. That means, as France makes clear, that even though Lapunov and his family were able to escape Chechnya, his life is constantly in danger. David Isteev, one of the activists featured in the film, laments that thus far it has been impossible to hold anyone accountable for the atrocities in Chechnya. "But," he says, "we keep trying." —S.Z.

WELCOME TO CHECHNYA
streams on HBO on June 30

MOVIES

A lion stalks off with the comedy prize

FORGET COMEDY SUPERSTARS; supporting players are the comedy gods' true gift to us, especially in the Will Ferrell vehicle *Eurovision Song Contest: The Story of Fire Saga*. Ferrell and Rachel McAdams star as Lars Ericksson and Sigrit Ericksdottir, two Icelandic misfits with hearty voices and a big dream: to enter, and possibly win, the Eurovision Song Contest, the televised international songwriting competition that draws a huge audience in many parts of the world, if not the U.S.

Through a few chance twists, Lars and Sigrit—supposedly terrible singers, though they don't sound so bad—get a shot at the big prize. Then they're derailed by one mishap after another: in a routine that requires them to appear airborne, Lars' harness breaks and he crashes to the ground—hilarious! When the duo finally make it to the Eurovision stage for the finals, Sigrit learns that Lars, who designs the pair's costumes, has lengthened her scarf by a few dangerous feet; she comes close to meeting an Isadora Duncan-style end, and though director David Dobkin stresses the gag's exaggerated slapstick proportions, it's still not funny. There's also a goofy subplot involving Lars' refusal to

acknowledge Sigrit's longing for him. Even though the hyperbolic mismatch between the gentle, charming Sigrit and the bumbling Lars is clearly part of the gag, it's still nearly impossible to have any emotional investment in these two.

But wait—second banana to the rescue! In a vampire dandy's flash of brocade and velvet, Dan Stevens (perhaps best known as the ill-fated Matthew Crawley in the early seasons of *Downton Abbey*) shows up as conceited hottie billionaire Russian crooner Alexander Lemtov. During rehearsals, Lemtov takes the stage for his pyrotechnic-heavy number, "Lion of Love," prowling the stage like a zoo cat in heat. He flashes a wink at Sigrit; she's flattered, but resists. In his faux-Russian accent, as ornate as an imperial samovar, he promises her many riches—"mansions, palaces, wi-fi in every room"—and still, Sigrit sticks with Lars. Her loss. As Lemtov, Stevens is so absurdly lascivious that he supercharges the movie every time he shows up, which, thankfully, is often. Innocent gazelles everywhere, look out. —S.Z.

EUROVISION SONG CONTEST streams on Netflix beginning June 26



Ferrell and McAdams: bumbling toward stardom

FEATURE

Will *Hamilton* resonate in 2020's America?

By Andrew R. Chow

IN JUNE 2016, THE BROADWAY PHENOMENON *Hamilton* was filmed in all its syllable-spraying, suede-coat-shaking glory. Director Tommy Kail used Steadicams and camera cranes to capture composer Lin-Manuel Miranda's definitive cultural artifact of Obama's America: a multicultural, optimistic narrative in which an immigrant lifts himself out of poverty by "working a lot harder" and "being a self-starter" to become an American Founding Father.

Hamilton remains an astonishing triumph in so many ways: as a rebuke to a white-dominated theater world; as a genre-crossing musical monument; as a subversive interrogation of who gets to claim American greatness. It scored a record-setting 16 Tony Award nominations, set box-office records and reimagined theater in the 21st century.

But when the film drops on Disney+ on July 3, it will arrive into a world that has been transformed by the past four years. A very different President holds power; income inequality has widened; a pandemic has wiped out the life savings of thousands of Americans, souring the musical's bootstraps premise. Over the past month, thousands of protesters have taken to the streets to excoriate America's systemic racial inequities, many of which can be traced back to the men *Hamilton* celebrates through song and dance.

As the musical becomes available to a vastly wider audience—Disney+ has more than 50 million subscribers—*Hamilton*'s creative team hopes it will continue to serve as a symbol of resistance and an inspiration for young artists and activists of color. But others are skeptical that a musical about white slaveholders can speak to a moment in which long-held American narratives about opportunity and justice are being forcefully debunked. "*Hamilton* tells the history of how this white-supremacist country was created," says Lyra Monteiro, a history professor at Rutgers University. "Our country has not been distorted since then. It's been functioning as it's supposed to be functioning."

When *Hamilton* opened on Broadway in August 2015, it was embraced by audiences across the political spectrum: Barack Obama once joked it was the only thing that he and Dick Cheney could agree upon. Since the election of Donald Trump, its creators and fans have wielded the musical as both a symbol of and a tool for progressive change. The cast confronted Mike Pence in November 2016 when he attended the show; soon after, Miranda spun a song out of the show's most applauded line, "Immigrants/ We get the job done," in response to Trump's escalating war on immigrants. At the Women's March and other protests, quotes like HISTORY HAS ITS EYES ON YOU and TOMORROW THERE WILL BE MORE OF US were held aloft on signs.

These mantras have resurfaced during the current wave of protests following the killing of George Floyd. "I have



^
A filmed version of *Hamilton*, starring Miranda, left, and Leslie Odom Jr., arrives in a changed world

been overwhelmed and gratified at seeing lyrics popping up on signs all over the country," Miranda says in an interview. "I'm excited young people are laying claim to the kind of country they want to live in."

FOR OTHERS, HOWEVER, the fundamental disconnect between the focus of these protests and *Hamilton*'s subject matter is getting harder to ignore. More and more Americans are coming to grips with the long tail of slavery and the ways in which anti-Blackness is embedded in American political, economic and social structures. Long-assumed truths are being interrogated, including the idea that America is a meritocracy or that the police protect all citizens equally. It's not hard to trace these injustices back to the Founding Fathers: in June, statues of Thomas Jefferson and George Washington were toppled or vandalized. Revered works like *Gone With the Wind* that reinforce these narratives are being scrutinized with renewed focus.

Hamilton sits in the eye of this hurricane. "Since George Floyd, I wonder



if its expiration date has already passed,” Monteiro says. “It’s hard to imagine people saying, ‘This is the musical of our moment,’ because the characters not only kept Black people in bondage themselves, but also designed a country that would preserve their system.”

Hamilton by no means ignores slavery: its third line describes enslaved people “being slaughtered and carted away across the waves.” Miranda says that the show “never backs away from a practice in which every character onstage is complicit.”

Critics like Monteiro disagree, arguing that the show deploys slavery in misleading ways. The institution is brought up to vilify the slave-owning Jefferson and lionize the abolitionist John Laurens, but is erased from the depiction of Washington, who owned more than 100 slaves, and Philip Schuyler, who at one point was the largest slaveholder in Albany, N.Y. Renee Romano, a history

professor at Oberlin College in Ohio, says the show also reinforces an oft-repeated narrative in which slavery was a uniquely Southern problem. “New York is depicted as the ‘greatest city in the world’—but when Hamilton lived there, 40% of households owned slaves, and they made up 14% to 16% of New York’s population,” she says. The city’s multicultural population at the time makes the fact that *Hamilton* contains no speaking roles for Black or Indigenous characters all the more glaring—and especially ironic given that the production was lauded for casting people of color to play white historical figures.

And then there’s the musical’s treatment of its namesake. While he is positioned as a “manumission abolitionist”—a perspective put forth by the historian Ron Chernow, whose 2004 Hamilton biography served as the basis for the musical—other historians contest this reading. There is evidence that despite Hamilton’s written misgivings about slavery, he arranged slave transactions and possibly owned slaves. As a signer of the Constitution, he also officially supported the three-fifths law that codified slavery. Miranda contends that the show grapples with Hamilton’s complicity in slavery through his silence on the subject in Act II. “After calling Jefferson out on slavery, Hamilton doesn’t do anything,” he says, adding, “I think that silence hits differently than it maybe did in 2015.”

‘Since George Floyd, I wonder if its expiration date has already passed.’

LYRA MONTEIRO,
professor at Rutgers
University, on *Hamilton*

To the writer Ishmael Reed, another shortcoming is the show’s neglect of Native Americans, who were being pushed west or murdered en masse by colonists at the time. “Native Americans have a different view of George Washington—he was known among the Iroquois as ‘Town Destroyer,’” Reed says. He also points to a letter Hamilton wrote in 1791, in which he cheerfully described the imminent attack of Kentucky settlers on a Native American community: “Corps of ardent Volunteers on their route to demolish every savage man, woman and Child.”

Last year, Reed staged an off-Broadway play, *The Haunting of Lin-Manuel Miranda*, in which he targets

Hamilton’s historical inaccuracies and whitewashing. Reed says it’s all the more important to critique *Hamilton* as it becomes globally available, given how much impact it’s already had on historical discourse. “Hamilton has been deified because of this musical,” he says. “His tomb has become a shrine of worship.”

Kail, who directed the original Broadway production as well as the upcoming film, says that people who deify Hamilton are missing the point. “No one is presented as doing the right thing,” he says. “They did what they did, and it’s our job to look back and challenge it—and talk about how we can do better to try to make a country that represents and protects all of its citizens.”

IN MID-JUNE, the mayor of Albany signed an executive order to remove a statue of Schuyler, who is described in *Hamilton* as a “war hero” and a devoted patriarch to the Schuyler sisters, from the state capital’s city hall. Phillipa Soo, who played Schuyler’s daughter Eliza in the original Broadway cast, says she supports this re-evaluation. “People have a right to be displeased by that statue,” she says. “Maybe it’s time to rethink all public statues of oppressors and slaveholders—but that will be a very difficult national conversation.”

Hamilton has many other virtues that may protect it from a similar treatment. “It challenges some of the basic foundational pictures we have of our early nation,” Romano says. “That kind of symbolic work is important.” And it’s worth noting the role that *Hamilton* had in paving the way for even more daring, and critically lauded, Broadway productions like Jeremy O. Harris’ *Slave Play*, which lays bare the intergenerational traumas of slavery.

Miranda hopes that when people watch the film, they won’t glorify Hamilton but instead interrogate his shortcomings and “reckon with the sins of the origin” of the country. This moment, he says, has taught him that writing a musical is not enough. “We have to be out there in words and deeds, standing up and speaking up,” Miranda says. “That’s where I feel like I’m making up for lost time.” □



REVIEW

Seeing Japan's invisible citizens

"To be homeless is to be ignored when people walk past, while still being in full view of everyone," says Kazu, the elderly protagonist of Yu Miri's *Tokyo Ueno Station*. A migrant worker, Kazu exists on the fringes of society, staying with other homeless people in Ueno Park, near the city's busy, claustrophobic railway station. In this liminal space among the ghosts of other wandering men and women, watching the seasons roll from one into the next, Kazu mourns the life he used to know and the people he used to love.

Born in Japan to Korean parents, Yu is skilled at centering the outsider's perspective in her writing. As a radio host, she helped tell the stories of those affected by the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster in Fukushima. Her empathy extends to this novel, first published in Japan last year; Yu's poetic, lyrical style invites readers to grieve Kazu's losses even as he is unable to do so.

The themes of exile and conflicting identities in *Tokyo Ueno Station* are hallmarks of postwar Zainichi literature, a genre rooted in the experience of ethnic Koreans in Japan. As key moments in Kazu's life intersect with that of the Emperor Akihito, Yu creates a series of vignettes of one man's small life against the broader backdrop of Japanese history. In so doing, she shows what it's like to live perpetually on the periphery. —Suyin Haynes

REVIEW

The costs of wanting more

By Annabel Gutterman

ELIZABETH, THE EXHAUSTED NARRATOR of Lynn Steger Strong's potent new novel, *Want*, was in her second week of college when the Twin Towers fell. In graduate school, she met her husband-to-be, who worked for Lehman Brothers, shortly before the financial crisis hit. It would take years for them to grasp the economic repercussions of these catastrophes. Elizabeth explains why: "We weren't formed enough to see them, were too safe to feel their first round of hits." Now, overwhelmed with debt from an emergency C-section, student loans and the costs of raising two young children in Brooklyn, the couple is forced to confront their reality. They file for bankruptcy.

In her debut novel, *Hold Still*, Strong examined the intensity of love that exists within a familial unit. In *Want*, the author interrogates that intensity again through Elizabeth, who is feeling increasingly trapped by her desires. For Elizabeth, desperate to lead a life different from her upbringing, devotion to her academic ambitions and motherhood leave her emotionally, physically and financially drained. She laments, "My body almost single-handedly bankrupted us."

Moving flashbacks reveal a youth spent in Florida, where a quietly self-destructive Elizabeth received little comfort from her wealthy and success-driven parents. She found solace in Sasha, her childhood best friend, who offered the support she so clearly needed. Strong writes of their friendship in exacting detail, illustrating the ferocity with which

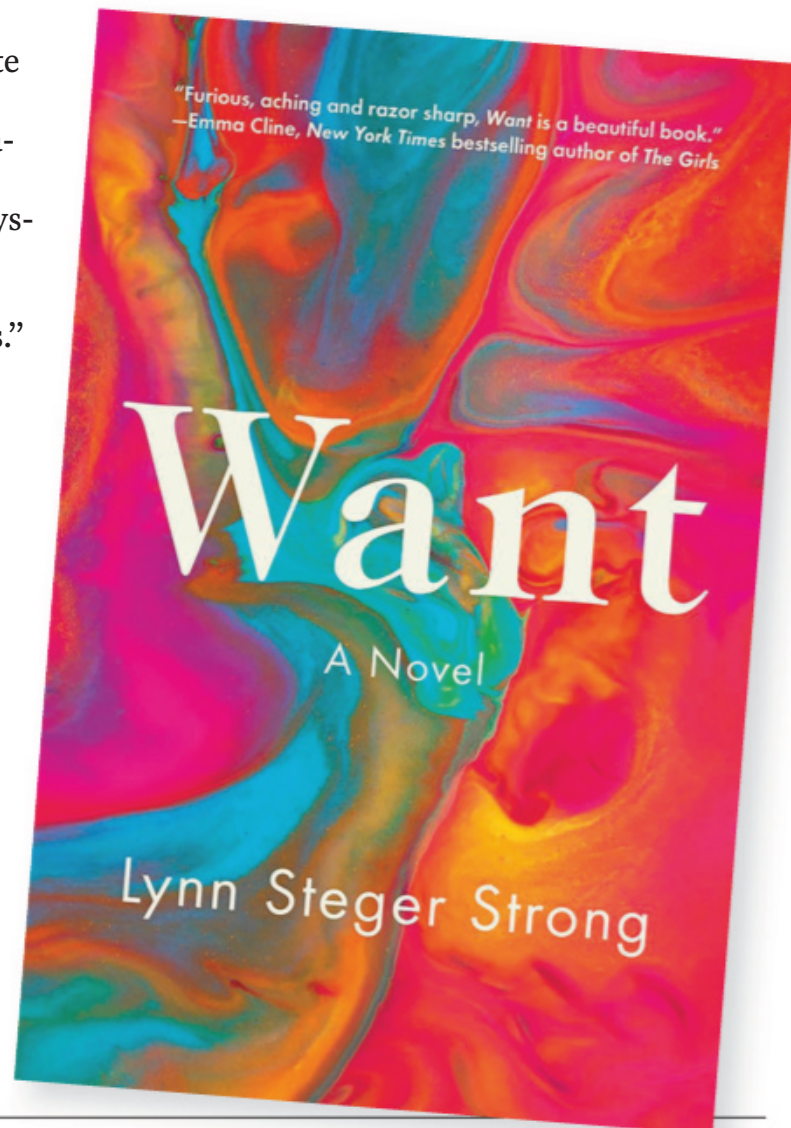
women can care for one another. Their paths split in their 20s following a fissure that proved too painful to overcome, until a crisis sends Sasha catapulting back into Elizabeth's orbit.

Various elements of *Want*—its New York City setting, Elizabeth's job at a prestigious university, her obsessive scrolling through Sasha's Instagram—place it in a genre of contemporary female fiction concerned with privilege and power. But Brooklyn is expensive; Elizabeth can barely afford her rent. Her gig at the university is in addition to her full-time role as a high school English teacher. And the scrolling is a yearning to understand the person she once knew better

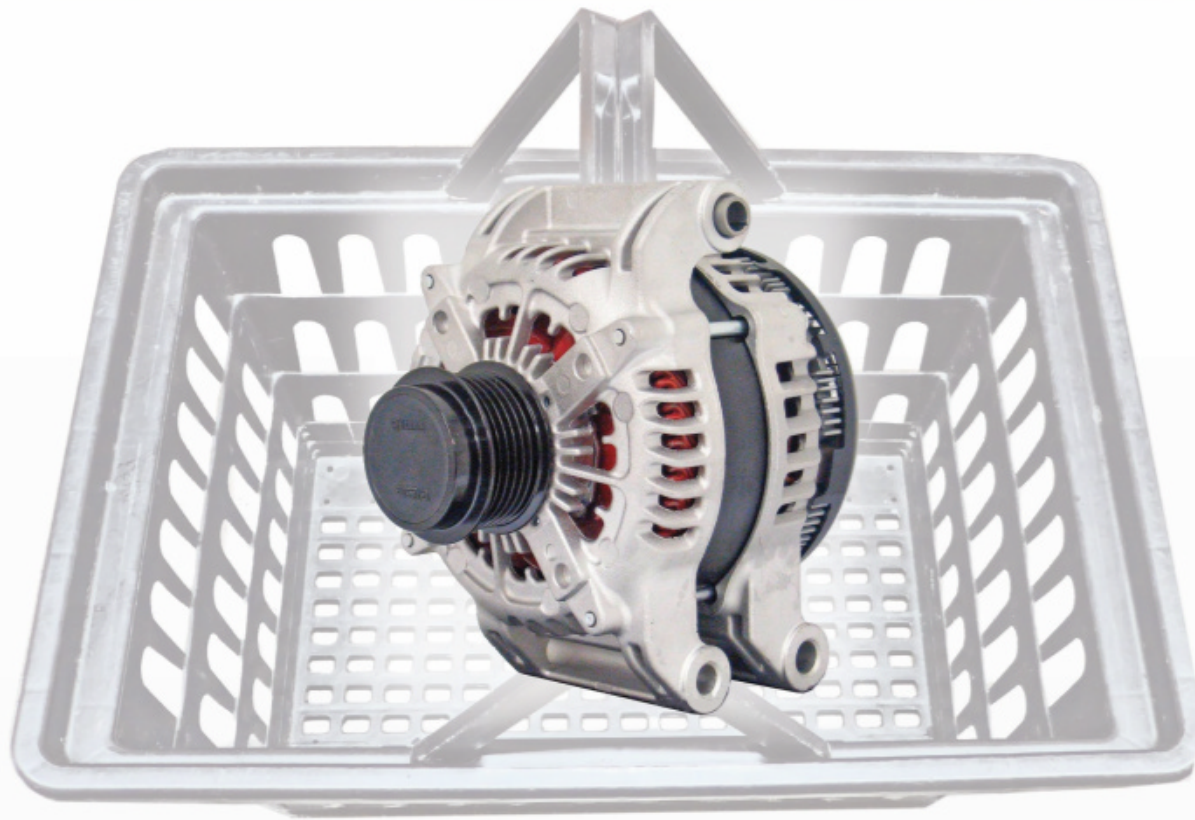
than anyone else. Elizabeth's anxious, raw voice ties these threads together, coalescing into a story about the price women pay for craving what's just out of reach. □

'My body almost single-handedly bankrupted us.'

ELIZABETH,
the narrator of *Want*



>
Like her narrator, Strong grew up in Florida



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7 Questions

Kevin Kwan The author of *Crazy Rich Asians* on economic inequality, his new book and embracing his identity

How have you coped with the pandemic? I'm just trying to imagine, well, this is what it was like during the war for my grandparents, except that we're not facing bombings or Japanese troops knocking on your door wanting to take you away. We just have to be disciplined and cooperative for the sake of the greater community—and that's new for so many of us in this country.

What are you thinking about? More political engagement. We're in a crisis moment for democracy. We need to look at the power structures we've put in place. Are we, the people, really being served?

As fun as your books are, they also decry massive wealth. How do you approach those themes? It begins at the core with economic inequality. The gulf between the crazy rich and everyone else is just so, so vast, and that is at the root of every problem. I don't try to hit people over the head, but I tell stories that hopefully make them think. In a strange way, you can tell a lot more truth with satire.

What made you want to look at the U.S. for your new novel, *Sex and Vanity*? My lens turns toward New York and the class structures and privilege that exist in this country and the institutions that serve to keep people out. There's the snobbery between the old money and the new tech money, between the old Chinese and the new Chinese. I also really wanted to look at a character like Lucie, who is biracial.

I was excited to read about a hapa character like me. What drew you to the hapa identity? It really wasn't being represented in modern contemporary fiction. I have so many hapa cousins, from Asian Americans to Chinese British to Australian Asians. Seeing

“IN THE EARLIER PART OF MY LIFE, IT WAS ABOUT REJECTING THE ASIAN SIDE OF MYSELF”



the diversity of experiences in their struggles—and how some have not struggled at all—so much of that is weighted to how you look and present. It also speaks to my identity crisis as an Asian immigrant and my journey of assimilation and self-discovery. You come here an “other,” and you have to adapt quickly to survive. In the earlier part of my life, it was about rejecting the Asian side of myself and empathizing with the Westernized, Singaporean side.

Where do you fall now? The whole movement behind the *Crazy Rich Asians* books and movie really ignited the activist in me to advocate for representation in media. It was such an aha moment to see the reaction. I grew up on an island with a channel that showed *Knight Rider* and *Baywatch*, and the next channel was Mandarin soap operas and action films. I always saw that diversity as a child, so when I came to the U.S. I didn't feel, as many Asian Americans do, a complete absence of myself reflected back. It was profound to meet fathers who would come up to me weeping and say, “This is the first time I've been able to so proudly take my children to a movie where I see us.”

The U.S. is reckoning with systemic racism against Black people. How should Asian Americans respond to this moment? I've really been trying to be meaningful in my engagement. I joined #BlackoutTuesday, but there were all these comments from Asians saying, “Why didn't you post when an elderly Chinese woman was attacked on the subway?” Or “Why aren't you helping Hong Kong? We're in a state of siege too.” We're at a point in the world where there's so much pain. I'm looking for ways to effectively be of help, whether by speaking up, lending my name, donating money or trying to continue to push myself to make work that helps to amplify and enlighten and bring healing and joy. —LUCY FELDMAN

“

We have the
power of
transformation
in our hands.

**Freedom
is within
our grasp.**

”

Brittany Packnett Cunningham.

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