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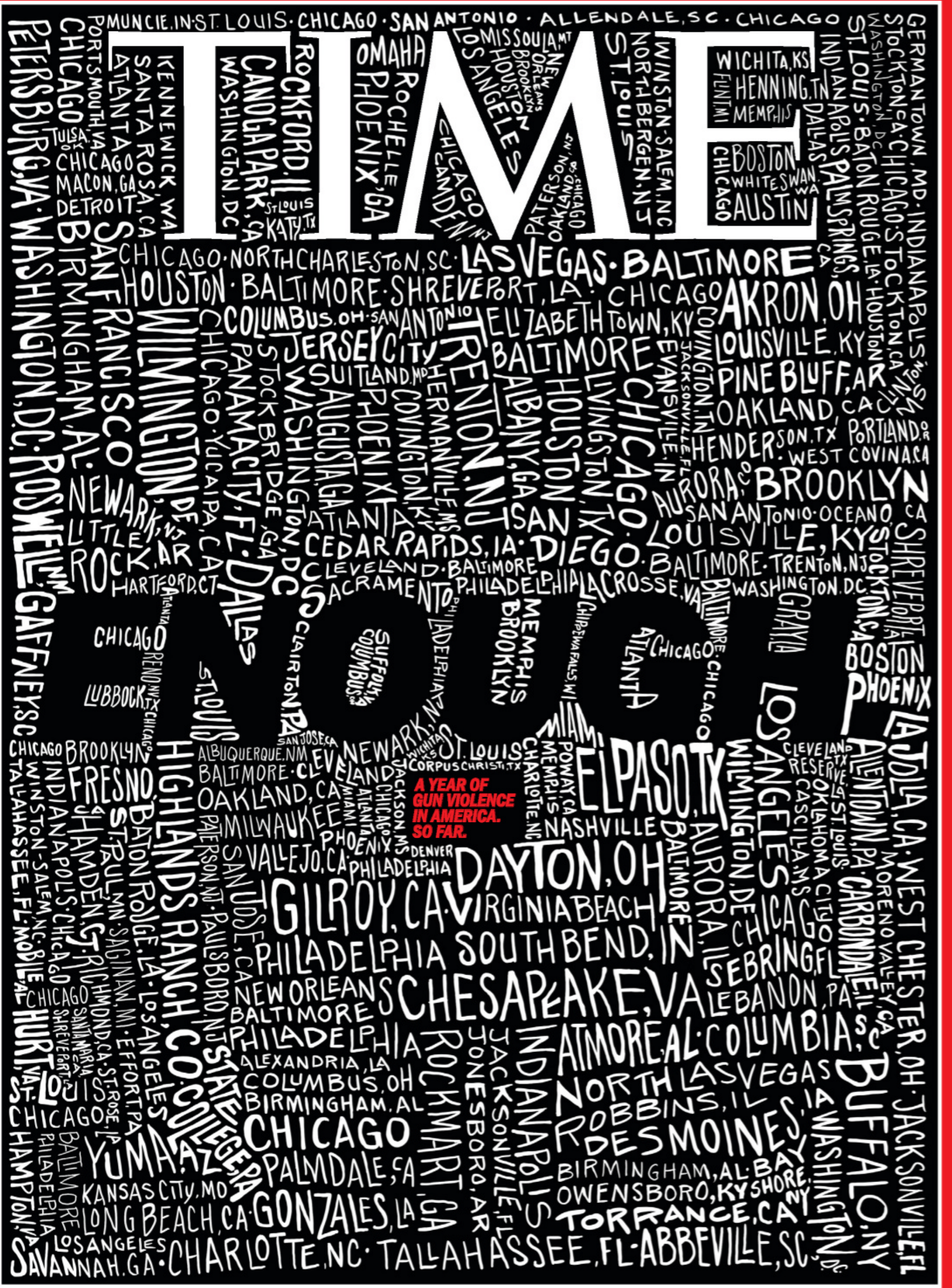
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^ Morrison visits  
the University of  
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for a conference on  
William Faulkner

Photograph by  
William R. Ferris  
Collection—Wilson  
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Chapel Hill

**ON THE COVER:**  
Illustration by  
John Mavroudis  
for TIME

# From the Editor

## We have a choice

LAST YEAR, WE PUT FIVE SURVIVORS OF THE MASSACRE at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., on the cover of TIME, with the word ENOUGH emblazoned across the image. Determining the cover is always a team discussion, and in the course of it, some in our newsroom urged that we not use that word. How to determine what exactly is enough? Wasn't it enough at Columbine? At Virginia Tech? At Fort Hood? Won't it be enough when, sure as night follows day, the next massacre occurs?

We all have our measures of how obscenely normalized domestic terror has become. At TIME, one is how frequently we have felt compelled to devote our cover to the subject. In my own less than two years in this job, we've run seven of them, from the 2017 massacre at a Las Vegas music festival that killed 58 people to this spring's murder of 50 worshippers at mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand.

In recent days, as the heartbreaking news from Gilroy to El Paso to Dayton swept across America, I thought about these covers as well as the hundreds of images from mass shootings we've published over the years. Terrified children who survived Sandy Hook walking single file to safety. Giant photographs of the dead at the prayer vigil for the victims at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston. The side-by-side graves of two brothers killed, among 11 altogether, at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh. Searing images and yet somehow forgotten by leaders with the power to effect change.

But as the week went on, what seemed to me to travel the farthest and speak the loudest were not pictures but numbers. Numbers that showed how tragically exceptional America is in its gun violence. Numbers making clear that rates of mental illness and video-game consumption in the U.S. are similar to those of countries that don't experience routine mass murder. Numbers revealing just how many civilian firearms are already in circulation in America: 265 million.

Another number: this week's cover, by artist John Mavroudis, lists the locations of 253 mass shootings in America so far this year. This list, tallied by the Gun Violence Archive, of incidents in which at least four people other than the shooter were injured or killed is a reminder that the toll of gun violence is even greater than the public attacks we typically think of as mass shootings.

**I GREW UP** in a family of gun owners and have always used them responsibly. But it shouldn't be easier to own and use a gun than to own and drive a car. Why should gun manufacturers be shielded from liability that incentivizes



### What to say

When tragedy is in the news, children can struggle to understand and process what they're seeing. With that in mind, TIME for Kids has curated a set of resources to help families and educators talk about tough topics like gun violence. Go to [time.com/toughtopics](https://time.com/toughtopics) to read more.

nearly every other manufacturer of consumer products in America to think about safety? Retailers can follow the lead of companies like Dick's Sporting Goods, which ended sales of assault-style weapons after the Parkland massacre. Simple safety technology, the kind that powers smart homes, cars and phones, can also be applied to guns.

Aryam Guerrero, who lost her brother Juan Ramon at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando in 2016, told my colleague Melissa Chan this week that she has become numb to the constant threat. "I just live my life as if I could die in the next 30 minutes," Guerrero said. "You have no choice but to live with it."

We do have a choice as a society. Not a perfect choice. Or a guaranteed solution. But doing nothing in the face of repeated mass murder in our society is indefensible.

More than 250 mass shootings in the first 220 days of 2019 alone, it's hard to believe that this doesn't go without saying.

Enough.

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



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Pearl, childhood cancer survivor; and Arnold, leukemia survivor.

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Lori, breast cancer survivor.



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Pictured: Heroes from Marvel Studios' *Avengers: Endgame*. Survivor photos by Kevin Lynch.



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‘To those who want to use xenophobia for political goals, we take the path of fraternity.’

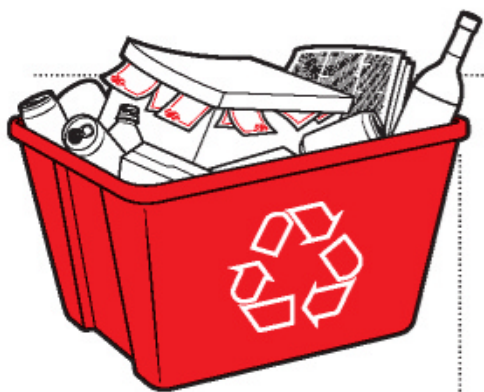
**IVÁN DUQUE,**

President of Colombia, announcing on Aug. 5 that babies born to Venezuelan refugees in the country from August 2015 to August 2021 would receive citizenship

‘The Boy Scouts don’t protect children.’

**STEWART EISENBERG,**

a lawyer representing a man who filed a lawsuit against the Boy Scouts of America on Aug. 6, alleging he was sexually abused hundreds of times as a Boy Scout in Pennsylvania in the 1970s; the Boy Scouts have said the organization responds “aggressively and effectively to reports of sexual abuse”



**\$23,000**

Amount of cash in a shoebox that an Oregon man accidentally put into recycling; after the man contacted the sorting company, the shoebox—and almost all the money—was discovered at a Northern California recycling plant



**100 m.p.h.**

Speed at which French jet-ski champion Franky Zapata crossed the English Channel via hoverboard on Aug. 4

**Trading cards**  
FBI issues subpoenas in probe of sports trading-card fraud



**Credit cards**  
Apple starts invite-only rollout of its new credit card

‘These guys are going to die in the streets like cockroaches—and that’s how it should be.’

**JAIR BOLSONARO,**

President of Brazil, who said in an Aug. 5 interview that he wants to make it easier for officers to shoot alleged offenders without being prosecuted

‘AT LEAST OUR DNA IS OFFSITE NOW.’

**NOVA SPIVACK,**

co-founder of Arch Mission Foundation, which supplied human DNA samples carried by the privately funded Israeli spacecraft that crash-landed on the moon in April; when his comments to *Wired* prompted speculation that organic material on the craft could reproduce there, he clarified on Twitter on Aug. 6 that it could not

‘My dad was a little mad that the name wasn’t George.’

**JENNA BUSH HAGER,**

Today show co-host, recalling on Aug. 5 the joking reaction of her father, former President George W. Bush, to the Aug. 2 birth of her third child and first son, Henry



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**"I was amazed! Sounds I hadn't heard in years came back to me!"**

— Don W., Sherman, TX

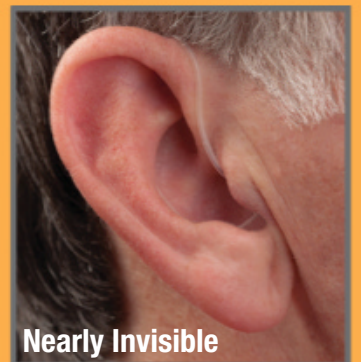
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# The Brief

**IN CONTROL**  
Indian troops stand guard on Aug. 5 during a curfew in the Kashmir Valley city of Srinagar



**INSIDE**

*DO REFORMS FOR SAUDI WOMEN  
GO FAR ENOUGH?*

*"FLIGHT SHAME" HAS EUROPE  
TRAVELING BY TRAIN*

*FILMMAKER D.A. PENNEBAKER IS  
REMEMBERED BY RORY KENNEDY*

PHOTOGRAPH BY TAUSEEF MUSTAFA

WORLD

## India takes Kashmir, but loses Kashmiris

By Naina Bajekal

**O**N THE SUNNY, CLOUDLESS MORNING WHEN Imaad Tariq was born in Kashmir, most of his family had no idea. “Nobody knows that my wife delivered a baby boy,” says Tariq Ahmad Sheikh, at the hospital on Aug. 6, a day later. “We couldn’t inform family, nor is anyone able to reach here.”

In the early hours of Aug. 5, the Indian government shut down the Internet as well as landline and cell networks in Kashmir, as part of an unprecedented bid for greater control of the disputed Himalayan territory, which both Pakistan and India claim and over which they have gone to war three times. Some 7 million people in the region were left with no way to contact the outside world, as the government closed schools, banned public meetings and barricaded neighborhoods. Officials arrested more than 100 people, including political leaders, activists and former chief ministers of the state. Local reports quote police saying at least one protester died.

But few Kashmiris will know any of that. Many may not even be aware that hours after the blackout began, India’s Home Minister Amit Shah announced the state of Jammu and Kashmir would be stripped of the special status it had held since shortly after the Partition of British India in 1947. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government said it would revoke two crucial articles of India’s constitution that have guaranteed Kashmiris the right to their own flag, constitution and near autonomy for seven decades. Overnight, India brought in radical changes to its only Muslim-majority state, while its population was left in the dark.

**TO SOME,** India’s move was a rebuke to President Trump’s suggestion in July that Modi had asked him to mediate in Kashmir, which New Delhi angrily denied. Others see it as an attempt to shift the region’s demographics; the legal maneuver paves the way for (largely Hindu) outsiders to buy property there for the first time, sparking comparisons to Israeli settlers in the West Bank. “Kashmir was always seen as real estate, not a place with people,” says Nitasha Kaul, a Kashmiri writer based in London. Scraping Kashmir’s autonomy has long been a goal of Modi’s Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which returned to power for a second term in May with an even bigger mandate. “A decision has been taken about Kashmir in which no Kashmiri has been a stakeholder,” says

Indian journalist Rana Ayyub. “This is an attack on Indian democracy.”

And while Modi’s government stokes tensions between Hindus and Muslims elsewhere, unrest in Kashmir has been steadily growing. A U.N. report in July cited local data showing 160 Kashmiri civilians were killed in 2019 alone, thought to be the highest figure in over a decade. In February, a suicide bombing by Pakistani-backed militants killed 40 Indian paramilitary police in Kashmir; in response, India sent fighter jets into Pakistani airspace and dropped bombs near the town of Balakot in Pakistan. (There were no confirmed casualties.)

India’s latest move has further widened the rift with its neighbor, risking a return to hostilities between the nuclear-armed states. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan warned Parliament on Aug. 6 that India’s actions would likely spark militant violence, leading to tit-for-tat strikes. “If we fight a war until we shed the last drop of our blood, no one will win,” he said. “It will have grievous consequences for the entire world.” Pakistan has since downgraded diplomatic ties and suspended bilateral trade with New Delhi.

But the risk to Islamabad of engineering a violent backlash via militant groups would be “very great,” says Farzana Shaikh, an associate fellow at the London think tank Chatham House, especially as Washington has declined to intervene. U.S. officials told TIME the Trump Administration so far is taking no action to prevent an escalation of the conflict between the two countries. And with Pakistan’s economy suffering, a fresh conflict with India could derail its attempts to repair relations with the West. “India in many ways has played its cards just right,” Shaikh says.

Beyond the geopolitics, though, it’s hard to see how India will win the hearts and minds of ordinary Kashmiris, who woke up on Aug. 5 to find their Internet cut off—and not for the first time. “There’s essentially no other place on earth that has had as many Internet shutdowns as Kashmir,” says Ravi Agrawal, the author of *India Connected*. Without any means of communication, it’s hard for locals to organize protests that could turn violent, just as it is for militants to plan an attack.

But at some point, the shutdown will end and Kashmiris will discover that Delhi has reshaped their lives in a move that carries echoes of a dark history. “I am reminded of the days surrounding Partition, when Indians and Pakistanis had no idea which country they woke up in,” Hafsa Kanjwal, a historian at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, wrote on Facebook. Modi is likely hoping a child like Imaad Tariq, born under a different constitution than his father, will grow up to embrace India. History suggests that might not be so simple.

—With reporting by BILLY PERRIGO/LONDON, FAHAD SHAH/SRINAGAR, KASHMIR and JOHN WALCOTT and KIMBERLY DOZIER/WASHINGTON □

**‘Together we are, together we shall rise and together we will fulfil [sic] the dreams of [1.3 billion] Indians.’**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Twitter on Aug. 6





**DIRECT ACTION** Protesters march through the streets of Hong Kong on Aug. 3, two days before a general strike there—and a subsequent police crackdown and warnings from Beijing that harsher treatment was coming. The strike came more than two months after uproar first began over a controversial extradition bill that many feared would erode Hong Kong’s autonomy. Though the region’s chief executive declared that bill “dead” last month, the protest movement has continued.

#### THE BULLETIN

## New freedoms for women in Saudi Arabia draw cheers—and doubt

SAUDI ARABIA HAS ANNOUNCED SWEEPING reforms to its system of *wilayah*, or guardianship—a jumble of regulations that dictate what women can and can’t do on their own, and that Human Rights Watch has said constitute “the most significant impediment to realizing women’s rights in the country.” The publication of the new laws on Aug. 2 prompted exuberant memes from Saudi women on social media, even as activists who have agitated for changes to the system remain in jail or on trial.

**IN CONTROL** On July 31, Saudi Arabia’s Council of Ministers approved new regulations indicating that women over the age of 21 will soon be able to obtain passports without requiring a close male relative’s permission. The reforms, which Saudi Arabia’s ambassador to the U.S., Princess Reema bint Bandar, called “history in the making,” also promise to improve protection against employment discrimination and grant women more autonomy over family matters. For example, while they have long had to depend on male relatives to register births, marriages or divorces, the new laws allow them to take those steps alone.

**STUDY IN CONTRASTS** Since Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman became the kingdom’s de facto leader in 2017, he has overseen a series of reforms like the latest to *wilayah*, including blunting the power of the religious police and lifting the ban on women driving. But his attempts to cast himself as a modernizer have been undermined by crackdowns on dissident voices, mounting criticism of Saudi involvement in the war in Yemen and a recent U.N. report citing “credible evidence” linking him to the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

**UNCHANGED** Human-rights groups welcomed the “long overdue” move to begin dismantling the guardianship system, but noted women will still require the permission of a male relative to marry or to leave prison or women’s shelters. And, rights groups have also noted, some who might have offered key insight on the news could not. Women’s-rights activists like Loujain al-Hathloul—who was arrested last year ahead of Saudi Arabia’s first granting women driver’s licenses—remain imprisoned there, even as others look ahead to greater freedom. —JOSEPH HINCKS

#### NEWS TICKER

### North Korea nets billions in cybercrime

North Korea has earned as much as \$2 billion through **large-scale cyberattacks on banks and cryptocurrency exchanges**, per a report to the U.N. leaked on Aug. 5. The report said the funds were being channeled to the country’s weapons-of-mass-destruction programs.

### Texas GOP Reps plan to retire

Texas Congressman Kenny Marchant said on Aug. 5 that he’ll retire from the House of Representatives next year. As once conservative suburban districts have become more contested in the era of Donald Trump, he brings the number of **Texas Republicans who say they won’t run in 2020** to four—and GOP Representatives overall to 11.

### New Zealand proposes abortion bill

New Zealand’s government unveiled a new bill on Aug. 5 that would **decriminalize abortion in the generally socially liberal country**. Those seeking the procedure there currently require the signatures of two doctors to certify that the mother’s physical or mental health is at serious risk.

## NEWS TICKER

### Trump signs sanctions on Venezuela

As the U.S. steps up its campaign against Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro, President Donald Trump issued an Executive Order on Aug. 5 **expanding economic sanctions on the country.** The order freezes U.S. assets of Maduro's government and prohibits Americans from doing business with it.

### Ebola spreads to major city in Congo

Health workers in the Democratic Republic of Congo confirmed **the first transmission of Ebola in Goma, an eastern city of 2 million,** on Aug. 1, after the wife and daughter of a man who died from the virus were infected. In July, the U.N. declared the outbreak, which has killed more than 1,800 in one year, an international emergency.

### U.S. ambassador to Russia resigns

Jon Huntsman, the U.S. ambassador to Russia, submitted his letter of resignation to President Trump on Aug. 6. The former governor of Utah, who'll continue to serve until Oct. 3, characterized his tenure as one of **"historically difficult" relations between the U.S. and Russia.**

## POSTCARD

### The season of 'flight shame' takes off

AS THE TRAIN FOR BERLIN PULLED OUT OF Malmo station in southern Sweden on a sweltering July afternoon, the atmosphere among the six strangers seated in car 104 was almost festive. It's unlikely their cheerfulness was sparked by the close quarters, replete with faded velour seats, or by the 13-hour adventure ahead. Perhaps instead it sprang from a shared mission. "I felt guilty when we flew to Barcelona for our last holiday," student Cathrine Hellberg said to nods all around. "I feel a little proud now to be taking the train."

This is the season of *flygskam* (flight shame) and its counterpart *tagskryt* (train bragging). You don't have to be teen climate activist Greta Thunberg—who is crossing the Atlantic by sailboat in August—to be among the growing number of Europeans eager to reduce their carbon footprints by limiting air travel. Coined by Swedish opera singer Malena Ernman, who happens to be Thunberg's mother, *flygskam* refers to the guilt people feel using a form of transportation that contributes 2% to 3% of total atmospheric carbon, as well as the shaming they may face should they persist in flying. As record-high temperatures have driven the reality of climate change home, grassroots initiatives like the Flygfritt social-media campaign—which persuaded 14,500 Swedes to renounce air travel in 2019 (and is shooting for 100,000 in 2020)—have helped *flygskam* spread.

For Snälltåget, the Swedish rail company that acquired the Malmo-Berlin line in 2011, the impact is striking. After years of turning

no profit, the company has seen a 20% increase in ticket sales in the first six months of 2019. "Right now, there's more demand than we can handle," says Marco Andersson, head of sales and marketing. And domestic flights in Sweden have fallen 4.5% in the first quarter of 2019 compared with the previous year, according to SJ, the national rail company.

It's enough to make an airline executive nervous. "The enemy isn't travel; the enemy is carbon," says Chris Goater, spokesperson for the International Air Transport Association, which is hoping new technologies like electric planes—rather than fewer flights—can help airlines reach emissions targets.

Sweden isn't the only place feeling the effects of *flygskam* (in fact, the Dutch, Germans and Finns have their own words for it). Europe's largest international passenger rail company, Austria's ÖBB, has seen 10% growth this spring and summer on some lines. But even if Europeans are inclined to cut back on flying, many are put off by the high prices and frequent changes involved in train travel. After low-cost airlines like EasyJet and Ryanair emerged in the mid-1990s, they helped bring a near end to the era of sleeping cars. Few cheap, direct rail journeys between major European cities remain. Governments and private rail companies are starting to respond to the increased demand, but better infrastructure will take years.

For Saga Thomsson, en route to Montpellier, France, for a vacation with her mother, even Snälltåget's outdated trains marked the best choice. "You don't travel by train to show off or make others feel shame," she said, standing in line to brush her teeth in the compartment's washroom. "You do it because you want to do the right thing." —LISA ABEND

## HISTORY

### Hiding in plain sight

Scientists unveiled a new dinosaur species on Aug. 5 after realizing a fossil in a South African museum had been misidentified for 30 years. Here, more museum mishaps. —Ciara Nugent

#### WHALE OF A TALE

The National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., learned in 2015 that **what curators had labeled a walrus fossil** was evidence of a then unknown species of a prehistoric sperm whale.



A researcher shows the whale fossil

#### FACE THE CHANGE

In June, a Madrid art museum relabeled a portrait, supposedly of Belgium's King Leopold II, after a visitor happened to recognize it as the face of French sculptor Auguste Rodin. Both men wore heavy beards.

#### HARD TO UNWRAP

A mummified hawk from ancient Egypt, brought to an English museum in the early 20th century, underwent advanced scanning in 2018 and turned out to be the tightly wrapped remains of a stillborn human fetus.

# Milestones

## DIED

**Hal Prince**, a Tony-winning Broadway director and producer of shows such as *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Cabaret*, on July 31 at 91.

## SENTENCED

**Cesar Sayoc**, the Trump supporter who sent pipe bombs to prominent Democrats last October, to 20 years in prison on Aug. 5.

## REPORTED

That 17 countries, home to **one-fourth of the world's population**, are in danger of running out of water, by the World Resources Institute, on Aug. 6.

## CHARGED

**R. Kelly**, with two counts of engaging in prostitution with a minor, by officials in Minneapolis on Aug. 5. Kelly, whose lawyers deny his guilt, is already fighting charges in New York and Illinois.

## RELEASED

**Cyntoia Brown**, who received clemency 15 years into a life sentence for killing a man as a teen trafficking victim, from a Tennessee prison on Aug. 7.

## RULED

That Puerto Rico Governor Pedro Pierluisi **was sworn in on unconstitutional grounds**, by Puerto Rico's supreme court on Aug. 7, after its senate sued.

## SEPARATED

**Twins who were born conjoined at the head**, by a team of 35 Hungarian doctors. They were in stable condition on Aug. 2 after the 30-hour procedure.



*Pennebaker in 1967, the year his film Dont Look Back was released*

## DIED

### D.A. Pennebaker

#### Documentary pioneer

By Rory Kennedy

D.A. PENNEBAKER, WHO DIED ON AUG. 1 AT 94, MADE MONUMENTAL contributions to the field of documentary filmmaking. My own gratitude for his work is personal as well as professional: his free-moving camera captured not only our nation's history, but also my family's.

Early in his career, he was part of the team that made *Primary*, which documented my uncle John F. Kennedy's and his opponent Hubert Humphrey's presidential campaigns over five days during the 1960 Wisconsin Democratic primary. Using the newly developed sync sound camera, Penny moved with his subjects in real time. A few years later, in *Crisis*, he helped chronicle President Kennedy and my father, then Attorney General Robert Kennedy, battling with Governor George Wallace over school desegregation.

A truly groundbreaking artist, Penny carved a new road for future cinema verité directors and created innovative narrative structures now ubiquitous in cinema and television. I will always treasure my friendship with him and with his wife, partner and fellow documentarian Chris Hegedus. He left future generations the gift of his work, and the world of film infinitely richer for his having been in it.

*Kennedy* is a documentary filmmaker

## ANNOUNCED

### Media merger A local-news giant

NOT SO LONG AGO, THE merger of America's two largest newspaper chains would have raised concerns about a worrisome concentration of media power. When completed, the \$1.4 billion purchase of Gannett by GateHouse Media, announced on Aug. 5, will mean a single firm controls *USA Today*, more than 260 other dailies and 300 weeklies across 47 states and Guam.

The new firm, to be known as Gannett, might appear to be doing in print what Sinclair Broadcast Group has tried to do in television. Until regulators stopped it last year, ultra-conservative Sinclair was on track to add Tribune Media's 42 TV stations to its 193 stations, creating a behemoth reaching nearly three-quarters of U.S. homes.

But in the Internet age, a print merger is the opposite of a power play. Around 1,800 American newspapers have died since 2004, most of them serving—and observing—small markets. Joining two companies that own a lot of them is a way to cut costs. But reporters fear what that means. Nationwide in the first five months of 2019, some 3,000 journalists have been laid off.

—KARL VICK



## In a new Broadway play, **Jake Gyllenhaal** attempts something radical: normality

By **Belinda Luscombe**

JAKE GYLLENHAAL IS NO STRANGER TO PLAYING strangers. He's Hollywood's go-to guy for delivering loners, slippery souls who aren't quite what they seem, dudes who are hiding something behind those hedgerow eyebrows, from the tortured cowboy in *Brokeback Mountain* to the obsessive cop with a history in *Prisoners* to the superhero Mysterio who's neither super nor hero in his current film *Spider-Man: Far From Home*.

However, for six nights a week during a brief stint on Broadway this summer, Gyllenhaal is transforming into what may be one of his most alien characters yet: a regular bloke, with the same daunting problems nearly everyone faces, the departure of a parent and the arrival of a child. And unlike so many of the men Gyllenhaal inhabits, the guy in *Sea Wall/A Life*, a two-act show in which Gyllenhaal's character Abe handles the second half, actually does want to talk about it. "I don't understand why we prepare so f-cking wonderfully and elaborately for birth," says Abe, "and yet so appallingly and haphazardly for death."

The actor, 38, has no wife, no child and two living parents, TV director Stephen Gyllenhaal and screenwriter Naomi Foner. He doesn't even really, he says, have a home. "I don't know if I would necessarily say I've settled anywhere," says Gyllenhaal, sitting in his dressing room a few hours before the second preview of the show. "I feel like I'm constantly moving." But he recoils at the idea that he's in unfamiliar terrain when taking on such visceral human transitions as the death and birth of family. "I have lost a lot of people that I love. I do know the feeling of loss. And I do know the feeling of deeply, deeply loving," he says. "I have been at the birth of children that I love. I think those feelings are actually much closer than we assume."

The Gyllenhaal family is, of course, famous for its famousness. Gyllenhaal's mother was nominated for an Oscar for the screenplay *Running on Empty*. His sister Maggie and brother-in-law Peter Sarsgaard are successful actors. His godmother is Jamie Lee Curtis. The Gyllenhaals are basically the Park Slope, Brooklyn, version of the Kardashians, obsessed with stories instead of cosmetics.

Like Kim and company, they appear to be tight-knit. The elder Mr. Gyllenhaal, whom the younger calls "my pops" and "the sweetest, kindest man,"

### GYLLENHAAL QUICK FACTS

#### He enjoys politics

He leans left but says, "I think we are in a time of listening, trying to figure out what is leadership, how it's changing, whether it's actually the entire system, whether it's the leader themselves."

#### And some of the Internet

"The nature of the culture we live in now is that people say and find the oddest things. I think the absurdity of it all should be enjoyed."

#### But not his eyebrows

"I'm like a walking *New Yorker* cartoon."

came in from L.A. to help his daughter and son-in-law move recently, and popped by the Hudson Theatre to see his son's show for the third or fourth time. (It had an off-Broadway run earlier this year.) "He came backstage, he was really moved this time, I think because of a number of things in the show that have evolved and changed," says Gyllenhaal. "We cried together."

There's what could be called a family shrine arranged in front of the actor's dressing-room mirror. It includes a box of old photographs of father and son, some of which are the obligatory beach-vacation family snaps. "He's really incredible, actually, at building sandcastles," recalls Gyllenhaal as he flips through them. There's a framed image of the actor as a baby with his dad. I LOVE YOU is written in neat capitals on a yellow sticky note stuck to the mirror. Those are both from his mom.

But Gyllenhaal doesn't need to sit and ponder them to get into the right mind frame before going onstage. He doesn't have much of a preshow ritual at all, because he prefers to take each performance as it comes. The night his father came, the actor was outside looking at the new artwork put up on the exterior wall of the theater by his friend, the perpetually sunglasses-wearing French photographer JR. It's a series of posters of all the people who came to the first performance. It's not an ad for the show, Gyllenhaal points out, just a collaboration. It's good to be a friend of Gyllenhaal's. He likes collaborating. During a tour of the green-room, he notes it was decorated by furniture-maker friends. He has made two movies with writer-director Dan Gilroy and two with the director Denis Villeneuve, and *A Life* is his third turn with the playwright Nick Payne, whom he met making his New York City theater debut, *If There Is I Haven't Found It Yet*.

It took five years from when Payne first sent Gyllenhaal some thoughts on the death of his father to persuade him to turn it into a play and then a few more to bring the play to the stage. "I've never really fit into a space that anybody has tried to fit me into," says the star of his career. "I just try to maintain as much of what I believe in or who I am as I can."

**WHEN HE COMES OUT** on the very bare stage of *Sea Wall/A Life*, Abe's addressing a crowd who has already had their emotions wrung out by the first act, *Sea Wall*, performed by Tom Sturridge. For the next hour or so, Gyllenhaal has to hold that audience with another story, funnier but less dramatic, and with no props except a pair of glasses and an iPhone. "Tom's piece sort of breaks open people's hearts in a way," he says. "I try to tell the audience very particularly that we're on a different journey now."

Abe swings erratically between the two narratives, his father's ill health and his wife's pregnancy,



with the only constant being how unprepared he is for either. It requires a lot of tricky tonal shifts, sometimes midsentence. But Gyllenhaal revels in it, doing two things at the same time, blurring the edges between them. He asked Payne for more as they developed the script.

Close Gyllenhaal observers, and there are many, especially among the film-student crowd, note that the actor excels in being two often contradictory types at once. The Marine in *Jarhead* who never sees action. The cameraman in *Nightcrawler* who begins to direct the news. The college professor in *Enemy* who has a stuntman twin. Tellingly, the actor named his production company Nine Stories, after a book by J.D. Salinger, who insisted his writing never be adapted for film.

Even the star's first foray into the superhero world is a meta-exercise. Gyllenhaal's less compelled by the obvious moral of the Mysterio story line—that if you create enough fear, people will believe anything—and more in the nature of belief. “I think it's been made very clear that we're in a time where truth is very confusing, and we have

**‘To me, the more interesting thing is that we also need to be careful about the myths that we tell. And who we believe in.’**

JAKE GYLLENHAAL,  
actor

people in our leadership making that confusing,” he says. “To me, the more interesting thing is that we also need to be careful about the myths that we tell. And who we believe in.” Gyllenhaal participates in one of this generation's most successful mythmaking enterprises by playing a character who calls into question everything about the making of myths.

It's tempting to think that having processed all that, the actor is relishing the chance to return to a more primal form of storytelling: two guys and their testimonies. But he insists that's not the appeal of the play. What he loves, he says, is the response. Not (just) the applause or the energy of a live audience, but the recognition people have of their lives. After the show theatergoers line up to tell him about their fathers or their children. “I've never felt it from anything I've ever done,” he says. “To hear the stories back at me, at such a consistent rate, that is unlike anything I've been a part of. I mean it just hit something.” It's almost as if Gyllenhaal has discovered that while oddballs are interesting to play, humans are interesting to talk to. □



# LightBox

## Into the sea

Rivers of meltwater carve into the Greenland ice sheet near the Sermeq Avangnardleg glacier in this view from a plane on Aug. 4. July was the hottest month since record keeping began 139 years ago, one more entry in the ledger marked “Climate Crisis.” Still another came on Aug. 1, when the largest one-day loss by volume of the Greenland ice sheet was recorded—12.5 billion tons of ice melted in the course of 24 hours.

*Photograph by Sean Gallup—Getty Images*

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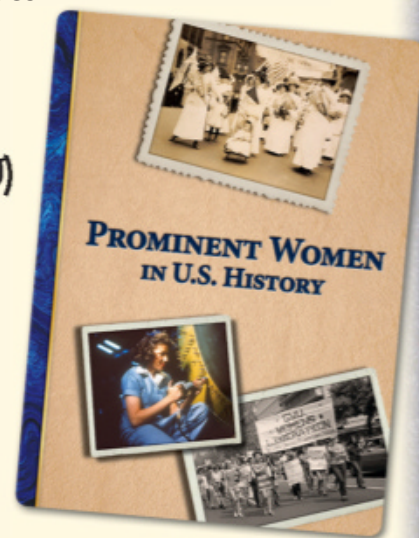
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# The View

NATION

## HOW FERGUSON WOKE US UP

By **Brittany Packnett**

On Aug. 10, 2014, my first day of protest after the shooting of Michael Brown Jr., I stood outside the Ferguson Police Department and asked an officer why, on the night prior, he had brought German shepherds to a black community in grief, evoking the trauma of the mid-century civil rights movement. “Well, did anyone die?” he replied.

INSIDE

SCREENING CHILDREN  
FOR ABUSE

CHINA'S CURRENCY GAMES  
THREATEN TRADE

MAKING MIDDLE  
SCHOOL LESS AWFUL

# The View Opener

If that's the standard, I thought, that's precisely the problem.

"Yes. His name was Michael Brown Jr. And that's why we're not going home."

Five years after Brown—an unarmed black teenager—was gunned down by officer Darren Wilson, Ferguson is a fixture. The day that a small town 15 minutes from my childhood home went from being Ferguson, Mo., to #Ferguson altered our collective outlook forever. But in August 2014, we weren't trying to change the world as much as we were trying to secure our own humanity. We saw in Brown's slain body the spirit of every black young person, under threat by systems that seem to feed on our downfall.

Our work was not looked upon with universal admiration. For months, we were called thugs, as though our black skin precluded us from being patriots. We were painted as lawless and disorganized, despite our strategy and discipline. And our righteous outpouring was met by tear gas and rubber bullets from local police departments.

But the police kept killing us, so we kept showing up. We did as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wanted:

we went wherever injustice lived, creating the crisis that would drive power structures to change. In the end, we had built a movement we call the Ferguson Uprising: over 400 days of sustained direct action.

**BROWN WAS KILLED** after five years under our first black President and an Administration during which progressive values inched their way into lawmaking. The lullaby hummed by the existence of a thoughtful President began to unwittingly hush many of us to sleep. Long past the Black Power movement or even Occupy Wall Street, too many of us had forgotten the responsibilities of the office of citizen.

The pot began to simmer when Trayvon Martin was killed in 2012. In Ferguson it boiled over. The uprising shifted society: long before Trump's Inauguration, resistance marches emerged across the country, mirroring Ferguson in tenacity and power, centered

on their own victims of police violence. The uprising shifted culture: films like Ava DuVernay's *Selma* and artists like Jesse Williams and Common placed the long narrative of black struggle in the context of our cries in Ferguson, and brands embraced the value of social change. The uprising shifted politics: police shootings went from footnotes to front-page stories, with outlets tracking just how disproportionately black, brown and indigenous the victims are. Democratic presidential candidates are now expected to not only have plans for ending police violence but also to talk knowledgeably about systemic racism.

In December 2014, seven activists met with President Obama and senior adviser Valerie Jarrett at the White House, and the four of us from Ferguson gave an unvarnished account of what was happening on our streets. Toward the end, the President shared advice,

former organizer to current ones. He recalled Dr. King: "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice," he quoted. "It's long. That means we need you in this for a while."

The work is not done. Police still kill over 1,000 people every year and rarely face

punishment. Local organizations are still fighting the overzealous policing practices in St. Louis County that contributed to the violence visited upon black communities. Many activists have faced the harsh consequences of society's failure to acknowledge their contributions. And the Trump White House has pursued policies that deepen harm in black communities.

The best way to honor the Ferguson Uprising is never to place it in our rearview mirror. It took centuries for the current political landscape to form, and it will take all of us placing our hands on the plow to till the soil for the world we dream of to grow. Freedom work isn't popular, but whether it's fighting police violence in St. Louis or white supremacy in El Paso, it is always necessary. Ferguson put our country back to work again.

*Packnett is an activist and the author of the forthcoming We Are Like Those Who Dream*



Police lock down a neighborhood in Ferguson amid protests in August 2014

## SHORT READS

► Highlights from stories on [time.com/ideas](http://time.com/ideas)

### Safety first

If a doctor says your kid should be screened for abuse, don't be offended, say Dr. Richard Klasco and Dr. Daniel Lindberg of the University of Colorado School of Medicine. Physicians are taking a new approach to make sure they don't miss cases. **"Challenging as these encounters may be," they write, "children must be protected, and biases must be rectified."**

### Old-school lessons

Students today are typically taught that racism is bad, but according to Charles King, author of *Gods of the Upper Air*, they're still not learning the truth about race. **"At worst," he writes, "high school courses are still teaching things that race theorists and eugenicists from a century ago would have understood and applauded."**

### Planning ahead

You may not want to think about it, but Shoshana Berger and BJ Miller, authors of *A Beginner's Guide to the End*, strongly suggest that you make a "When I Die" file for your loved ones. **In fact, they write, "it may be the single most important thing you do before you depart."**

## THE RISK REPORT

# Choppy waters ahead for the U.S.-China trade war

By Ian Bremmer



THE U.S.-CHINA trade conflict continues to escalate. When the most recent round of talks produced no apparent progress, President

Trump upped the ante by announcing new tariffs on the \$300 billion in Chinese imports the U.S. hadn't already taxed. Beijing first responded by warning that it would stop importing all U.S. agricultural products. (China is one of the world's largest importers of these products.) Then, on Aug. 5, China raised the stakes again by allowing traders to push the value of its currency below the psychological barrier of 7 yuan to 1 U.S. dollar. That move is designed to hurt the U.S. economy by making U.S. products more expensive for Chinese consumers and companies to buy, and to help Chinese producers by making Chinese products more affordable in the U.S. In that sense, it weakens the impact of the Trump tariffs. The U.S. side then hit back by officially branding China a "currency manipulator."

These moves don't mean the U.S.-China conflict is spiraling out of control. Chinese policymakers know that currency is a dangerous weapon. By raising prices for Chinese consumers, a weaker Chinese renminbi may further weaken an already slowing Chinese economy. It increases the debt for Chinese companies that have borrowed money in U.S. dollars and other currencies, and it makes it more expensive to buy oil, which is generally priced in dollars. It also encourages other governments to dump renminbi that may be losing their value, creating more financial-market headaches for China, and could encourage them to lower the value of their own currencies in self-defense.

The U.S. move to brand China a currency manipulator is largely symbolic. The 1988 Trade Act, which created this

designation, calls on the Treasury Department to negotiate with the governments it has accused, but it doesn't automatically impose tough penalties on them.

In announcing its decision, the department said simply that Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin "will engage with the International Monetary Fund to eliminate the unfair competitive advantage created by China's latest actions." There are no specific threats of further action to boost his negotiating leverage. By Aug. 6, the Chinese currency had moved back beyond

the 7-1 barrier, signaling that China felt it had made its point and didn't intend to push further for now.

Still, the ongoing escalation should worry us. The two sides continue to put weapons on the table they don't yet intend to use. Both recognize that firing any of them could prove self-defeating and do a lot of collateral damage, but they don't seem closer to resolving their broader differences. Meantime, the weapons are now visible for all to

see, and until one side or the other finds a mutually satisfying path toward peace, it becomes harder not to use them.

As election year approaches in the U.S., Beijing will target its actions at U.S. voters that Trump needs. It may also feel it can wait until after the election to see whether there might be a new U.S. President, and if Chinese action targeted at U.S. farmers helps with that process, so much the better for Beijing. In response, Trump has signaled that policy won't work: "our great American Farmers know that China will not be able to hurt them in that their President has stood with them and done what no other president would do," Trump tweeted on Aug. 6. He has incentives to prove he's tough on China and to avoid any action that might look like retreat.

They say in politics, timing is everything. That bodes ill for the next few months of U.S.-China conflict. □

**As election year approaches in the U.S., Beijing will target its actions at U.S. voters that Trump will need**

## EDUCATION

# Middle school made tolerable

Middle school, as documented in such educational opuses as *Eighth Grade*, is awful. Students who have done well in elementary school often stumble, become isolated and fall behind. But Geoffrey Borman, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison who specializes in education policy, thinks he may have found an answer. And it costs \$1.35 a student.

Borman and his team gave more than 600 Wisconsin students two 15-minute writing exercises, one at the start of school and one a month later, in which they were asked to react to a survey, with quotes lifted loosely from former students, about struggling in the early months of school. The idea was to suggest that everyone felt a little lost at first. The results were encouraging.

"The students who received our intervention missed fewer days of school, got sent to the principal's office less often and got better grades," says Borman. "They had better relationships with their teachers and classmates, were less anxious about big tests and were more motivated to do well in their classes." Even the Wimpy Kid would be impressed.

—Belinda Luscombe



Danielle Novoa,  
right, with her twin  
sister Jessica Torres  
at an interfaith vigil  
in El Paso's Ponder  
Park on Aug. 4

PHOTOGRAPH BY  
MARK LAMBIE

SPECIAL REPORT

# THE TERROR WITHIN

For decades, U.S. officials ignored the growing threat of domestic extremism. That may finally be changing **By Vera Bergengruen and W.J. Hennigan**

**BILL CLINTON**  
ON BANNING WEAPONS OF WAR

**JULISSA ARCE**  
ON FEARING THE OTHER

**DAVID FRENCH**  
ON THE RISE OF THE "ALT-RIGHT"

**JON MEACHAM**  
ON WHAT TRUMP WON'T SAY

**ROD ROSENSTEIN**  
ON PROSECUTING TERROR

**JESSICA GOLD & MEGAN RANNEY**  
ON GUNS AND MENTAL HEALTH



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STRONG



# WHAT DOES A TERRORIST LOOK LIKE?

For more than a generation, the image lurking in Americans' nightmares has resembled the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks: an Islamic jihadist. Not a 21-year-old white supremacist from a prosperous Dallas suburb.

But long before that young man drove to El Paso, Texas, on Aug. 3 and allegedly murdered at least 22 people at a Walmart crammed with back-to-school shoppers, it was clear that white nationalists have become the face of terrorism in America. Since 9/11, white supremacists and other far-right extremists have been responsible for almost three times as many attacks on U.S. soil as Islamic terrorists, the government reported. From 2009 through 2018, the far right has been responsible for 73% of domestic extremist-related fatalities, according to a 2019 study by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). And the toll is grow-

ing. More people—49—were murdered by far-right extremists in the U.S. last year than in any other year since the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995. FBI Director Christopher Wray told Congress in July that a majority of the bureau's domestic-terrorism investigations since October were linked to white supremacy.

Yet the nation's leaders have failed to meet this menace. In more than a dozen interviews with TIME, current and former federal law-enforcement and national-security officials described a sense of bewilderment and frustration as they watched warnings go ignored and the white-supremacist terror threat grow. Over the past decade, multiple attempts to refocus federal resources on the issue have been thwarted. Entire offices meant to coordinate an interagency response to right-wing extremism were funded, staffed and then defunded in the face of legal, constitutional and political concerns.

Today, FBI officials say just 20% of the bureau's counterterrorism field agents are focused on domestic probes. This year alone, those agents' caseload has included an investigation into an Ohio militia allegedly stockpiling explosives to build pipe bombs; a self-professed white-supremacist Coast Guard officer who amassed an arsenal in his apartment in the greater Washington, D.C., area; an attack in April at a synagogue outside San Diego that killed one; and the July 28 assault at a garlic festival in Gilroy, Calif., that killed three. Cesar Sayoc, a 57-year-old man from Florida, was sentenced to 20 years in prison on Aug. 5 after pleading guilty to mailing 16 pipe bombs to Democrats and critics of President Donald Trump.

The FBI has warned about the rising domestic

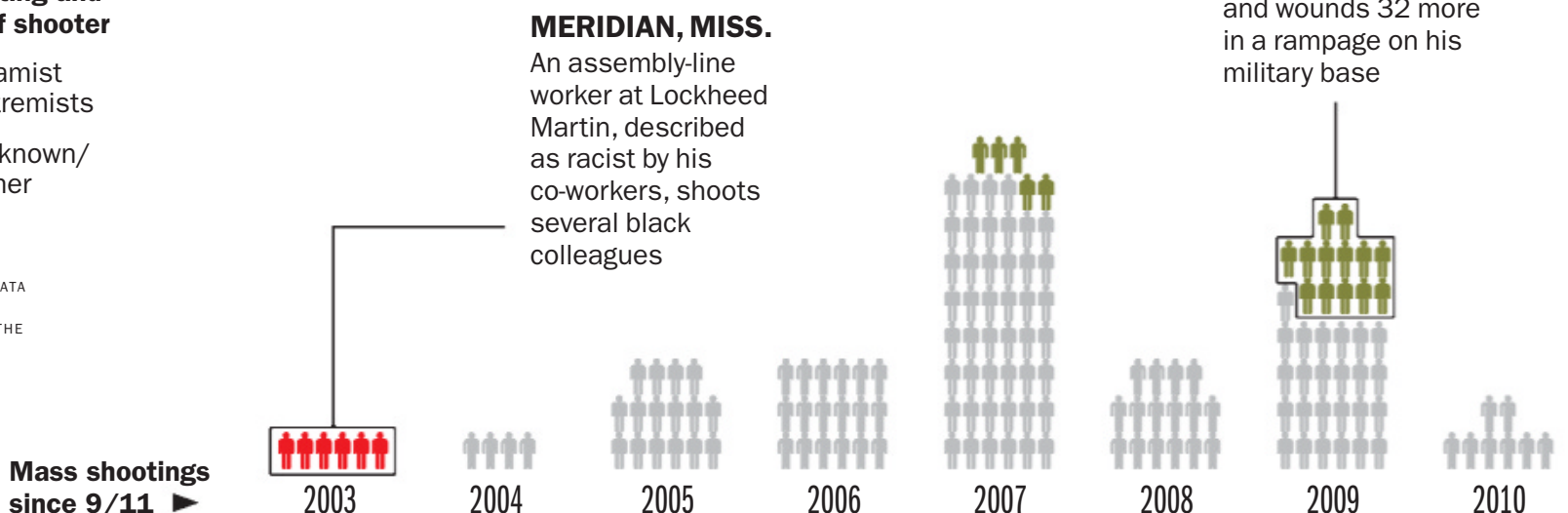
## HOMEGROWN THREAT

Since 2003, in the U.S., 663 people have died in mass shootings, defined as indiscriminate attacks in public with at least three fatalities, excluding the shooter. More than 1 in 4 victims were killed by an attacker who adhered to an extreme ideology.

### Deaths by mass shooting and suspected ideology of shooter

-  Right-wing extremists
-  Islamist extremists
-  Left-wing extremists
-  Unknown/Other

NOTE: TOTAL FATALITIES ADAPTED FROM MOTHER JONES. IDEOLOGY DATA THROUGH 2018 IS FROM THE U.S. EXTREMIST CRIME DATABASE AND THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE.



threat for years, but has not had a receptive audience in the White House. As a result, agency leadership hasn't historically prioritized white-supremacist violence even among homegrown threats, for years listing "eco-terrorism" as the top risk, former special agent Michael German told the House Committee on Oversight and Reform in May.

Law-enforcement officials say the cancer of white nationalism has metastasized across social media and the dark corners of the Internet, creating a copycat effect in which aspiring killers draw inspiration and seek to outdo one another. The suspect in El Paso was at least the third this year to post a manifesto on the online message forum 8chan before logging off to commit mass murder. More people were killed that day in El Paso than all 14 service members killed this year on the battlefields in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.

"Even if there was a crackdown right now, it's going to take years for the momentum of these groups to fade," says Daryl Johnson, a former senior analyst at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), whose 2009 report on right-wing extremism was lambasted by conservatives even before its release. "I'm afraid we've reached a tipping point where we're in for this kind of violence for a long time."

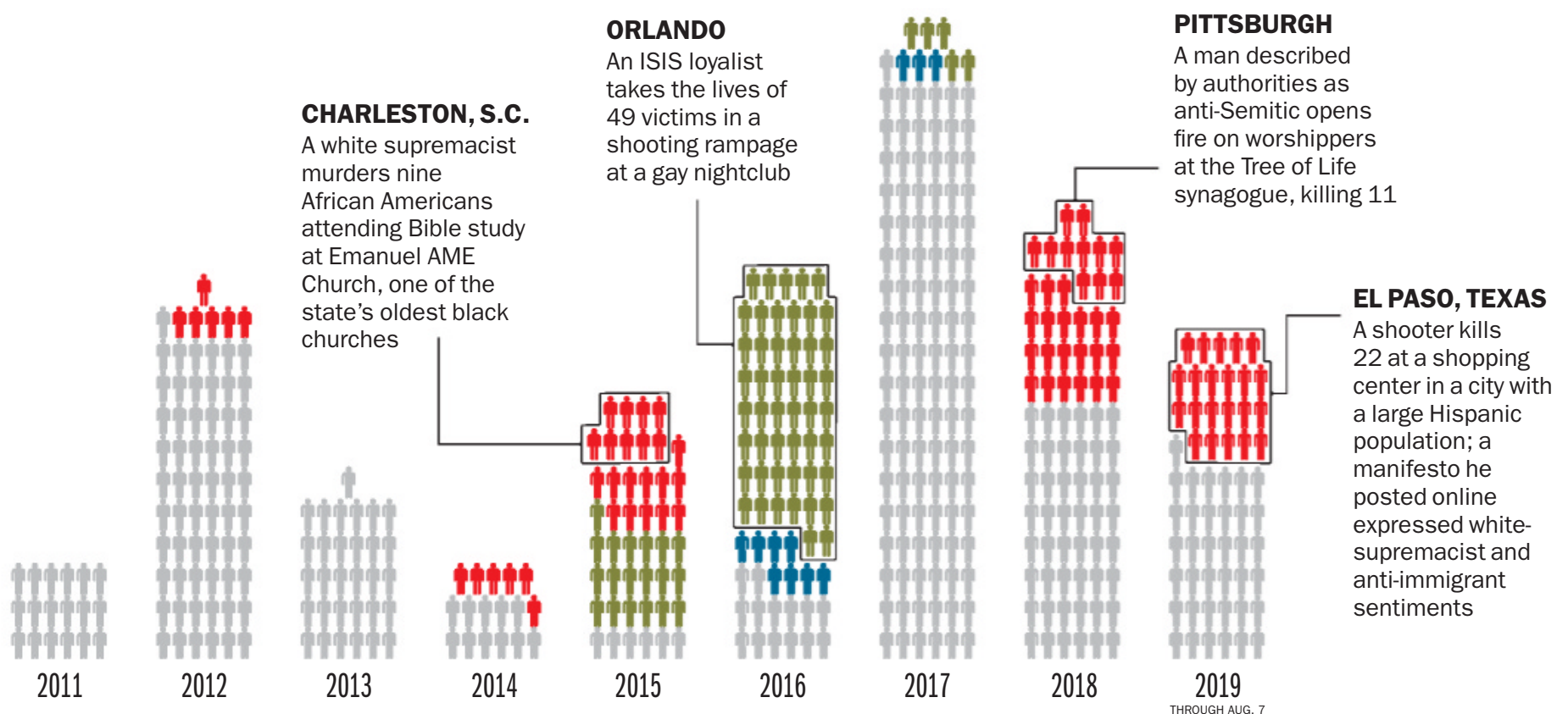
**RIGHT-WING TERRORISM** is a global problem, resulting in devastating attacks from New Zealand to Norway. But it is particularly dangerous in the U.S., which has more guns per capita than anywhere else in the world, an epidemic of mass shootings, a bedrock tradition of free speech that protects the expression of hateful ideologies and laws that make it challeng-

ing to confront a disaggregated movement that exists largely in the shadows of cyberspace.

Law enforcement lacks many of the weapons it uses against foreign enemies like al-Qaeda. To defend America from the danger posed by Islamist terror groups, the federal government built a globe-spanning surveillance and intelligence network capable of stopping attacks before they occurred. Federal agents were granted sweeping authorities by Congress to shadow foreign terrorist suspects. No comparable system exists in domestic-terror cases. Domestic terrorism is not even a federal crime, forcing prosecutors to charge suspects under hate-crime laws.

"White supremacy is a greater threat than international terrorism right now," says David Hickton, a former U.S. Attorney who directs the University of Pittsburgh Institute for Cyber Law, Policy and Security. "We are being eaten from within." Yet Hickton says federal prosecutors are limited in how they try domestic cases. "I'd have to pursue a white supremacist with hate crimes, unless he interfaced with al-Qaeda. Does that make any sense?"

Then there is the problem of a Commander in Chief whose rhetoric appears to mirror, validate and potentially inspire that of far-right extremists. The screed posted by the suspected terrorist in El Paso said he was motivated by a perceived "Hispanic invasion of Texas." President Trump's campaign has run some 2,200 Facebook ads warning of an "invasion" at the border, according to a CNN analysis. It's a term he regularly uses in tweets and interviews. "People hate the word *invasion*, but that's what it is," he said in the Oval Office in March. "It's an invasion of drugs and



criminals and people.” (The El Paso shooter said his actions were unconnected to Trump. A senior Administration official told TIME that the criticism linking the President’s rhetoric to violence was “unfortunate, unreasonable and obviously politically motivated.”)

In the wake of the El Paso attack, which was followed by a second mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio, roughly 13 hours later, Trump promised to give federal authorities “whatever they need” to combat domestic terrorism. He said law enforcement “must do a better job of identifying and acting on early warning signs” and said he was directing the Justice Department to “work in partnership with local, state and federal agencies, as well as social-media companies, to develop tools that can detect mass shooters before they strike.”

But White House officials did not specify which new authorities are needed. Nor does the Administration’s record offer much hope. In the early days of his presidency, the Trump Administration gutted the DHS office that focused on violent extremism in the U.S. and pulled funding for grants that were meant to go to organizations countering neo-Nazis, white supremacists, antigovernment militants and other like-minded groups.

**THE EL PASO SUSPECT** was born in 1998, three years after the worst homegrown terrorist attack in American history. The bombing of Oklahoma City’s Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building was carried out by Timothy McVeigh, a Gulf War veteran who wanted to exact revenge against the federal government for the deadly sieges in Waco, Texas, and Ruby Ridge, Idaho. The sprawling investigation that followed McVeigh’s attack, which killed 168 people, foreshadowed some of the challenges facing law enforcement today.

The bombing helped call attention to the threat of domestic terrorism. But that focus dissipated in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, which drove the full force of the U.S. national-security system into fighting Islamic terrorism. From 2005 to 2009, according to a Justice Department audit, the number of FBI agents assigned to domestic-terrorism probes averaged less than 330 out of a total of almost 2,000 FBI agents assigned to counterterrorism cases.

By the end of George W. Bush’s presidency, however, it had become apparent to U.S. officials monitoring such threats that something serious was brewing at home. The prospect of the first black President sparked a sharp rise in far-right groups, from so-called Patriot movement adherents to antigovernment militias, according to analysts at DHS. The Secret Service took the unprecedented step of assigning Barack Obama a protective detail in May 2007, mere months into his campaign and long before candidates typically receive protection.

Johnson, who led a six-person group at DHS’ Office of Intelligence and Analysis, began working



on a report about the rise of right-wing extremism. It warned that white nationalists, antigovernment extremists and members of other far-right groups were seizing on the economic crisis and Obama’s ascension to recruit new members. Johnson was preparing to release his report when a similar study by the Missouri Information Analysis Center, meant for law-enforcement officers, was leaked to the public in February 2009. The paper, titled “The Modern Militia Movement,” linked members of these militias to fundamentalist Christian, anti-abortion or anti-immigration movements.

The report was pilloried by GOP groups and politicians for singling out conservatives as possible criminals. Missouri officials warned Johnson about the blowback he could expect for publishing a similar analysis. But Johnson, who describes himself as a conservative Republican, says he thought the DHS lawyers and editors who worked on the report would



*Walmart employees pay their respects at a memorial outside the site of the El Paso mass shooting*

provide a layer of protection from GOP criticism. “I didn’t think the whole Republican Party would basically throw a hissy fit,” he recalls.

But when the DHS report was leaked to conservative bloggers in April 2009, it provoked an outcry from Republicans and conservative media, who painted it as a political hit job by the Obama Administration. DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, who originally issued a broad defense of the report, apologized to the American Legion for one of its most controversial components—a section that raised concerns about military veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and subsequently being susceptible targets for recruitment by right-wing groups. Johnson’s team was slowly disbanded; the number of analysts devoted to non-Islamic domestic terrorism dwindled from six to zero in 2010, he said.

The Missouri and DHS reports were early examples of how the fight against right-wing terrorism

would be hamstrung by politics. For years, “there’s been a visceral response from politicians that if these groups are being labeled as ‘right wing,’ then it’s Republicans who are responsible for those groups’ activities,” says Jason Blazakis, former director of the Counterterrorism Finance and Designations Office at the U.S. State Department, who is now a professor at the Middlebury Institute in Monterey, Calif. “It’s unfortunate, but I think in many ways this has resulted and served this reluctance in the Republican side to take as strong of action as they could.”

In interviews, veterans of the FBI, DHS and other national-security agencies recalled moments during the Obama Administration when they realized the domestic-terror threat was expanding unchecked. In January 2011, local police in Spokane, Wash., narrowly averted a tragedy when they redirected a Martin Luther King Day parade away from a roadside bomb planted on the route, loaded with shrapnel



coated with a substance meant to keep blood from clotting in wounds. At the time, it was one of the most sophisticated improvised explosive devices to appear in the U.S. Two months later, the FBI arrested Kevin William Harpham, 36, a former U.S. Army member linked to the neo-Nazi National Alliance. “I remember being like, ‘Wow, we have a problem,’” recalls former FBI agent Clint Watts, a fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute. “The belief was always that this would be al-Qaeda, not a former soldier who is a white supremacist.”

In 2011, the Obama White House released a strategy to “empower local partners” to counter violent extremism. As part of that plan, DHS official George Selim was put in charge of leading these efforts as director of an interagency task force in 2016. Selim’s office of community partnerships, which had been set up a year earlier, grew to 16 full-time employees and 25 contractors, with a total budget of \$21 million. As part of its work, it had \$10 million in grants for local programs to counter propaganda, recognize the signs of radicalization in local communities and intervene to stop attacks before they happen.

But the Obama Administration was wary of the political blowback, according to a senior government official familiar with the efforts of the FBI and DHS, and mindful of the government’s lack of legal authority to monitor domestic hate speech, obtain search or surveillance warrants, or recruit sources. Meanwhile, the threat continued to grow, fueled in online forums. In June 2015, Dylann Roof, a 21-year-old who posted on the neo-Nazi site Stormfront under the screen name “Lil Aryan,” opened

fire in a black church in Charleston, S.C., killing nine parishioners.

Then Trump won the White House. In the new Administration, efforts to confront domestic extremism “came to a grinding halt,” says Selim. The new Administration redirected federal resources on Islamist terrorism. Barely a week into his presidency, Reuters reported that Trump had tried to change the name of the Countering Violent Extremism program to Countering Radical Islamic Extremism.

The Administration’s reconstituted Office for Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention saw its mission expand while its staffing and budget were slashed to a fraction of what it had been, according to a former DHS official. “The infrastructure we had labored over for years started to get torn down,” says Selim, who also led counterterrorism efforts under George W. Bush. “It has been decimated in the past two years under this Administration.”

The Justice Department has also recently reorganized its domestic-terrorism categories in a way that masks the scope of white-supremacist violence, according to former FBI officials who say the change makes it harder to track or measure the scale of these attacks, which are often haphazardly classified as hate crimes or deferred to state and local authorities. The lack of clear data impacts the resources the FBI can devote to investigating them.

A second senior government official, granted anonymity to discuss the Trump Administration’s efforts, says that while FBI analysts continued to issue warnings about the alarming patterns of white-nationalist radicalization online, mid-level officials and politi-



*From left: Police carry bags of evidence from the home of the Gilroy shooting suspect; the site of the Dayton attacks*

cal appointees quickly recognized that assessments that ran counter to what Trump was saying publicly would fall on deaf ears. “That could cost you a seat at the table,” the official says, “although there have been fewer and fewer tables to sit at and discuss intelligence and policy.”

As President, Trump has repeatedly downplayed the threat posed by white supremacists. He famously blamed “both sides” for violence at a white-nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Va., in 2017. Asked if he saw white nationalism as a rising threat in the wake of a March attack on two New Zealand mosques by an avowed racist who killed 51 people, he countered, “I don’t really. It’s a small group of people.”

**IN A NATION** where a mass shooting occurs on average about once a day, it is easy to be cynical about the prospect of change. But following the El Paso and Dayton attacks, there are glimmers of hope, however slight.

The crowded field of Democratic presidential candidates has jumped on the issue, ensuring that the national spotlight of the 2020 campaign will keep the debate over guns and domestic terrorism from fading away. In Congress, Democrats have rallied behind legislation that would require DHS, the FBI and the Justice Department to address white supremacy and right-wing extremism, including training and information sharing.

Among law enforcement there has been a new push for domestic terrorism to be codified as a federal crime. “Acts of violence intended to intimidate civilian populations or to influence or

affect government policy should be prosecuted as domestic terrorism regardless of the ideology behind them,” Brian O’Hare, president of the FBI Agents Association, wrote in a statement. Such a change would give prosecutors new tools to confront the threat of domestic radicalization.

There has also been a noticeable shift in how law-enforcement and government officials talk about these attacks. FBI agents, politicians and federal attorneys have become quicker to label extremist violence committed by Americans as “terrorism.” On Aug. 6, the FBI announced it was opening a domestic-terrorism investigation into the suspect in Gilroy, noting that the gunman had a “target list” of religious institutions, political organizations and federal buildings. The day after the El Paso attack, the top federal prosecutor in western Texas declared that the incident would be treated as terrorism. “We’re going to do what we do to terrorists in this country, which is deliver swift and certain justice,” said U.S. Attorney John Bash.

This language matters, experts say. If we cannot call an evil by its name, how can we hope to defeat it? “You can’t really deal with the problem unless you acknowledge it exists,” says Mark Pitcavage, senior research fellow at the ADL’s Center on Extremism, who has studied far-right extremism since the mid-1990s. “We need a consensus that this is a problem, and we need to get together, irrespective of people’s partisan beliefs or anything else, to confront this problem for the good of everybody.” — *With reporting by ALANA ABRAMSON, TESSA BERENSON and JOHN WALCOTT/WASHINGTON* □

VIEWPOINTS

## REINSTATE THE ASSAULT-WEAPONS BAN NOW

By **Bill Clinton**

IN ONE WEEKEND, 31 PEOPLE WERE MURDERED and dozens more injured in two mass shootings just hours apart in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio. The death toll may still grow. The shooters killed the young and old, men and women. In El Paso, the white-nationalist shooter's intent was to claim as many Latino lives as possible. In both cities, the victims had their tomorrows taken or their futures forever altered by domestic terrorists as they shopped or enjoyed an evening out—everyday activities we all expect to pursue in safety. And in both cases, the gunmen used military-style assault weapons that were purchased legally.

America is reacting as we have come to expect in the wake of mass shootings. Thoughts and prayers are offered, as they should be. Communities come together, as they should, in vigils to remember those lost and injured and to remind ourselves that we shouldn't keep letting this happen. Elected officials speak about the need for change. But the tragedies do keep happening, while the one thing that we know can reduce the number and the death tolls of mass shootings has not been done: reinstating the ban on assault weapons and the limit on high-capacity magazines that was in effect from 1994 to 2004.

Assault weapons are designed to inflict maximum harm in a short period of time. A 2015 study by Everytown for Gun Safety found that shootings where assault weapons were used resulted in 155% more people shot and 47% more people killed than gun incidents with other types of weapons. It should come as no surprise that when we see high death and injury totals, from Sandy Hook to Las Vegas to Parkland to El Paso to Dayton, the killers have used these weapons. The Dayton killer shot 41 bullets in 30 seconds before the police got him. He killed nine people and wounded 14 others, almost one victim per second.

I worked hard to pass and was proud to sign the ban on these weapons of war into law, and the results were clear: mass shooting fatalities declined while they were in effect and have risen sharply since they were allowed to lapse.

**FOR TOO LONG**, America has allowed a determined, well-financed group to pretend to grieve with us while spreading paranoia among those who responsibly use guns for hunting, sport shooting and self-protection. For too long, the gun lobby and their elected allies have stalled, deflected and changed the conversation until the pressure abates and they can get back to business, heedless of the



*President Clinton signs the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act at the White House on Sept. 13, 1994*

killings inevitably yet to come.

It pains me to see people in the culture I grew up in buy into the argument that banning weapons of war threatens the Second Amendment and their way of life. As the 1994 assault-weapons ban shows, deaths from mass shootings fell while the number of hunting licenses actually increased. No one has to give up their culture to save the lives of innocent people, so many of them very young.

The gun lobby often invokes the Democratic losses in the 1994 midterm elections after passing the assault-weapons ban and the Brady background-check bill to try to scare lawmakers of both parties into maintaining the status quo. Those who lost their seats in that election did cast brave votes to make our country safer and give our children the chance to grow up and live their dreams. The 2018 elections, thanks to the passionate activism of citizen groups across the country, proved that it's a different world now. Today members of Congress will be supported if they reinstate the assault-weapons and large-ammunition magazine bans, and if the Senate passes the universal-background-check law already passed by the House of Representatives.

Of course, no single action can completely end mass shootings and the wave of gun violence that plagues communities across America.

We all have to stand against, not inflame, the racial, religious and gender-based bigotries that often drive the delusions of mass killers.

The “red flag” law is a good idea. Also, we can and should do more to prevent, treat and manage mental illness. But the incidence of mental illness in America is similar to that of other wealthy nations, yet we have far more deadly mass shootings. What's different is the sheer number of guns per capita and the widespread accessibility of weapons of war.

We know reinstating the assault-weapons ban and the ammunition limit, and making improved background checks universal, will help.

A 2018 RAND study found that policies that could bring about a drop in gun deaths as small as just 1% would mean 1,500 fewer deaths in a decade. And we can do better than that.

We have talked, tweeted and delayed long enough. This is about who we are as a country, what America will look like years from now, and whether our children and grandchildren will be safer and freer to grow up.

I have always believed in the inherent goodness of people. I still do. I have spent my life trying to advance the idea that our common humanity matters more than our interesting differences and working for a world in which we are coming together, not being torn apart. We can take a big step toward that world by keeping assault weapons out of the hands of those who wish to destroy it.

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*Clinton was the 42nd President of the United States*

## **The power of a President's words**

**By Jon Meacham**

It had been the grimmest of seasons. First, on Sept. 15, 1963, Ku Klux Klansmen had bombed the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., killing four young girls. Then, on Nov. 22, John F. Kennedy was shot to death in Dallas. As Kennedy's body was lying in the Capitol Rotunda before the burial, the new President, Lyndon B. Johnson, received a piece of advice from Whitney Young of the National Urban League. “I think you've just got to ... point out that ... with the death of President Kennedy ... that hate anywhere that goes unchecked doesn't stop just for the week,” Young told Johnson, who was preparing to address Congress on Nov. 27. “And the killing at Birmingham—the people feel that they can react with violence when they dissent.”

Johnson agreed and said he had included the point in his draft remarks to Congress. “I dictated a whole page on hate—hate international, hate domestically—and just say that this hate produces inequality, this hate that produces poverty ... the hate that produces injustice—that's why we've got to have a civil rights bill,” he told Young. “It's a cancer that just eats out our national existence.” In the House chamber, speaking as President, Johnson told the country: “Let us turn away from the fanatics of the far left and the far right, from the apostles of bitterness and bigotry, from those defiant of law and those who pour venom into our nation's bloodstream.”

The Johnson example came to mind in the wake of the white-nationalist terrorist attack in El Paso. Our greatest leaders have pointed toward the future, not at a particular group or sect. Donald Trump, however, has risen to the pinnacle (and governs while there) with divisive and incendiary rhetoric on race, ethnicity and immigration. Trump has spoken of the influx of “rapists” from Mexico and of an “invasion” of the southern border (a word that also appears in the El Paso attacker's online screed against Hispanics). The incumbent President has suggested that four female legislators of color “go back” to their families' country of origin (three of the women were born in the U.S.) and attacked U.S. Representative Elijah Cummings' Baltimore district as a “rat and rodent infested mess.”

A President sets a tone for the broader nation and, by word and by deed, helps tailor habits of heart and of mind. Presidential action and presidential grace are often crucial in ameliorating moments of virulence



and violence—and the kind of presidential provocation we are now experiencing can help create and exacerbate just such hours.

Trump's failure to do much more than tweet over the weekend of the attack, followed by his listless and unconvincing Aug. 5 remarks about hate (in a speech most notable for its implicit defense of guns), stands in stark contrast to other Presidents in other moments of crisis. From Bill Clinton after Oklahoma City to George W. Bush after 9/11 to Barack Obama after the church shooting in Charleston, S.C., in 2015, Trump's recent predecessors have met the moment in ways he seems unable to do.

**WE ARE ALL POORER** for the fact that the incumbent President appears more comfortable as a fomenter than as a unifier. This is something Trump's predecessors from all parties knew well. "You can't divide the country up into sections and have one rule for one section and one rule for another, and you can't encourage people's prejudices," Harry Truman observed. "You have to appeal to people's best instincts, not their worst ones. You may win an election or so by doing the other, but it does a lot of harm to the country." As Franklin D. Roosevelt observed in the autumn of the 1932 campaign, "The presidency is not merely an administrative office. That's the least of it. It is more than an engineering job, efficient or inefficient. It is pre-eminently a place of moral leadership. All our great Presidents were leaders of thought at times when certain historic ideas in the life of the nation had to be clarified."

Presidents, of course, are hardly omnipotent. They aren't the source of heinous acts, nor do they possess the ability to stop them single-handedly. But their hands shape our collective history. "One thing I believe profoundly: *We make our own history*," Eleanor Roosevelt wrote shortly before her death in 1962. "It is not so much the powerful leaders that determine our destiny as the much more powerful influence of the combined voices of the people themselves."

Good things happen in history when Presidents and reformers are in tune with what Abraham Lincoln called the better angels of our nature. "Nothing makes a man come to grips more directly with his conscience than the Presidency," Johnson recalled in his memoirs. "The burden of his responsibility literally opens up his soul."

The tragedy of our time may well be that we have already seen what's in Donald Trump's.

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*Meacham is the author of The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angels*

## OUR BROWN SKIN MAKES US A TARGET FOR HATE

**By Julissa Arce**

I WAS 11 WHEN I IMMIGRATED TO SAN ANTONIO from Mexico. When I turned 14, my tourist visa expired and I became undocumented. After more than a decade without papers, I became a U.S. citizen on Aug. 8, 2014.

I naively believed that when I legally became an American, with a passport that proves I belong here, all the fears I had while living undocumented would be erased: fears of being separated from my family, of being detained, of being deported, of never being fully accepted in this country. But the election of Donald Trump, his racist and harmful lies about immigrants, the policies enacted by his Administration and the violence he has incited against brown people have removed the rose-colored glasses through which I once viewed this country. I now see America more clearly for what it is: a place where the color of your skin is the most important factor. And if you're black, brown or any other nonwhite ethnicity, it's the thing that can make you a target of hate.

Trump has spent his entire presidency building upon the anti-immigrant and anti-Latino rhetoric he put forth when he disparaged Mexicans as rapists and drug smugglers at his campaign launch. Last October, as thousands of Central American migrants made their way to our southern border to seek asylum, Trump tweeted, in part, "This is an invasion of our Country and our Military is waiting for you!" In May, while speaking of migrants during a rally in Panama City Beach, Fla., he asked, "How do you stop these people? You can't." One woman had an idea: "Shoot them!" she shouted. The crowd cheered and clapped. "That's only in the Panhandle you can get away with that statement," Trump responded with a smirk.

**TRUMP CLAIMS** that he doesn't have a problem with immigrants so long as they enter this country the "right way." In that same October tweet, he wrote, "Please go back, you will not be admitted into the United States unless you go through the legal process." In reality, seeking asylum is a legal way to enter the country, but not only has Trump called our asylum laws "ridiculous," his Administration has also taken action to restrict the options for those seeking refuge. His treatment of migrants has already had deadly consequences, with more than two dozen deaths in U.S. custody since 2017, including at least seven children. Now Trump's rhetoric has turned deadly as well. On Aug. 3, a white nationalist opened fire in a crowded



Walmart in El Paso as “a response to the Hispanic invasion of Texas,” he wrote in a manifesto before the shooting. The shooter didn’t ask any of the 22 people he killed for their papers, or if they came to the U.S. “the right way,” or if they immigrated “legally.” That’s because it isn’t actually about legality. It is about our brown skin in America.

In May, while unveiling his immigration plan, Trump claimed, “Newcomers compete for jobs against the most vulnerable Americans and put pressure on our social safety net and generous welfare programs.” But a Department of Labor report conducted under the Bush Administration called the perception that immigrants take American jobs “the most persistent fallacy about immigration in popular thought.” And in 2014, the chief actuary of the Social Security Administration estimated that undocumented workers have paid \$100 billion in Social Security taxes over the past decade. But it isn’t about the economy. It is about our brown skin in America.

In July, Francisco Erwin Galicia, a Dallas-born teenager, was held for over three weeks in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody, where he says he lost 26 lb. because of the poor conditions and was not allowed to shower. In March, Customs and Border Protection detained 9-year-old Julia Isabel Amparo Medina, a U.S. citizen, for more than 30 hours when she crossed the border at the San Ysidro, Calif., port of entry to

*Mourners comfort one another at a vigil for the victims of the Aug. 3 shooting in El Paso*

attend school. These are not isolated incidents. ICE has requested the detention of 3,076 U.S. citizens from October 2002 to December 2018, according to Syracuse University’s Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse. It isn’t even about being born on American soil. It’s about our brown skin in America.

This isn’t the America that I was taught to love by my immigrant parents. The America that advertises the promise of physical and economic safety to people around the world. I have spent most of my life in this country. I have built a career, developed friendships and fallen in love here. As I mark 25 years in the U.S., and five as a citizen, I have come to understand that I was American even before I had a passport that says as much.

This brown skin will continue to glow against the darkness that has fallen in America because I also see the America that had hundreds of people lined up in El Paso to donate blood. I see Army Private Glendon Oakley Jr., who risked his life to take several children to safety. I see the hundreds of people who have donated nearly half a million dollars to my scholarship fund to help undocumented immigrants attend college. I see that America, and that is the one I will keep fighting for.

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*Arce is co-founder and chair of the Ascend Educational Fund and author of Someone Like Me and My (Underground) American Dream*

# HOW TO STOP WHITE-SUPREMACIST TERRORISM

By Rod Rosenstein

WHEN PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH ACKNOWLEDGED that America faced a significant new terrorist threat after Sept. 11, 2001—less than eight months after he took office—some critics nonetheless argued he deserved blame for failing to take action earlier. But Bush's response garnered almost universal acclaim. He made it his mission—and the mission of his Administration—to prevent future attacks. As a result, protecting America from foreign terrorism stands as one of the Bush Administration's greatest achievements.

On Aug. 5, President Donald Trump declared that America must defeat the “sinister ideologies” of racism, bigotry and white supremacy. People consumed with those views are responsible for a growing number of violent crimes motivated by a desire to send a political message, the definition of terrorism. If President Trump wants to replicate President Bush's success by launching a war on domestic terrorism, he should focus on deterring people from becoming violent white supremacists.

Prevention requires political leaders—not just police and prosecutors—to think holistically about what causes white-supremacist ideologies to fester and foment violence. People are not predisposed at birth to buy high-powered guns and fire them at strangers. By studying common attributes and experiences of terrorists around the world, we can learn how to dissuade others from following the same path. Just as doctors fight communicable diseases by strengthening antibodies and treating early symptoms, a comprehensive strategy to prevent domestic terrorism should include protecting vulnerable people from indoctrination and catching incipient terrorists before they strike.

President Trump identified several possible tactics in his remarks on Aug. 5. Most important, he affirmed that racial-extremist propaganda is a contagion that radicalizes vulnerable people via the Internet. Identifying pernicious racist material and encouraging Internet companies to restrict access to it—as they do with ISIS propaganda—may protect some from terrorist indoctrination.

As part of the Internet strategy, we should alert the public about the volume of divisive racist propaganda posted by agents of Russia and other adversaries. Warning people that propaganda is literally un-American may help build resistance.

The President also suggested that domestic terrorism may be curtailed by establishing protocols to report threats posted on social media,



ending the glorification of violence through gruesome video games, reforming mental-health laws and prohibiting firearm possession by people who pose a grave risk to public safety. Legislators should evaluate those ideas and invite additional recommendations.

Criminal prosecution is another important tool, but most terrorists are not deterred by the prospect of death or incarceration after an attack; indeed, that is often part of their plan. Prosecution for notorious terrorist attacks therefore does not discourage copycats. To the contrary, extremists use publicity about successful attacks to inspire future attackers, as we have seen.

Consequently, federal law-enforcement tools and resources are put to their best use when they are employed to develop cases against aspiring terrorists before they engage in mayhem, particularly when prosecution by local authorities would not result in a significant term of incarceration. Proactive cases are often more challenging and always more controversial—because the suspects have not committed significant terrorist acts—but they are enormously effective in preventing crime.

**AFTER SEPT. 11**, Attorney General John Ashcroft ordered federal agencies to disrupt incipient terrorist schemes by pursuing any available criminal



charges, from immigration violations to financial fraud. Ashcroft's approach mirrored a strategy used against the Mafia 40 years earlier, when Attorney General Robert Kennedy hyperbolically threatened to arrest mobsters for spitting on the sidewalk if that was the only available charge. Authorities will need to pursue a similar approach in some domestic terrorism cases to intervene successfully when suspects demonstrate red flags, behaviors that suggest they are inclined to commit terrorist acts.

Finally, thoughtful political rhetoric can be part of the solution, as President Trump implicitly recognized by urging Americans to condemn racism, bigotry and white supremacy. If a President's words matter—and Donald Trump clearly believes they do—then vociferous advocacy for tolerance might deter some people from adopting pernicious ideologies. Many Presidents have used their bully pulpit to inculcate moral virtues. President Trump pledged in his Inaugural Address to “lift our sights and heal our divisions.” This fraught political moment might inspire him to emphasize that laudable goal in future speeches, just as Sept. 11 set a new course for President Bush.

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*Rosenstein was Deputy Attorney General from April 2017 to May 2019*

*Police officers walk by shopping carts at the scene of the El Paso mass shooting, on Aug. 4*

## **The problem is bigger than Trump**

**By David French**

In the immediate aftermath of the El Paso shooting, a raging argument broke out online and across the airwaves. Given that the suspected shooter used one of Donald Trump's favorite words to describe illegal immigration—*invasion*—did that mean Trump actually inspired one of the worst mass killings in American history? And if his words inspired violence, can we blame other politicians on the left and the right when depraved killers repeat their slogans and messages?

It's elementary to understand that the use of deliberately inflammatory rhetoric—especially in an angry, polarized era—can have terrible consequences. At the same time, however, arguments about specific politicians are much too simplistic. In fact, in the white-nationalist context, it actually understates the extent to which “alt-right” ideas and themes have infiltrated American discourse in ways that have energized a fringe movement and given it life and reach beyond the Oval Office.

In other words, our political world's obsessive focus on Trump can blind our nation to a larger problem.

Radicals of all kinds don't just seek to kill, threaten or harass. They also seek to influence, and the measure of their influence is the measure of their success. Jihadists, for example, seek to transform Muslim attitudes and theology. They seek to alter the very mind-set of the Islamic world, to make it implacably hostile to other faiths and to embrace an apocalyptic worldview.

**THE SO-CALLED ALT-RIGHT** seeks to fundamentally alter the American view of immigration, ethnicity and nationality. White nationalists view ethnicity as inseparable from culture, to such an extent that they claim immigrants from Latin America, Africa and Asia are simply incapable of assimilating into Western civilization, and that their inclusion will ultimately destroy America itself.

They argue that America is facing a “white genocide,” that a “great replacement” is under way. In their view, white Western culture faces extinction at the hands of black and brown immigrants, a class of people who are typically cast as sick, dirty and violent, compared to the white guardians of Western civilization.

So, yes, the “alt-right” was thrilled by Trump's campaign rhetoric, and it barraged Trump critics with threats and harassment. But its influence extended well beyond online trolling and real-world intimidation. Steve Bannon, Trump's campaign CEO, called the website he ran, Breitbart

.com, the “platform for the alt right.” At its height in 2016 and early 2017, Breitbart was one of the most influential websites on the right, frequently ranking second in web traffic only to Fox News.

Breitbart relentlessly pushed “alt-right” themes into the national discourse. At one point, it had a “black crime” tag on its site, and it published an extensive “guide” to the so-called alt-right that miscast it as “young, creative and eager to commit secular heresies.” “Alt-right” words like *cuckervative* or *cuck* entered the lexicon. The term refers to pornography in which white men watch black men have sex with their wives.

As Breitbart’s traffic declined following the departure of Bannon, other right-wing sites picked up the torch. Even now, you’ll find constant attacks on the “cucks” who dissent from Trump’s presidency or policies. Just last month, a Trumpist website called American Greatness published a poem called a “Cuck Elegy,” aimed at me, that refers to immigrants as “parasites.” Influential and respected conservatives write for that site.

Over the past few years, “alt-right” themes have also spread to Fox News, which has hosted guests who’ve spread hysterical falsehoods about immigrants, including the pure fiction that they could introduce smallpox—a disease that was eradicated decades ago—into the U.S. Another guest discussed an extraordinarily racist book called *The Camp of the Saints*, which depicts Indian immigrants in the most vicious ways, as having “predicted what’s happening.”

And we cannot forget that Trump’s repeated claim that illegal immigrants represent an “invasion” also echoes “alt-right” themes, even if unwittingly.

These are but a few examples of the injection of white nationalist ideas and themes into our political and cultural discourse. To be clear, the vast majority of conservative or right-leaning Americans are not racist, hate racism, and utterly reject the ideology and language of white nationalism. Still, the “alt-right” has achieved remarkable success in influencing our national debate. And they do it, in part, by casting themselves as fearless warriors against political correctness, telling the truths that only “the left” won’t like. This perception of influence gives radicals a sense of momentum and energy.

As strange as it may sound, to focus on the President is to think too small. The old virus of white nationalism has been injected into our culture in a new way, and it’s imperative that we recognize its symptoms—including its language and ideas—and react with the energy and commitment to banish it back into the irrelevant margins of American life.

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*French is a TIME columnist and a senior fellow at the National Review*

## IT’S NOT ABOUT LINKING GUN VIOLENCE AND MENTAL ILLNESS

**By Dr. Jessica Gold and Dr. Megan Ranney**

BETWEEN “CALLS FOR ACTION” AND OFFERS OF “thoughts and prayers,” legislators across the political spectrum, ranging from Senator Bernie Sanders to President Donald Trump, were quick to assign blame to mental illness following the two recent mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio.

It’s not just politicians. A 2016 study found that in a random sample of 400 news stories about mental illness published from 1995 to 2014, 40% linked mental illness to violence. So many people—with such disparate political beliefs, for so many years—have said mental illness is related to mass shootings. So it’s easy for the public to accept the premise without questioning.

But there is no factual link between mental illness and violence against others. People with mental-health disorders are more likely to be victims of violent crime than perpetrators, and more likely to hurt themselves than others. There is a much stronger correlation between mass shootings and other issues, like domestic violence. Misleading statements about mental health stigmatize patients, leading to fewer seeking help and to possible social isolation. A 2013 Kaiser Health poll found that 47% of Americans were uncomfortable living next door to and 41% were uncomfortable working with someone with a serious mental illness.

When we blame gun violence on “mental illness,” we create a bugaboo that forestalls real progress. The U.S. mental-health system is far from perfect. But even if we perfected treatment, we would not stop the current American gun-violence epidemic. Instead of depending on what we think we know, let’s talk about what we don’t know, like how the mental health of a population, including the victims’ family and friends, is altered in the aftermath of a mass shooting. We know very little about the links between exposure to gun violence and suicide, or between social-media exposure to gun violence and long-term depression, PTSD, anxiety or suicide. We need to fund more research into these issues and others—including structural inequality, racism and misogyny, and firearms access by at-risk people—to figure out why these tragedies keep happening. Blaming mass shootings on mental illness stops us from making forward progress.

Mental illness is certainly a problem in this country. But hate is not a mental illness. Neither is murder. Our patients, friends and family members with mental illness deserve better than to be America’s scapegoat.

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*Gold is an assistant psychiatry professor at Washington University in St. Louis. Ranney is an associate emergency-medicine professor at Brown University*

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# My Year in the



# Dark

**My son's father was killed while reporting on Russian hired guns. I'm still waiting for justice**  
By Irina Gordienko



< The author in the Novaya Gazeta office in Moscow on July 15

was a robbery gone wrong, goes the official line. But the colleagues of the victims have investigated the murders independently over the past year and have concluded that known associates of the Wagner Group were involved in the killings.

The victims' friends and families have pleaded with the authorities in Russia to consider this evidence. Among the most vocal has been Dzhemal's ex-wife Irina Gordienko, one of Russia's best-known reporters. Ahead of the first anniversary of the murders, Gordienko described her experience of dealing with Russian authorities over the past year, not as a journalist but as a person bereaved and looking for justice.

A version of her account was first published in Novaya Gazeta, one of Russia's last independent newspapers, where Gordienko is a correspondent. With her permission and support, TIME is publishing an edited translation of the piece as part of its Guardians series on the escalating war against the freedom of the press worldwide.

**O**NE YEAR AGO, ON JULY 30, 2018, three Russian journalists were shot to death and their bodies left on the side of a road near a conflict zone in central Africa. Their names were Orkhan Dzhemal, a renowned war correspondent; Alexander Rastorguev, an award-winning filmmaker; and Kirill Radchenko, their cameraman. The purpose of their trip to the Central African Republic was to film a documentary about the Wagner Group, a Russian private military company that has been active in several African countries in recent years and is believed to have ties to the Russian military and the state.

Authorities in Moscow say the reporters were killed in a random act of violence. It

MOST OF MY 17 YEARS AS A JOURNALIST have been spent reporting on the tougher parts of Russia, around the region known as the Caucasus, which has lived through many wars. I have seen dead bodies there, and the signs of inhuman torture that the heroes of my articles endured. I have written a lot about prisons, some of which still haunt me in my dreams. I've had to deal with just about every sort of police officer, investigator and prosecutor. But nothing quite prepared me for that day one year ago when Russian authorities summoned me in relation to the murder of my former husband, the journalist Orkhan Dzhemal.

Under the rules of Russian criminal procedure, they had classified me as a victim in the case. I wasn't the only one. Kirill and Alexander both left behind grieving

# The Guardians

parents. Orkhan and I have a son. In some ways my work had prepared me for victimhood; I have written about hundreds of criminal cases in which the interests of regular people are barely taken into account. But I never realized what it really means to be a victim, or as the cops like to call me, a *terpila*, their heartless slang for someone who is forced to endure.

Look up the word *terpila* in the Russian dictionary, and you will find several definitions—including “a weakling incapable of self-defense.” Indeed, that pretty much describes how I feel after dealing with Russian investigators in the year since Orkhan was murdered.

I should clarify something before going further: as an official victim in this case, I have signed an agreement with the Russian authorities “on the nondisclosure of information on the preliminary investigation.” It prohibits me from sharing what I know of the police work behind this case. But I’m not too worried about violating that agreement, because I haven’t seen much police work going on.

My main point of contact among the investigators has been Detective Igor E. Zolotov, a beefy man who keeps his hair cut close to his skull. If there had been some police work for him to demonstrate, perhaps he would have shown me the case files already—as the law allows. But he has always refused, each time throwing a thoughtful glance at the thick binder that sits atop his desk whenever I visit his office, its cover marked with the initials CAR, for Central African Republic.

Apart from Zolotov, I’ve had appointments with three other investigators over the past year, all related to my status as a victim. All of them were irreproachably polite yet turned pale each time I began to demand answers to the most elementary questions. They would sigh and complain that there’s nothing to be done.

**THE OFFICIAL THEORY** offered by the Investigative Committee, Russia’s version of the FBI, is that the murder was committed during a robbery by Arabic-speaking bandits who are active in that part of Africa. I categorically reject this explanation. There is not a single piece of evidence to support the notion that this was a robbery. The most valuable possessions of the victims were left untouched at the scene of the crime.



▲  
*A tribute to the three slain Russian journalists outside the Central House of Journalists in Moscow on Aug. 1, 2018*

Yet the authorities in Russia offer no other explanations. They seem content to blame their own inaction on the police in central Africa. All they do is wait for answers to arrive from that continent far, far away. And so, as far as I can see, the Investigative Committee has managed to do nothing at all.

The last time I went to see Zolotov, on July 10, my hope was to find out about a legal request my lawyers had filed exactly a month earlier, through the official channels of the committee. Our request was simple: take the article published by my newspaper under the headline **CHRONICLE OF A WELL-ORCHESTRATED DEATH**, and include it in the official case file.

The article was based on a private investigation carried out by a consortium of journalists known as the Dossier Center. Like Orkhan’s last reporting trip—the trip to Africa that got him killed—the work of the Dossier Center was sponsored

by the Russian businessman Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who supports a variety of journalistic efforts from exile in London. Khodorkovsky does this as part of his vocal opposition to the Putin regime and out of a desire to hold it to account.

The investigation found that the murder of Orkhan and his colleagues was not the work of “Arabic-speaking bandits.” The ones responsible are the men Orkhan went there to investigate, the report alleges. Among them is Evgeny Prigozhin, a businessman known as “Putin’s chef” because of his close ties to the Kremlin.

Along with our legal request, we provided documents to support the conclusions of the Dossier investigation. These documents implicate known associates of the Wagner Group, a Russian mercenary company that has been linked to Prigozhin ever since it first gained attention in 2014, though Prigozhin denies any connection.

It’s widely known that the hired guns of the Wagner Group have been active in the Central African Republic since at least 2017, helping to train the local military and secure gold mines. And cell-phone records obtained from the CAR show that



## I've written about hundreds of criminal cases, but I never realized what it means to be a victim

men affiliated with the Wagner Group were in regular contact with one another there from July 28–30, when Orkhan and his team were in that country. The Russian mercenaries were also in contact with local police, who appear to have kept close watch over the journalists.

Now, exactly what involvement they had in the murders, if any, is not clear. Prigozhin and others implicated in the Dossier investigation all deny having anything to do with the murders. But we believe the evidence of their connection to this tragedy is at least compelling enough for Russian police to question them.

My lawyers asked investigators to do exactly that, but we received no response. And when I asked Zolotov about this, he looked very surprised. “It’s the first I’ve heard of it,” he said. “I haven’t seen your request.”

My lawyer, Marina Andreeva, corrected him: “It was delivered in person to the office of the Investigative Committee and handed to your colleague.”

“I get a lot of correspondence, might have missed it,” he said. “Let me check and get back to you.” After we’d left, the detective called us fairly quickly, and rattled off the following: he didn’t understand what we were talking about at first, but of course, yes, the request had been reviewed.

**THE RESPONSE CAME** a few hours later. The men affiliated with the Wagner Group would not be questioned by police, Zolotov reported. In his view, “there was not enough information” linking these individuals to what had happened. From my sources at the Investigative Committee, I later learned how the detectives typically talk among themselves about questioning someone like Prigozhin: Why, they ask, would we want to disturb such a big and busy person?

Why indeed.

As for our request, and the potential evidence it contained, the investigators said they would look into it as soon as possible. But what, exactly, does the Russian investigation consider possible?

Sending a group of investigators to Africa is apparently out of the question; they say

it’s too expensive. Their last trip, in September 2018, had no clear results. It took all of three days.

That same month, my lawyer filed another request: please deliver the clothing of the murder victims to Moscow. Without their clothes it is impossible to carry out a full ballistic analysis of the gunshot wounds that killed them.

She filed another request for the return of all the private things the team of journalists had with them while in the CAR. She also asked that the mobile-phone records of Orkhan, Kirill and Alexander be recovered from the local telecoms company. By studying these materials, we could reconstruct the events leading up to the murders. We might even be able to set out a plan to find the killers—and discover who they answered to.

But several months later, nothing has been done. When I ask Zolotov about all this, he again throws up his hands: “We have asked the Central African Republic to assist us. We send them orders, one

after another. Nothing helps. There is no legal-assistance agreement between our two countries, and we can’t force them.”

This does not appear to be true. In August 2018, the governments of Russia and the CAR signed a military-cooperation agreement, which includes the supply of Russian weapons and military instructors to the CAR. In April, that agreement was expanded to allow the Russian Defense Ministry to build an outpost in that country. Within that expanded deal, there is a section that calls for the law-enforcement agencies of Russia and the CAR to “cooperate with each other directly” on criminal cases. So where is this cooperation when it comes to the murder of three Russian citizens on the territory of the CAR? Are their killings not “criminal” enough?

Zolotov sighed. There was one other thing he wanted to tell me, as our most recent meeting came to an end. It had to do with the stuff that Orkhan, Kirill and Alexander had with them when they were killed—their clothes, and their three suitcases. As it turns out, said Zolotov, these things have been sitting at the Russian embassy in Bangui, the capital of the CAR, for over three months. “However,” he said, “it is not possible to send them to Moscow.”

Using the diplomatic post is out of the question, I am told. The Russian Foreign Ministry has declined to help with that, while the Investigative Committee does not have the resources for it. Even the Ministry of Defense refused to help, claiming that its planes “don’t fly there.”

“I might even want to go there and do something about it,” Zolotov told me with a tone of regret as we said goodbye. “But I can’t go on my own, and my bosses don’t send me,” he added, rolling his eyes.

There wasn’t much else to say. The investigation into the murders of three Russian journalists clearly looks to be going nowhere, all thanks to the diligent inaction of my country’s government. That inaction only serves to confirm one thing to me: Orkhan, Kirill and Alexander were not killed during a robbery.

And one day the Russian investigative authorities will have to answer for this. I don’t intend to be their *terpila*. I will continue pushing for the truth. One day I’ll need to explain to my son who killed his father, and why. □

Appreciation

1931–2019

# TONI MORRISON

The great American novelist and Nobel laureate  
used breathtaking prose and a clear moral vision in  
pursuit of a more humane and just world

BY TAYARI JONES

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN SCHOELLER







I HAVE NEVER BEEN TO LORrain, Ohio, but it has been on my bucket list for 20 years at least. I'm curious about this town, pop. 64,000, located roughly 130 miles north of Columbus, at the mouth of the Black River. One of my students drove across the country, passing through the town with which I was so infatuated. I asked her to bring me back a small sample of dirt. It isn't rich and loamy, as I imagined it would be. Instead, it is the soft brown of cocoa powder, grainy and dry. Still, I keep it on my writing desk, sealed in a tiny jar that once held baby food. This earth, scooped from the hometown of Toni Morrison, is my totem.

Morrison, who died Aug. 5 at the age of 88, is not the first black woman writer I ever encountered. Her first novel, *The Bluest Eye*, begins with what reads like an excerpt from the *Dick and Jane* books, indicting the compulsory whiteness of American education in the 1950s and its sickening effect on children. Born in 1931, I grew up with a steady diet of fiction and poetry by writers who "looked like me." *Dick and Jane* were cast to the dustbin in favor of

▲  
*Morrison, working on a train in 1978, also taught writing at Yale University and Princeton University during her career*

African folktales and the novels of Virginia Hamilton and Mildred Taylor. So, when I read *The Bluest Eye* as a teenager and was gobsmacked by the sheer genius of the work, it wasn't because I had never seen myself in a book. It was

because I had never read a book this good.

In *The Bluest Eye* and all of her other work, Toni Morrison writes about ordinary people in a way that somehow manages to make them mythological without rendering them unrecognizable. *Song of Solomon*, her powerful third novel, opens as an insurance salesman leaps to his death, wearing a set of wings of his own fashioning. In the hands of another writer, this scene could be played for laughs—a crazy man thinks he can fly! Or it could be used to illustrate the hopelessness of Black American life—a man in a soul-stealing, predatory line of work chooses to end it all. But Morrison (who sets this scene on the date of her own birth) renders the doomed salesman as iconic as Icarus, but still manages to work in a laugh line or two, "Mr. Smith went SPLAT!" I often use these opening pages to show my students that a master



novelist can condense the entire novel into an intense first chapter that goes down hot and strong like a good whiskey. The more than 300 pages that follow are the intoxicating effects of that first powerful experience.

Morrison's characters live with me the way biblical figures were always in the back of my grandmother's mind when she needed to make a point. As Grandmother might say, "Remember Job" or "Don't forget when Ezekiel saw the wheel," so I spouted the cautionary tales abounding in Morrison's novels. There is Eva Peace, in *Sula*, who set her drug-addicted son afire after she dreamed he was trying to climb back into her womb. At the funeral of her best friend, Nel realizes that all these years it was Sula she missed, not the husband with whom Sula had an affair. No woman wants to be like Hagar, in *Song of Solomon*, whom her lover likens to the "third beer," the one you drink just because it's there. And then there are the great loves. Grandmother had Ruth and Boaz in the Bible, and I had Paul D, who treasures Sethe because she is a

From top: Morrison presented with the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama in 2012; with partygoers, including Angela Davis and Oprah Winfrey, in 1994

"friend of [his] mind" in *Be-loved*. Has there ever been a commitment deeper than Sixo's with the "Thirty-Mile Woman," so named because this is how far he travels on foot to see her for a brief visit before returning home

to the plantation where he is enslaved?

My favorite song in the Baptist hymnal is "May the Work I've Done Speak for Me." As we remember Toni Morrison, I believe this should be engraved upon her tombstone. Morrison didn't peddle her personality, performing the role of a great writer, yet she was the most formidable mind of our times. She is best known as the author of 11 astonishing novels, garnering the many laurels on which she refused to rest. She also wrote works of nonfiction, some of which are so dense and intricate that they sometimes even seem ruthless as she confronts racism and its collateral effects on society. Yet this was not her entire contribution to the world of letters. She worked as an editor at Random House, midwifing landmark works. She edited Gayl Jones, Angela Davis and Toni Cade Bambara. She compiled *The Black Book*, which



# Appreciation

in the 1970s my parents displayed just beside the complete set of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Between the two of them, there was a sense that the entire world of knowledge rested on a single shelf.

**MORRISON LABORED TIRELESSLY**, and she theorized about her efforts, leaving for us a road map of sorts.

After the re-election of George W. Bush in 2004, she wrote:

*This is precisely the time when artists go to work. There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write, we do language. That is how civilizations heal.*

*I know the world is bruised and bleeding, and though it is important not to ignore its pain, it is also critical to refuse to succumb to its malevolence. Like failure, chaos contains information that can lead to knowledge—even wisdom. Like art.*

Of course this seems quaint during these dark days, despairing at the idea of a second Bush term, but these words

may serve as an urgent gift to us now as we are facing moral crisis like none I have witnessed in my lifetime. Although her art, and artistry, is singular in such a way that it could exist only for the sake of its own beauty, she understood that her work—and all of our work—must be applied in pursuit of a world that is more just, more fair and more humane. All of her novels center on the lives of people who struggle to find their place in a country that doesn't always afford them true ownership on the land upon which they stand, the soil in which they find themselves rooted. They are treated like unwelcome but necessary tenants that America requires in order to function. Morrison didn't just tell these stories of these

people—her people, our people, us—she elevated them.

As I struggle to end this remembrance, I am fiddling with the jar of earth on my desk. I have developed a habit of shaking it and letting my mind wander. Today I am thinking of *The Bluest Eye* and how it begins with a discussion of dirt and marigolds that didn't grow. I'm looking at this sample of the dry Midwestern soil that sprouted our great American genius, and I am grateful for the life she lived and the language she left behind. I will close with her own words, a simple phrase uttered by a grieving grandmother, Pilate in *Song of Solomon*, so deeply spiritual that she is almost supernatural, but even she could not prevent the inevitability of death. Of her granddaughter, she proclaimed to anyone within hearing, the same words so many of us are whispering as we remember Toni Morrison: She was loved.

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*Jones is the author of the novel *An American Marriage* and a professor at Emory University*





*Morrison, in  
her office at  
Random House*



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# Time Off

**MIDDLE AGES**  
A revamp of  
*Sex and the City*  
for the over-50  
crowd joins a  
slew of shows and  
films about life,  
love and aging

## INSIDE

OUR BOYS MINES THE FALLOUT  
OF A WEST BANK KIDNAPPING

A NEW DOCUSERIES EXAMINES A  
FAULTY PROBATION SYSTEM

KEVIN COSTNER'S VOICE IS JUST  
RIGHT FOR A RETRIEVER

ILLUSTRATION BY ASIA PIETRZYK FOR TIME

# TimeOff Opener

CULTURE

## A guide to the Ides of 50

By Susanna Schrobsdorff

I'VE BEEN FIELDING A LOT OF questions about dating apps lately. There are 2 a.m. texts like: "Is 55 too old to go on Tinder?" And existential laments like: "I thought I was just leafing through photos but it turns out I was swiping *yes, yes, yes*, when I wanted to say *maybe, maybe, maybe*. Isn't there any room for ambiguity? Not even an option to 'save for later'?"

All good questions, though I don't have the answers. I have no experience with Tinder or any of the swiping apps—I only made it to the browser-based era of online dating. But as the first person in my friend group to divorce, nearly 10 years ago, I'm the prime confidante for questions too embarrassing to ask the happily coupled.

But I might be relieved of those duties now that we finally have an elder stateswoman of midlife dating: Candace Bushnell, creator of *Sex and the City*—the book and series that tackled all the uncomfortable dilemmas of 30-something single women in the 1990s—is back with a new book and upcoming Netflix series that asks, *Is There Still Sex in the City?* And while she doesn't bring back Carrie, Miranda, Charlotte or Samantha, it feels a bit like we're at brunch with middle-aged versions of those archetypes, and they're still talking about love and sex because, well, of course.

The book, part memoir, part fiction, is a guide to the Ides of 50, a stage of life when kids depart (along with most of the local estrogen), marriages teeter and normally accommodating women stop being so accommodating. And because things are way more complicated now, they may also find themselves trying to figure out how to swipe *maybe* on a 27-year-old programmer from Connecticut.

Much like in the original *SATC*, Bushnell and her friends experience every romantic possibility so we don't

**'It's a whole new world out there when it comes to middle-aged mating.'**

**CANDACE BUSHNELL,**  
in *Is There Still Sex in the City?*



**Bassett, Huffman and Arquette try to find themselves anew in *Otherhood***

have to—from being courted by cubs (young men who pursue older women) to dating wealthy septuagenarians who think 59 is a bit old for them. She writes about re-dating an ex decades later and a laser procedure called the MonaLisa Touch that is supposed to rejuvenate a

woman's sex life like Viagra, except that it hurts and is almost never covered by insurance. You can hear Sarah Jessica Parker's voice in Bushnell's as she asks a new set of Carrie-esque questions: "Are middle-aged women now catnip for younger men?" "Was Tinder an app for people that hated themselves?"

Bushnell, now 60, also touches on poignant aspects of what she calls "middle-aged madness": the death of a parent, the isolation of divorce, the ache of realizing that even the most gorgeous among us will eventually become invisible.

**UNTIL RECENTLY,** when we saw women in some midlife drama, it usually involved Diane Keaton in a gauzy

romance set against a tasteful backdrop. No one was getting ghosted on Bumble at 49 with absolutely no explanation.

A slew of recent movies get at the lighter side of midlife madness. *Wine Country*, directed by Amy Poehler and released this past spring, sees a group of old friends travel to Napa for a 50th birthday only to discover that no one escapes middle age unscathed. It has some hilarious moments, but it's no *Sideways*, the 2004 Oscar-winning Napa road-trip film that was not only funny but also piercing and sad. I hate to say it, but many male midlife-crisis films are often less earnest and take more fruitful risks, and we need more of that in stories about women.

And that brings me to the next beat in the 50-plus women genre: *Otherhood*, a good-hearted Netflix film that debuts this month. It's about three friends, played by Patricia Arquette, Angela Bassett and Felicity Huffman, who must rekindle their identities, separate from their roles as mothers, now that their children are adults. Arquette tells TIME she cherished the opportunity to play a mom at this stage: "I haven't had a lot of chances to do material where the leads are all women, talking about friendship and parenting with a female director and producer."

(Director Cindy Chupack won an Emmy for her work on *Sex and the City*.) But Arquette really lights up when she talks about something apart from her role as a mom—her work pushing for the Equal Rights Amendment. And that’s the problem with the film: we already know these three mom archetypes too well. This is in contrast to *Gloria Bell*, released earlier this year and starring Julianne Moore, which gets at the complexities of existing in the in-between of young and old, a parent but not so needed, attractive but with sexual irrelevance in view.

*Otherhood* was also overshadowed by news of Huffman’s bout of real-life middle-aged madness, when she admitted to paying \$15,000 to get her daughter into college with faked achievements. The irony is that the real-life story might be a more powerful tale about mothers who need to separate from their children. It made us cringe, in part because we’ve all done things—albeit less egregious things—to help our kids, only to realize later we’d gone too far. It can be easier to see truth in extremes.

I welcome Bushnell’s new series, so long as it’s brave enough to take us to those outer edges of female longing, insecurity, vanity, brilliance and connection. That was, after all, the beauty of the original. The *SATC* women were not subtle creatures. Most of us don’t have 600 pairs of shoes, nor have we left a man at the altar, but we viscerally understood Carrie’s self-destructive obsession with both the shoes and the man. And while it’s common for us to choose one of the four characters as our avatar, in many ways we are all of them at once. The challenge for the new incarnation is to be as open and complex about post-menopausal life as the last one was about everything that comes before.

Bushnell and her co-creators would do well to take a page from Season 2 of BBC’s *Fleabag*, which features a now Emmy-nominated guest spot from Kristin Scott Thomas. Her character gives a raw and riveting soliloquy about female aging and the liberation that comes with it. Afterward, young *Fleabag*, on the receiving end, says she’d been told menopause was horrendous. Thomas answers with a wink: “It is horrendous. But then it’s magnificent.” □

## New dating manuals leave the rules behind

By Raisa Bruner

“You just want the best of everything, don’t you?” my date asked—nay, *accused*—as I nursed a Negroni and balked. Don’t we all? As a millennial woman, I’ve been groomed to never settle. It’s implicit in the girl-power rhetoric of our pop-culture icons and explicit on social media. Previous generations studied *The Rules* for landing “Mr. Right” (recall #2: Don’t talk to a man first). But a new set of books suggest we set aside the question of Mr.—or Ms.—Right and strive for a more empowered relationship with ourselves, prospective partners and love itself.

For *The Game of Desire*, a new self-help dating guide from Shan Boodram, the sexologist enlisted five women for a romance boot camp, designed to teach them to flirt better, identify matches and communicate with purpose. Some of her suggestions (stroke the rim of your glass to arouse your date’s desire) might raise eyebrows. And they’re delivered with a chummy vibe that can grate. But the bulk of her advice is sound: learn what you want and create the circumstances to get it.

*Man Fast*, a new memoir from former aid worker Natasha Scripture, is less about dating than about how much a step back from it can do. Following the *Eat, Pray, Love* outline, Scripture travels

through India, Sicily and Tanzania while inspecting her own issues with commitment, health and spirituality. The goal: to come out of her self-prescribed “man fast” more grounded and independent. Spoiler alert: she finds fulfillment sans partnership.

Artist and comedian Shelby Lorman, meanwhile, wants us to think—and laugh—about the norms of dating and masculinity. *Awards for Good Boys* is a series of cartoons, doodles and written interludes poking fun at things we laud men for even in 2019. (He took out the trash? Marry him, he’s a catch!) The book is a rueful sigh, less instruction manual than recalibration of standards for male behavior.

Speaking of which: Inti Chavez Perez’s *Respect* is, unlike the other books here, geared toward male readers—more specifically, teenage ones. Covering everything from anatomy to consent, it fills a gap in the literature for young men navigating adolescence in an era that may seem like a minefield of potential missteps. It is to pickup-artist manuals like *The Game* what the above books are to *The Rules*: a rejection of the tired narrative of the conquest and a new way of thinking about what it means to have the best of everything—with or without a partner.







David (McDowell), right, leans on a mentor (Johnson)

## REVIEW

### A *Moonlight* writer revisits adolescence

By Judy Berman

IT'S A STORY POP CULTURE KEEPS RETELLING: A SMART, kindhearted kid from a poor neighborhood sees his potentially bright future threatened by gangs. Movies like *Boyz n the Hood* set the prototype in the 1990s. The 21st century has brought variations on this theme to television, in shows as different as HBO's classic *The Wire* and the Netflix teen comedy *On My Block*.

The title character of *David Makes Man*, which premieres Aug. 14 on OWN, starts out in the same perilous situation. A 14-year-old growing up in the South Florida projects, David (Akili McDowell) is an anomaly at his magnet middle school. Though he's far from the sole black student, he does seem to be the only kid whose family sometimes has to choose between electricity and phone service. When he's not at school, he plays surrogate dad to an intractable little brother J.G. (Cayden Williams) while his mom Gloria (Alana Arenas) waits tables. As he struggles to keep his grades up and his teachers happy, in hopes of getting into a prestigious high school, David is drafted by the gang that holds court on the lawn in front of his building. The irony of his predicament is that the same intelligence that offers him a path out of the projects also makes him a priceless asset to the dealers who run them.

Torn as he is between the upwardly mobile world he glimpses at school—where he's known as D.J.—and the poverty-stricken one he comes home to each night, as Dai, that conflict doesn't define him. Created by Tarell Alvin McCraney, who wrote the play on which *Moonlight* was based and the screenplay for Steven Soderbergh's *High Flying Bird*, the show endows

its hero with a complex internal life. Self-possessed and independent, but also tender, he thrives in his imagination—a place where childhood is all water guns and balloons, where his old mentor Sky (Isaiah Johnson) is still alive, where he can stop code-switching and just exist. Along with McDowell's disarming vulnerability, these lyrical passages give David specificity and dimension.

**COMING-OF-AGE NARRATIVES** set in disadvantaged communities too often escalate into battles between extraordinary protagonists and the relationships that tie them to that environment. We're supposed to want the Davids of the world to ascend to college, career and financial security without looking back. Undertones of exceptionalism or bootstrapping imply that these kids' less ambitious friends and family members deserve the poverty they were born into.

It's impossible to predict, based on the five languidly paced episodes sent to critics, where the show will end up—but McCraney seems too invested in the people around David to leave them behind. Even as it immerses us in his subjectivity, *David Makes Man* builds vivid, sympathetic supporting characters. In recovery from drug addiction, Arenas' charismatic Gloria is determined to stay clean and support her sons. Though it flirts with cliché, an episode devoted to a day in her life ultimately reveals her to be a dreamer in the same mold as David. Gloria's close but complicated relationship with Mx. Elijah (Travis Coles), a gender-queer neighbor who takes in LGBTQ teens with nowhere else to go, gives subtle insight into both characters' pasts. A dealer who forces David to run dangerous errands isn't a monster; he's a lonely, insecure child desperate to solidify his authority.

David's school friends don't have ideal lives, either. Seren (Nathaniel McIntyre) is a biracial, middle-class boy whose perfect-looking house seethes with painful secrets. Through his eerily exacting parents, McCraney demonstrates how isolating a drive for individual excellence can be. David is lucky to find refuge from the stresses of home and school in the third space of his still developing mind. But if he flourishes, it will be alongside the people who care about him—not in spite of them. □

**'Coming-of-age is a hard story to tell because it's so individual.'**

**TARELL ALVIN MCCRANEY,**  
in an NPR interview



Shiv (Snook) steps up

REVIEW

## The sour smell of *Succession*

Something is rotten in the house of Roy—literally. In *Succession*'s Season 2 premiere, airing Aug. 11, HBO's off-brand Murdochs convene at one of their many homes, only to be greeted by the stench of putrefying flesh. Someone has stuffed octogenarian media mogul Logan Roy's (Brian Cox) chimney with dead raccoons. This repulsive homecoming is a perfectly blunt metaphor for a photogenic family gone bad—and a hint of what's to come for this Emmy-nominated satire.

In the wake of the wedding that closed out the show's first season—where the fragile Kendall (Jeremy Strong) staged a hostile takeover of his dad's company, then abandoned it when Logan caught him covering up manslaughter—the Roys are scrambling to retain their empire. Kendall and snarky younger brother Roman (Kieran Culkin) are at each other's throats. And the family's news business takes the spotlight, with Logan's spectacularly unqualified scions joining the drama that is media circa 2019. These developments make for a season that's just as nastily funny as the first. But the real cause for celebration is the increased attention to Shiv (Sarah Snook), a sharp strategist who might be the show's true protagonist.

—J.B.

REVIEW

## In Israel, a true story of bitter revenge

AMID EVEN THE LONGEST, BLOODIEST conflicts, some acts of violence remain capable of enraging a desensitized public. One such incident occurred on June 12, 2014, when three teenage Jewish boys were kidnapped in the West Bank. As the Israel Defense Forces launched a massive manhunt—which ended in the deaths of five Palestinians and the arrests of about 400—Israelis took to the streets to demand the boys' safe return. But on June 30, a search party found the bodies of all three, shot dead by Hamas militants. The nation mourned. Nationalists started talking about revenge.

The HBO miniseries *Our Boys*, an American-Israeli co-production premiering Aug. 12, dramatizes what happened next. Before the sad news about the boys breaks, we meet two other teens: Mohammed (Ram Masarweh), an Arab who's doing construction work for his dad (Jony Arbid), who daydreams about an upcoming trip to Istanbul; and Avishai (Adam Gabay), an Orthodox Jew, who struggles at yeshiva. Growing up in Jerusalem, both are gentle boys who chafe at family expectations. Similarities like these can fuel heartwarming stories of cross-cultural friendship. Sadly, what happened after the ini-

tial murders is the stuff of a political thriller.

At its center is Simon (Shlomi Elkabetz), an Israeli Security Agency operative on the nationalist beat. When Jewish vigilantes retaliate in the name of the slain boys, their violence enrages a disenfranchised Arab community. It also forces Jews to acknowledge that there are dangerous extremists who share their faith. And it exposes the apathy with which powerful majorities can treat the pain of oppressed minorities.

The result of a collaboration between *The Affair* creator Hagai Levi, Orthodox Jewish filmmaker Joseph Cedar and Palestinian writer-director Tawfik Abu Wael, *Our Boys* depicts each culture with empathy and specificity. In fact, it's so conscientious that it's bound to confuse viewers who aren't familiar with Jerusalem neighborhoods, the Israeli justice system, or the differences between Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews. (As a secular American Jew, I often lost track.) Despite superb performances, this dearth of context and a frustratingly slow pace can make the show a hard sit. Stick around, though, and you'll be rewarded with a timely argument that an eye for an eye isn't always justice. —J.B.



Simon (Elkabetz), right, grapples with the heavy cost of violent conflict



## MUSIC

### A rapper's long fight for justice

By Judy Berman

ON JAN. 24, 2007, 19-YEAR-OLD ROBERT RIHMEEK Williams was arrested on his South Philly doorstep. He doesn't recall everything that happened next because, he says, police beat him so severely that he kept losing consciousness. Facing 19 drug, firearms and assault charges—including the allegation that he'd pointed a gun at a cop—he opted for a nonjury trial for financial reasons, was convicted on seven counts despite a lack of evidence and received a two-year prison sentence. But it's the eight years of probation supervised by Genece Brinkley, a tough judge who seems to have obsessed over this case, that have consigned Williams to over a decade of legal turmoil, including more time behind bars.

It's hard to imagine Williams' story—one that's all too common for young black men in America—making headlines if he weren't better known as Meek Mill, a rapper who's worked with Rick Ross, beefed with Drake and been engaged to Nicki Minaj. Inextricable from racism, poverty and mass incarceration, the relationship between hip-hop and crime has always been fraught. Yet Meek's case recalls Kafka's *The Trial* more than the legal woes of some of his contemporaries. It's made him an activist for criminal-justice reform, as documented in Amazon Prime's *Free Meek*, out Aug. 9.

As its title suggests, the five-part docuseries makes no claims of impartiality. Produced in part by his record label, Roc Nation, it seeks to vindicate Meek—and call for changes that could help his less fortunate counterparts. Through interviews

▲  
*The image of a bandaged, beaten 19-year-old Meek has become a symbol of the fight for criminal-justice reform*

with the rapper, his devoted family and Roc Nation staffers including founder Jay-Z, a portrait coalesces of a talented young artist who saw his career thwarted time and again by a rigged system. Lawyers (including Brinkley's, caught on a hot mic) attest to the absurdity of Meek's ordeal; *Rolling Stone* reporter Paul Solotaroff recalls, "I had never seen a case built on less."

**THE DOC ALSO ILLUMINATES** several of the broader but less publicized issues Meek's story exemplifies, drawing attention to the hardships faced by the 4.5 million Americans caught in the probation system, demonstrating how one minor conviction can lead to a lifetime in the system. Brinkley's near sovereign power over Meek's fate is hardly unique, even if her backstory and the details of their relationship are remarkable. (He claims she pressured him to record a remix of Boyz II Men's "On Bended Knee" featuring shout-outs to women who'd helped him—Brinkley included. She denies it.) Less shocking but more damning is the revelation of the role dirty cops played in his initial arrest.

It's only one of many infuriating discoveries made by the private investigators who turned the tide in Meek's favor after he returned to prison in 2017, in a decision that drew the outrage of fans and activists. The final two episodes follow his allies' ultimately successful efforts to extricate him from Brinkley's grasp. (His original conviction was finally overturned in July.) If the transition from deep dive to detective story feels bumpy, both portions are equally important. Only someone from Meek's background could be ensnared in a saga like this one—and only someone with the cultural footprint he's established since his arrest could make such common injustices front-page news. □

MOVIES

## A one-child rule, and its scars

In 1996 a Chinese artist named Peng Wang, who had taken an interest in garbage as his subject matter, came across a human fetus wrapped in plastic labeled “medical waste.” He was so shaken and moved by the sight that he made China’s one-child policy a major theme of his work.

Wang is just one of the subjects interviewed in Nanfu Wang and Jialing Zhang’s compelling and upsetting documentary *One Child Nation*, which explores China’s government policy, launched in 1979 and eliminated in 2015, mandating that each family produce only one child. The law was heavily enforced; families who violated it faced stiff fines or destruction of their homes. Worse yet, many women were forced to undergo sterilization or abortion, in some cases even after fetuses had reached eight or nine months. Unwanted infants were often abandoned and left to die, or sold to orphanages. Wang and Zhang, both of whom were born in China under the one-child rule, explore not just the policy but also its far-reaching effects—and offer a chilling glimpse of what can happen when a nation opts to control women’s bodies for its own political gain.

—Stephanie Zacharek



Wang and her son



Ventimiglia and friend: If only dogs could drive! And also make movies

MOVIES

## A dog’s wisdom, wasted on human ears

THE BEST THING ABOUT A STORY narrated by a dog? At least *someone* has common sense. The soul of *The Art of Racing in the Rain*, adapted from Garth Stein’s 2008 novel, is Enzo, a canine with golden fur, soulful eyes and a way with words; his bons mots of shaggy wisdom come to us in the voice of Kevin Costner. Since puppyhood, Enzo has belonged to Denny (Milo Ventimiglia, of *This Is Us*), a Seattle race-car driver who’s good at what he does yet is only inching toward his big break. When Denny falls in love with Eve (Amanda Seyfried) and starts a family, pressures mount. His rich, stuffy in-laws (Kathy Baker and Martin Donovan) don’t like him much. Then his life with Eve takes a devastating turn. Enzo—named after legendary Italian racing star Enzo Ferrari—witnesses it all, peppering his observations with racing argot he’s picked up from his owner, as well as snippets of wisdom he’s learned from one of his favorite activities, watching TV.

It could all be so winsome and adorable—but it isn’t. Animal lovers should know that nothing terrible happens to Enzo, though there are two close calls; they’re conveniently willed into

being by some highly unbelievable negligence on the part of Denny and Eve, who otherwise seem completely devoted to Enzo. But the big problem with *The Art of Racing in the Rain*—directed by Simon Curtis, whose last movie was the surprise delight *Goodbye Christopher Robin*—is that it’s nearly impossible to care about any of the humans. For a guy with a job that almost no one on the planet has, Denny is shockingly dull, and Ventimiglia fails to vest him with even an iota of personality. The generally charming Seyfried is saddled with a bum role that mostly requires her to suffer beatifically, and Donovan and Baker, both marvelously subtle actors, are badly suited to playing monsters-in-law.

But Costner as Enzo? Now that’s a stroke of genius. Enzo’s phrasing, thanks to Costner, is an easy-on-the-ears drawl; the texture of his voice is pleasingly rough, like a bit of fur that’s been slightly ruffled by the removal of a bothersome burdock. And everything he says and does makes sense, at least in dog logic. Meanwhile, the humans around him have lost the plot. Unfortunately, they’re the ones in charge of pouring out the kibble. —s.z.

# 7 Questions

**Ibram X. Kendi** The National Book Award winner on “the R word,” the end of capitalism and his new book, *How to Be an Antiracist*

**Y**our new book combines theory and memoir. Why did you decide to weave in your own story? I did not want to use personal narrative; I’m a very private person. But I was trying to think of a way to convey the journey one has to embark on to be antiracist, and eventually I relented.

**The journey included your own moments of racism as well as seeing it in influential figures from black history. How do you reconcile that with your admiration for them?** Some of these leaders started out their activist careers thinking like many other people did, thinking part of the problem was with black people. The more they engaged in the problem, the more they realized there was in fact nothing wrong with black people and everything wrong with racist policy and power. Seeing those stories—somebody like W.E.B. Du Bois, who grew over the course of his life—is actually what inspires me the most.

**You make the point that racist is a crucial descriptive word, not a slur, but many people see it as an insult. Is it possible to reclaim the word?** It’s absolutely necessary. Part of the reason so many Americans are so defensive is because we’ve been led to believe that *racist* is a fixed category, that it’s a tattoo, it’s a label. Of course they’re going to say, “I’m not a racist, I’m not a bad person.” But *racist* is describing what you’re saying in the moment.

**What’s antiracist, as opposed to not racist?** I’ve argued there’s no such thing as “not racist.” Racist ideas suggest a racial hierarchy among racial groups. Antiracist ideas suggest that no racial group is better or worse than another. There’s really no in-between state of neutrality.

**What have you thought of the response to President Trump’s racist tweets?** I first and foremost think that

“WE’VE BEEN LED TO BELIEVE THAT RACIST IS A FIXED CATEGORY, THAT IT’S A TATTOO, IT’S A LABEL”



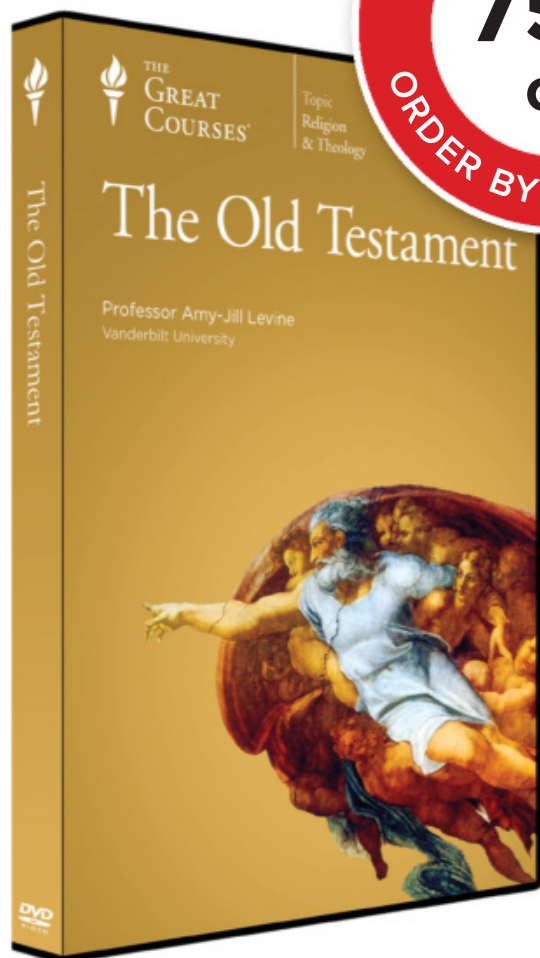
it is a good thing so many public institutions and officials have been willing to identify racism, because Americans have a difficult time using the R word—just as the Americans writing the U.S. Constitution had so many conversations about slavery but never used the S word [in it]. On the other hand, we have to be crystal clear when we classify something as racist *why* we’re classifying it as racist.

**In your discussion of class and race, you argue it doesn’t track for Senator Elizabeth Warren to call herself a capitalist but propose radical change to the U.S. economy. What have you thought of her defenses of capitalism as she campaigns for 2020?** What’s really happening, particularly among the left, is a debate over how we define capitalism. What I tried to show in [*Antiracist*] is that you can’t separate capitalism from racism, that they were birthed during the same period in the same area and have grown together, damaged together and will one day die together.

**Stamped From the Beginning, your book on the history of racist ideas, won the National Book Award for Nonfiction, but you describe doing that research as taking a psychic toll. How was it to spend time with antiracism instead while researching this one?** I found the experience challenging, just in a different way. For *How to Be an Antiracist* I was primarily turning a critical eye on myself. Fortunately, I hadn’t believed many of the most subversive things that people have said for hundreds of years about black people, but I have said some pretty bad things.

**And you end the book on a note of hope that antiracism can prevail.** I’m hopeful primarily because of my understanding of history. There’ve been so many times that the impossible has happened.

—LILY ROTHMAN



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