

TIME

**CHARM  
OFFENSIVE**

SHOULD  
THE WORLD  
BUY  
WHAT THE  
CROWN  
PRINCE IS  
SELLING?

by  
KARL VICK



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2 | Conversation  
4 | For the Record

## The Brief

News from the U.S.  
and around the world

5 | The EPA takes on  
clean-car rules

7 | Bracing for  
more clashes along  
Gaza's border

11 | Remembering  
Winnie  
Madikizela-  
Mandela

12 | Red-state  
teachers revolt

16 | TIME with ...  
outspoken  
Congressman  
Matt Gaetz

18 | A magical Easter  
for Notre Dame

## The View

Ideas, opinion,  
innovations

21 | Ian Bremmer:  
What **China's new  
tariffs** mean for  
the U.S.

23 | **Bill Gates** on  
the importance of  
*Factfulness*

24 | Why "Latinx"  
is taking hold

26 | Elise Jordan:  
I'm a libertarian,  
and it's time for  
**gun control**

## Features

### ■ **The Crown Prince Makes His Pitch**

Mohammed bin Salman, the rising  
young leader of Saudi Arabia, is  
working overtime to change the world's  
perception of his feudal kingdom  
*By Karl Vick* 28

### **Dream High**

Inside the life of one of the  
700,000 young immigrants in  
the U.S. with DACA status  
*By Charlotte Alter* 36

### **Economic Cycles**

China's bike-sharing phenomenon  
is rolling into cities across the globe.  
Now the companies behind it want to  
reshape society  
*By Charlie Campbell* 42

## Time Off

What to watch, read,  
see and do

49 | In *Killing Eve*,  
Sandra Oh follows  
the scent of a killer

52 | Husband-  
and-wife team  
John Krasinski  
and Emily Blunt's  
*A Quiet Place*

54 | Meg Wolitzer's  
new novel  
on feminism

55 | R&B triple  
threat **Tinashe**

56 | 11 Questions for  
Oscar winner and  
former politician  
**Glenda Jackson**

▲  
**Corina Barranco**  
walks home  
from high school  
in Lorain, Ohio,  
on Feb. 22

Photograph by  
*Maddie McGarvey*  
for TIME

**ON THE COVER:**  
Photograph by  
*Martin Schoeller*  
for TIME

# Conversation



## WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT ...

**THE ENFORCER** Molly Ball's April 9 profile of U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions generated plenty of talk among Washington observers. New York Times Justice Department reporter Katie Benner joked on Twitter that President Trump would be excited to read "that he's the pitchman for Jeff Sessions' ideas," while the Washington Post's Matt Zapotosky said that even if many of the AG's decisions match up with Trump's desires, it doesn't mean they are "ploys" for him to keep his job, since "Sessions has wanted to do this stuff way before he connected with Trump." That said, some readers took issue with Philip Montgomery's cover portrait of Sessions. The black-and-white photo makes him "look like a dark and sinister character," said John R. Pierce of Rockville, Md.

**"Nobody's above the law" ... including you, Jeff "I Don't Recall" Sessions."**

LARRY LASSETER, Brea, Calif.

**DEPRESSION ON CAMPUS** Katie Reilly's feature in that same issue on the increasing number of university students with anxiety and depression outlines a "crisis" that "nobody's talking about," wrote Patricia Nash, a special-education assistant in Baraboo, Wis. Mark Porst of Chicago wanted to read more about the underlying causes of the increase. (Les Krings of Columbus, Neb., blamed helicopter parents.) Erin Haugen, a psychologist in Grand Forks, N.D., tweeted that the story held a lesson for students who are selecting colleges: the most important thing is to "find the right fit."

**'What is happening to these children in high school? That is where we need to fix the problem.'**

JANE HILL, Malden, Mass.

## LAUGH TRACK

TIME's entertainment team recently spoke with comedian Aparna Nancherla of Netflix's *The Standups*. While people in the funny business have a reputation for concealing sadness, Nancherla incorporates her mental-health struggles into her routine. "Now it's more of an open conversation in our household in a way that it might not be in other South Asian households," she says. Read the profile—and other cultural conversations—at [time.com/entertainment](http://time.com/entertainment)



## AVAILABLE NOW

A new special edition from LIFE, *Martin Luther King Jr.: 50 Years Later*, considers the civil rights icon's legacy a half-century after his death. "If it hadn't been for Dr. King and Robert Kennedy, I would probably not be an

elected official today," Georgia Congressman John Lewis writes in the introduction. "I feel it now, almost 50 years later—that when these two young men were taken from us, something died in us." Read Lewis' essay at [time.com/history](http://time.com/history) and find the book now on Amazon.



Subscribe to TIME's free history newsletter and get **the stories behind the news, plus a curated selection of highlights from our archives.** For more, visit [time.com/email](http://time.com/email)

**YOU ASKED** The TIME Health team is here to answer your burning wellness questions as part of its ongoing "You Asked" series. Past examples range from "Can indoor plants really purify the air?" to "Should I exercise when I'm sick?" Submit your questions to [health@time.com](mailto:health@time.com), and see past answers at [time.com/you-asked](http://time.com/you-asked)

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**‘Knock yourselves out ... We didn’t do anything wrong.’**

**CHARLES KUSHNER**, real estate mogul, maintaining that his company and his son Jared Kushner, a White House adviser, haven’t broken any laws; the Kushner family faces multiple investigations into possible conflicts of interest

**‘WE’RE GOING TO BE GUARDING OUR BORDER WITH THE MILITARY.’**

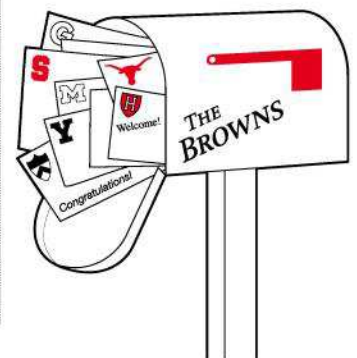
**DONALD TRUMP**, U.S. President, stating during a meeting with Defense Secretary James Mattis at the White House that he plans to order the military to protect the U.S.-Mexico border until a wall can be built

**‘IT IS STILL LIKE A DREAM FOR ME. AM I AMONG YOU?’**

**MALALA YOUSAFZAI**, Nobel Prize winner, visiting her hometown of Mingora in Pakistan’s Swat Valley for the first time since the Taliban tried to kill her there in 2012

**20**

Number of colleges and universities—including every Ivy—that offered admission and a full ride to 17-year-old Micheal Brown; the Houston teen, who credited college-guidance programs with helping him, hopes to become a lawyer



**‘A bully is a bully.’**

**DAVID HOGG**, Parkland shooting survivor and March for Our Lives organizer, rejecting radio host Laura Ingraham’s apology for having made fun of him on Twitter

**‘It takes a statue like this to make forgetting less easy.’**

**HENRIK HOLM**, senior research curator at the National Gallery of Denmark, on the unveiling of the country’s first public statue of a black woman; the 23-ft.-tall work depicts Mary Thomas, who helped lead one of the largest labor revolts in Danish colonial history

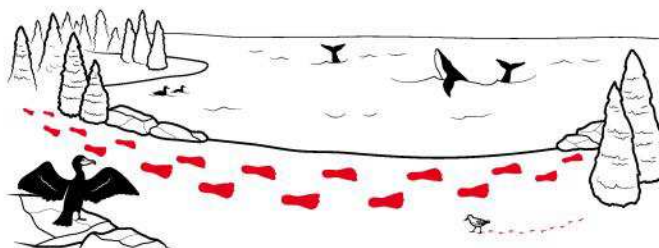
**Musk**  
Elon Musk’s Tesla misses Model 3 production target



**Tusk**  
U.K. announces a strict ban on ivory sales, to protect elephants

**29**

Number of human footprints discovered near the shores of Calvert Island in British Columbia; the footprints, estimated to have been created 13,000 years ago, may be North America’s oldest



**\$8.5 million**

List price for the childhood home of Confederate General Robert E. Lee in Alexandria, Va.; it is now for sale

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BROWN BIRD DESIGN FOR TIME

# The Brief

An aerial photograph of Los Angeles, California, heavily obscured by a thick, orange-brown smog. The city's skyline, including several prominent skyscrapers, is visible in the background, partially hidden by the haze. The foreground shows a complex network of roads and highways, with a major highway curving through the center of the frame. The overall atmosphere is dense and hazy, with a warm, monochromatic color palette of oranges and browns.

## REGULATORY HAZE

Los Angeles  
on a smoggy  
summer day;  
California  
has said it  
will challenge  
the EPA's new  
emissions  
rollback

## INSIDE

WHY CLASHES ARE LIKELY  
TO CONTINUE ALONG  
THE GAZA BORDER

A SPACE STATION DID FALL  
TO EARTH—BUT YOU DON'T  
NEED TO WORRY

REMEMBERING WINNIE  
MADIKIZELA-MANDELA'S  
COMPLICATED HISTORY

## ENVIRONMENT

# The EPA's climate of controversy

By Justin Worland

**T**HE BIG THREE U.S. AUTOMAKERS HIT THE road early to ask the Trump Administration to hit the brakes on regulation. Not long after last year's presidential Inauguration, the CEOs of GM, Ford and Fiat Chrysler traveled to Washington, D.C., and made an in-person pitch to soften vehicle-emissions rules enacted under President Obama. A few weeks later, during a visit to Detroit, President Trump promised to take care of the auto industry.

Now that Environmental Protection Agency head Scott Pruitt has delivered, however, carmakers are concerned that the rollback will bring a whole new set of challenges.

Pruitt announced on April 2 that he would undo a regulation that would have required automakers to reach an average fuel economy of 54.5 m.p.g. by 2025, thereby preventing 6 billion metric tons of global-warming-causing greenhouse-gas emissions and saving 12 billion barrels of oil. The decision represents one of the Trump Administration's most aggressively regressive moves yet on climate change. In making the announcement, Pruitt criticized his predecessors for unrealistic goals and promised to "get this right going forward."

But the rollout fell flat. The EPA failed to find an auto dealer to play host, so Pruitt delivered brief remarks at the agency's headquarters, with limited press access. Trump didn't show up. Nor did he tweet about it, as he has for past environmental rollbacks. And while auto-industry trade groups attended and praised the move, individual car companies stayed largely silent, distancing themselves from the decision.

In a blog post, Ford executive chairman Bill Ford and CEO Jim Hackett said they "support increasing clean-car standards through 2025" and added, "At Ford, we believe we must deliver on CO<sub>2</sub> reductions consistent with the Paris Climate Accord."

Indeed, those standards were one of two key policies underpinning an Obama Administration promise to the world that the U.S. would address global warming, and environmental scientists expected the rule to become increasingly important for reducing the nation's carbon footprint. Without the rules, says Ann Carlson, a professor of environmental law at the UCLA School of Law, "we're going to see a different kind of auto market."

But Pruitt's rollback isn't controversial for climate reasons alone. Though automakers

had requested the revision, saying compliance with Obama's rules would be costly, they are now worried that the Administration may go too far. Most significantly, California could set its own emissions standards in response, leading to a protracted court battle that would force carmakers to operate without clear or uniform rules. "Maintaining a single national program is critical to ensuring that cars remain affordable," the Auto Alliance trade group said in a largely supportive statement.

## ROLLBACK AGENDA

The EPA chief intends to undo a slew of Obama-era environmental policies. Here are a few.

### Emissions standards

The agency plans to ease rules requiring passenger cars to average 54.5 m.p.g. by 2025.

### The Clean Power Plan

The EPA is nixing a rule that limits power-plant emissions.

### Waters of the U.S. rule

The EPA has started a process to scale back this rule to reduce pollution in small streams.

### Insecticide ban

Pruitt rejected a proposed ban on chlorpyrifos, a potentially harmful pesticide.

**THIS HESITANT REACTION** to Pruitt's rollback underscores the strange position in which the EPA administrator finds himself. He is extraordinarily effective at fulfilling Trump's promise to nix regulations—he's made more than 20 big deregulatory moves by his own count—and also at attracting controversy that riles opponents and has led to questions about how long he can survive in a White House prone to turnover.

The ethics scandals he faces are striking: he lived for six months in a condo co-owned by a lobbyist, paying \$50 a night; he spent more than \$100,000 of taxpayer money on first- and business-class travel everywhere from Italy to New York City, a move he defended as a security measure; he went around the White House to give favored aides raises upwards of 30%. And that's just news from the past few months.

His wonkier policy moves have been equally controversial. Most recently, in March, he told the conservative Daily Caller that he would stop the agency from using any studies that aren't based entirely on data accessible to the public. This means, for example, excluding research that relies on private health information. Pruitt says it's about transparency, but scientists say that ignoring essential public-health research endangers lives.

"This leaves me and many of my colleagues puzzled about what to do," says Jonathan Levy, a professor of environmental health at Boston University. "How can you genuinely affect public health and decisionmaking if the decisionmakers do not wish to use science?"

Now Pruitt has hinted that the fight over vehicle-emissions standards will remain bitter if blue states don't fall into line. "Cooperative federalism doesn't mean that one state can dictate standards for the rest of the country," he said.

So far, Trump has stood by his EPA chief. Still, the relationship appeared strained as the latest round of revelations hit. The White House confirmed that the two men spoke by phone in the midst of the latest controversy but declined to give any more details. Asked about Pruitt at a public appearance on April 3, Trump had a brief response. "I hope," the President said, "he's going to be great." □







Israeli troops fire tear gas at Palestinian protesters on March 30

#### THE BULLETIN

## Israelis and Palestinians brace for more violence after clash along Gaza border

**VIOLENCE BROKE OUT ON MARCH 30** when an estimated 30,000 Palestinians gathered at the border between Israel and Gaza for an event that was billed as the first day of a six-week protest against the long-standing blockade there. After more than a dozen Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire, both sides defended their actions—and acknowledged that clashes were likely to continue in the run-up to the 70th anniversary of Israel’s founding in May.

**A DEADLY DAY** While the idea for border protests was started by a social-media activist months ago, Hamas—the Islamist group that controls Gaza—adopted it and organized the first day of the marches. When Palestinian demonstrators began throwing rocks, tossing Molotov cocktails and rolling burning tires toward the border fence, Israeli troops responded with tear gas, rubber bullets and live fire. Palestinian officials said 18 protesters were killed in the clash and hundreds injured, making the protest the deadliest day of the ongoing conflict since the Israel-Gaza war in 2014.

**OPPOSING VIEWS** In the days after the violence, each side waged a public relations battle, releasing videos and statements to back up its version of the events. Palestinians and some human-rights groups accused the Israeli military of using excessive force. Israel said its troops killed only protesters who were participating in violence and took necessary steps to prevent Hamas from breaching the border. The U.N. Secretary-General and the E.U. diplomatic chief called for an independent investigation, but Israel’s Defense Minister rejected the idea.

**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT** Israel has said it will not soften its response to Hamas-led demonstrations and warned that it may target militant groups within Gaza if more violence occurs. The protests are expected to continue until May 15, the date on which Israel was created in 1948—which Palestinians call their *nakba*, or catastrophe. Hamas has hinted that the protest, known as the March of Return, could culminate in Palestinians’ attempting to cross the border.

—ABIGAIL ABRAMS

#### NEWS TICKER

### Shooter wounds three, kills self at YouTube HQ

A woman opened fire at YouTube’s headquarters in San Bruno, Calif., on April 3, **wounding three people** before killing herself. The suspect’s family said they had tried to warn police that “she might do something.”

### Antarctica experiencing glacial retreat

Using satellite tracking software, a British-led team of scientists found that **10.7% of Antarctica’s ocean-front glaciers are retreating** at significant speed—faster than the threshold considered average—as warm ocean water melts the ice from below, contributing to rising sea levels.

### Local news anchors recite script on media bias

Sinclair Broadcast Group, which operates nearly 200 TV stations in the U.S., required its news anchors to read a scripted message **warning viewers about “fake stories,”** echoing rhetoric about “fake news” used by President Trump, who voiced support for the promos on Twitter.

## NEWS TICKER

### Costa Rica picks a liberal President

Costa Ricans voted to elect Carlos Alvarado Quesada, the center-left candidate from the ruling party, as President.

In the April 1 runoff election, Alvarado—who **campaigns on his support for same-sex marriage**—beat Fabricio Alvarado Muñoz, an evangelical pastor who vowed to restore “traditional values.”

### Rep. Esty will not seek re-election

Democratic Representative Elizabeth Esty from Connecticut said on April 2 that she would leave Congress at the end of this year amid criticism of how she handled **complaints of harassment** against her former chief of staff, who was accused of threatening and harassing another staffer in Esty's office.

### Labour leader responds to anti-Semitism charges

Days after **U.K. Jewish groups protested outside Parliament**, accusing Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn of ignoring anti-Semitism, Corbyn came under fire for attending a Passover seder hosted by a radical, non-Zionist Jewish group. Corbyn, who earlier apologized for hurt caused by his party, defended the choice on April 3.

## GOOD QUESTION

### Why don't more people get hit by falling space debris?

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT YOU DIDN'T GET clobbered by China's Tiangong-1 space station when it fell to Earth on April 1. The not-so-good news is that there's a lot more space junk where that came from. All the same, you can take off your hard hat, because your odds of getting conked are vanishingly small.

At any moment, there are more than 500,000 pieces of space debris orbiting Earth. Some are no bigger than a millimeter or two; others—like Tiangong-1, which was the size of a school bus—are a potential menace. Left to themselves, the majority of satellites eventually tumble out of orbit. The principal cause is drag from the faint wisps of atmosphere that reach into what we consider the vacuum of space. The lower a spacecraft orbits, the more it feels these atmospheric fingers and the less far it has to fall in the first place before beginning its final, flaming dive.

Making things worse, the atmosphere subtly expands and contracts in response to solar activity. The drag it exerts on any orbiting spacecraft can thus unpredictably increase or decrease, making it hard for NASA or other agencies to predict precisely where the spacecraft will land. Worse, derelict spacecraft often tumble, causing the face—and thus the surface area—they present to the atmosphere to change constantly, adding one more X factor to the trajectory equation.

One of the reasons none of this typically presents a danger is that when satellites reach the end of their useful lives, they can be deorbited in a controlled way, sent on suicide dives to the middle of the ocean. It's when something goes wrong—when communications are lost or thruster fuel is exhausted—that re-entry becomes a crapshoot. That's what happened when NASA's Skylab space station tumbled to Earth in 1979, and it's what happened with Tiangong-1 too.

Even in those situations, the odds are very much on safety's side. Roughly 70% of Earth's surface is water, and much of its landmass is unpopulated. Some of Skylab's debris did rain down on land, but in a sparsely populated desert. The little town of Esperance, Australia, got some debris to exhibit in its local museum—along with a display of the \$400 check it received in payment of a (mostly) playful highway-littering fine it imposed on the U.S.—but no one was injured.

If you're still worried, take comfort in some numbers: in the long history of spaceflight, only one person has ever gotten on the wrong side of a piece of falling space junk. That was Lottie Williams of Tulsa, Okla., who was struck on the shoulder by a piece of a Delta II rocket in 1997. She was unhurt. According to the Aerospace Corp., a nonprofit group that tracked Tiangong-1's fall, the likelihood of an individual being hit by space debris is less than 1 in 1 trillion. The European Space Agency pegs the odds even longer. It says getting struck by lightning is 10 million times as likely as the 1-in-300 trillion odds of being hit by space debris. —JEFFREY KLUGER

## FAITH

### Religious rebuilding

A Muslim politician and a Jewish leader in Berlin are raising funds to fix a synagogue wrecked by Nazis in 1938. Here, other communities that refurbished religious sites. —Abigail Abrams

#### MOSUL CHURCH

Christian and Muslim neighbors came together in May 2017 to restore a Catholic church in Mosul, Iraq, that had been damaged while ISIS occupied the area. Volunteers cleaned the church's walls and cleared rubble.

#### TEXAS MOSQUE

When a mosque in Victoria, Texas, was burned in January 2017, local churches and a synagogue offered space for congregants to pray, while an online campaign raised over \$1 million to build a new mosque.

#### SOUTHERN CHURCHES

Muslim groups raised more than \$100,000 to repair several historically black churches in the South that were burned after the 2015 Charleston, S.C., church shooting.



CHURCH: ODD BENNETT/AP

# The Brief Milestones

## DIED

### Steven Bochco Television hitmaker

BEFORE SHONDA RHIMES OR Ryan Murphy, there was Steven Bochco, a star showrunner who came to prominence practically before the category existed. Bochco, who died on April 1 at 74, broke out with the NBC drama *Hill Street Blues*, a 1981–87 police procedural about city cops dealing with hard social realities. He went on to probe the justice system with projects as different as NBC's glossy *L.A. Law* and ABC's gritty *NYPD Blue*.

His boundary-pushing instincts—engaging with hot social debates, often in graphic ways—were proof less of contrarianism than of a common touch. His shows were zeitgeist hits, winning over audiences, critics and the Television Academy. *Hill Street Blues* and *L.A. Law* both won the Emmy for Best Drama four times.

In an era in which TV producers' success can be measured in how passionate their niche of the audience is, Bochco's career—as a writer and producer who told stories intended for as wide a viewership as possible—seems impossible. Bochco's final show, *Murder in the First*, aired on TNT; the showrunner outlived the era of smart network-TV crime programming that he defined.

— DANIEL D'ADDARIO



Madikizela-Mandela and her husband Nelson Mandela raise their fists in 1990 upon his release from prison after 27 years

## DIED

### Winnie Madikizela-Mandela Defiant freedom fighter

By Sindiwe Magona

THE HISTORY OF THE ANTI-apartheid struggle cannot be written without the name of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, who died on April 2 at 81. When Nelson Mandela was sent to prison at Robben Island, his young wife, left with two little children and no financial support, did not allow his sentence to dampen her spirit for the

work—work in which she too was involved, as the 1956 women's march to Pretoria shows. She turned her anger into activity. She became the go-to person for sympathetic international entities. She suffered arrest and detention, torture and banishment. Defiant, she continued fighting.

When lives are examined in hindsight, we often

forget the setting. Winnie did not live in a vacuum but in apartheid South Africa. She suffered the double bind of race and gender. The first pitted her against white superiority, while the latter made her inferior in the eyes of men of all races.

At times, she was at odds with the movement too. At the end of apartheid, she was called to appear before South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, where she said she was "deeply sorry" and admitted that "things went horribly wrong" under her leadership during a violent period for the liberation struggle. But accounts of what went on show that "things went horribly wrong" in many instances for which no one was forced to face accusations.

Let us not forget: had there been no apartheid, she would have lived a very different life. But there was apartheid, and she chose to fight for liberation.

**Magona** is an award-winning South African writer and a former employee of the United Nations. She spent a decade working for the U.N.'s antiapartheid radio programs.

## DIED

**Johan van Hulst**, a Dutchman who saved 600 children during the Holocaust, on March 22 at age 107. Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust museum named him one of the Righteous Among the Nations, an honor for non-Jews who rescued Jews during World War II.

## SELECTED

The first Latin American and first Asian-American apostles, by the

Mormon Church, over Easter weekend. The two men diversify the top leadership of the church, which had exclusively comprised nonminority men.

## ANNOUNCED

The date for parliamentary and local district elections in Afghanistan, which have been delayed repeatedly since 2015. The country's Independent Elections Commission said they will now take place on Oct. 20.

## ORDERED

Florida Governor Rick Scott, to create a new system for restoring voting rights to felons who have served their time, by a federal judge in the state. The current system leaves decisions up to the discretion of top state officials.

## OFFERED

Shares for Spotify, the music-streaming service, for the first time, when it went public on April 3. The company's

direct listing allowed it to trade on the New York Stock Exchange without the usual fanfare and regulatory steps that surround IPOs.

## SHARED

The HIV status of Grindr users, with other companies that helped optimize the location-based hookup app for LGBTQ people. In response to criticism, Grindr said it would stop giving the third parties access to the sensitive data.



Kentucky teachers fill the state capitol on April 2 to protest pension changes and budget cuts

## DEVELOPING STORY

### Inside the revolt of the red-state teachers

THE TEACHERS WHO FLOODED THE Oklahoma state capitol by the thousands this month had the same message for lawmakers as did teachers in Kentucky and West Virginia when they recently walked out of classrooms as part of what some experts are describing as an unprecedented wave of activism.

“I think we forgot for a while how important it is to use our voice,” says Alicia Priest, head of the Oklahoma Education Association, which is calling for pay raises and a reversal of education cuts. “We’ve got to fund our classrooms, and if that takes stepping out of our schoolhouses, our maintenance buildings, our bus barns, our cafeterias, to make this happen, then that’s what we’ll do.”

It’s no coincidence, says Jon Shelton, a University of Wisconsin–Green Bay assistant professor who has studied the history of teacher strikes, that these recent labor actions are making headlines in politically conservative states. “In red states, you’ve seen the deepest cuts, and you combine that with a commitment by

the GOP and by Republicans not to raise taxes under any circumstances,” Shelton says. “I think teachers in those states are fed up with austerity. They’re fed up with disinvestment in public schools.”

Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin signed a bill on March 29 giving teachers an average raise of \$6,100, funded by taxes on cigarettes and motor fuel as well as oil and gas production—the state’s first major tax hike in nearly 30 years. But teachers say it’s not enough to make up for years of stagnant wages. Those in Oklahoma, West Virginia and Arizona—which rank among the worst states for teacher pay, per the National Education Association—have spoken out about working second jobs and using their own money for classroom supplies. In Kentucky, where teachers aren’t eligible for Social Security benefits, protests have focused on pensions.

Facing growing class sizes, outdated technology and underfunded programs, teachers also say they’re frustrated by budget cuts. Some states are trying to get ahead of the wave—New Mexico, which also ranks among states with the lowest teacher pay, passed a raise in March—but teachers who have rallied in Arizona could be next to formally strike, and Shelton thinks teachers in some blue states could follow. —KATIE REILLY

## THE CEO REPORT

### Tech stocks and the Trump tweet effect

By Alan Murray

THE MARKETS LOVED Donald Trump when he was talking deregulation and taxes. But they don’t care much for his actions on technology and trade.

Amazon stock took a beating after the President again attacked the online retailer over the pricing of its deliveries through the USPS. “Only fools, or worse, are saying that our money losing Post Office makes money with Amazon,” he tweeted. “They lose a fortune, and this will be changed.” But John Callan, an expert on the Postal Service, told the *Wall Street Journal* that it’s a symbiotic relationship: “Amazon would not exist if not for the USPS, and USPS now probably wouldn’t exist without Amazon.”

Facebook continued to get clobbered and has lost nearly 20% of its value since it peaked. In an interview with *Vox*, CEO Mark Zuckerberg defended himself from those—like Apple CEO Tim Cook—who have criticized Facebook’s business model of selling its users to advertisers rather than selling products and services to users. “I find that argument, that if you’re not paying that somehow we can’t care about you, to be extremely glib and not at all aligned with the truth,” Zuckerberg said. He pointed out that “a lot of media” have a similar ad-supported business model. But wait—does that mean Facebook is a media company?

*Murray is the president of Fortune*

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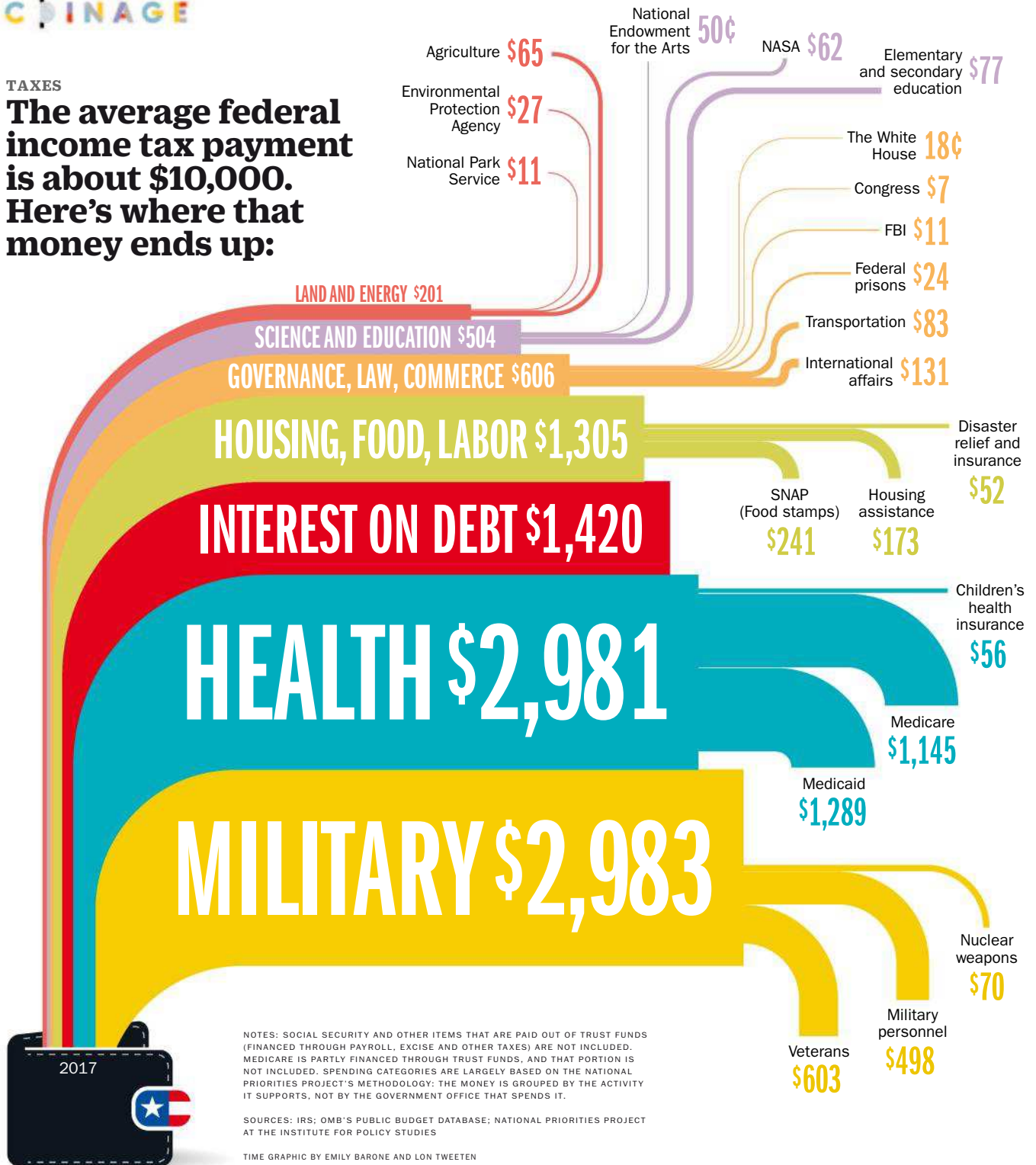
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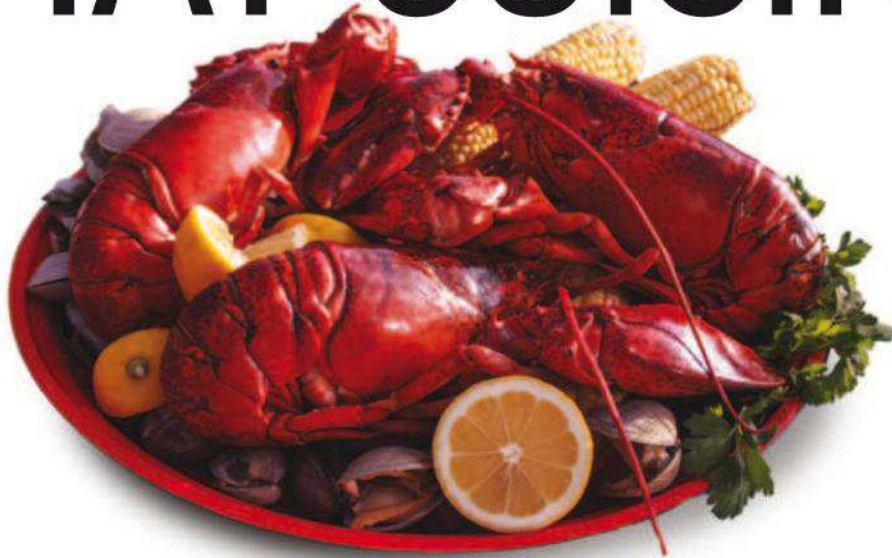
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TAXES

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## Florida Congressman **Matt Gaetz** is a conservative provocateur for our moment

By Nash Jenkins

IT'S 5 P.M. ON A RECENT THURSDAY AND Matt Gaetz is deep in the belly of the Capitol, preparing to make his fourth appearance on cable news since dawn. That rates as a slow day for the 35-year-old freshman Representative from the Florida panhandle. This one on Fox News, which for Gaetz is tantamount to batting practice. The real game comes when the incendiary conservative appears on MSNBC or CNN and provides the sort of contrarian commentary that has made him one of President Trump's favorite members of Congress. In a few minutes, Gaetz will go before the cameras to bemoan the "full absurdity" of special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation. But first he wants to explain his underlying philosophy.

"The convention that one should never be perceived to troll another that has a different viewpoint is a very country club approach to politics," Gaetz explains in his office, nursing one of the 10 or so Diet Pepsis he drinks each day. "And we're sort of in the era of *Caddyshack*. The caddies have taken over the country club."

Trolling has made Gaetz a star on the right. In terms of sheer airtime, he is arguably the most visible member of the House Republican conference outside of its leadership. Unlike, say, Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, he shirks scripted talking points. A Gaetz TV hit often feels calibrated to strike the pressure points of liberal outrage, delivered with the impishness of a fraternity president before the university disciplinary committee. Remember when Trump described Haiti and some African nations as "sh-tholes"? As Republicans distanced themselves from the remarks, Gaetz went on MSNBC to validate them, describing Haiti as a land of little more than "sheet metal and garbage."

Gaetz acknowledges that his tactics are designed to infuriate his opponents. His guest to the State of the Union in January was Charles C. Johnson, who has disputed that six million Jews died in the Holocaust and was permanently banned from Twitter in 2015 for calling on his followers to "take out" the prominent Black Lives Matter activist DeRay McKesson. Gaetz laughs about the outrage the invitation stirred up. "I'd never heard of the guy," he says. "A colleague called me up and said what he wanted to talk about was my

### GAETZ QUICK FACTS

#### **Creature of habit**

Gaetz drinks about 10 Diet Pepsis a day, by his own estimate.

#### **Republican rebel**

As a young lawmaker in Florida, he defied his party's leadership to fight for a medical-marijuana bill.

#### **Trump bump**

Gaetz says he sometimes gets phone calls of praise from President Trump after his media appearances: "It's like you have a little Trump rally in your ear."

views on cannabis reform and bitcoin." Gaetz says he extended the State of the Union invitation to Johnson in an off-the-cuff gesture after his original guest, his father, fell sick.

More substantively, Gaetz has been one of the House's loudest critics of the Russia investigation, which he considers an exercise in delegitimizing Trump. "Part of Russia's influence campaign is to engage in these asymmetric pokes at democracies everywhere, and we gotta prepare for that and deal with that," he says. "But did the Trump campaign collude with Russia? These were folks lurching from one campaign rally to the next. I was the emcee at one of the rallies, and I only found out the people I'd be introducing at the event hours before it began."

At this point, Gaetz's chief of staff, Kip Talley, interrupts to show me a Twitter video his team had posted days prior, jabbing at Representative Adam Schiff, the ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, for doing a 2013 interview on the Kremlin-backed news outlet RT. "Some say that was a little trollish," Gaetz says with a smile. "To each his own."

Such stunts have earned him the personal attention of the President, whom Gaetz says calls every now and again to offer praise for his cable-news appearances. "He cracks me up," Gaetz says. "When Donald Trump calls you, it's like you have a little Trump rally in your ear."

**GAETZ WOULD KNOW.** He became a Trump man fairly early in the GOP primary, pivoting from former governor Jeb Bush, whom he once idolized. "For everyone our age in Florida that came up in the conservative movement, Jeb Bush was like Attila the Hun," he says. "But the '98 vintage of Jeb turned out to be very different than the 2016 vintage Jeb."

Gaetz's knowledge of Florida politics is intimate. His father Don once presided over the state senate. Gaetz won a seat in the Florida house of representatives in 2010, at 28, beginning a six-year stint in Tallahassee. In the statehouse, Gaetz—who bills himself as a "pro-military, pro-border security libertarian Republican"—defied the party agenda to back legislation that would allow terminally ill patients to pursue medical-marijuana treatment. "The speaker of the house called me to yell at me for pulling an ambush," Gaetz recalls. "But we got that bill passed in a year."

It's easy to write Gaetz off as nothing more than a troll, someone who provokes for provocation's sake. But to do so is to ignore both his policy interests (he's sponsored 15 bills this term) and the skill with which he reads the Republican electorate. His audience is the demographic of Americans whose politics are less dogma than reflex: a reaction to the perceived sanctimony of a progressive cultural climate that treats conservatism as a punch line and scolds those





who fail to use the correct gender pronouns. “People in the media grew up in the Northeast and can’t comprehend the notion that there are people who like to go out to the clay pits and shoot, and afterward go eat fried chicken,” Gaetz says. “That’s the cultural bias that I think people were reacting to when they supported Trump—in particular in his assault on the media. The media became a prop in 2016.”

Gaetz declared his candidacy for Congress four days after Trump won the South Carolina primary and spent much of his campaign stumping for the candidate. “I’d knock on doors and people would discuss Trump,” he says. “They’d say, ‘You know what? He says a lot of the stuff that I’m thinking.’” This, Gaetz says, is the essential tenet of Trumpism: not economic nationalism, not xenophobia, but rather the repudiation of the poll-tested insincerity of the political class.

“Our generation, I think, has a demand for authenticity that exceeds any prior generation,” he says. “We share candid moments with one another more than any other generation through social media, but it’s also that we get the fact that the

**‘The caddies have taken over the country club.’**

MATT GAETZ, on how Trump’s presidency is upending political convention

cardboard-cutout candidate with the perfect hair and the perfect life and the white picket fence—that no one really lives like that. We’re all normal, flawed people who have off-the-cuff thoughts. I think the organizing principle of American politics today is to be interesting and authentic. If you can do those two things, voters will forgive and forget, and be O.K. with a lot of other stuff.”

By embracing this philosophy, Gaetz is betting on a vision of American politics in which Trump is not an aberration but the new normal. “This is the front end of the wave,” he says. “I do not believe the Democrats are nominating Cory Booker or Kirsten Gillibrand in 2020. They’re going to get themselves a celebrity, someone like Oprah or Mark Cuban.”

It’s also fair to say that Gaetz’s trolling, and the visibility it creates, is an investment in his own career prospects. He insists that he’s not thinking beyond his re-election this fall, but it’s clear that he has big ambitions. “I’m just a guy on the Judiciary Committee with a normal set of responsibilities,” he says. “Making an argument on television, and making sure people see it on social media.” □

# LightBox





SPORTS

## On Easter, a Hail Mary answered

ARIKE OGUNBOWALE WASN'T EVEN supposed to get the ball. But with three seconds left in the women's college national championship game on April 1 and the score tied 58-58, the Mississippi State defense forced the inbounds pass to Notre Dame's junior guard. She caught it, took two quick dribbles and then launched a prayer at the buzzer. An eerie déjà vu overcame the crowd in Columbus, Ohio: just two nights earlier, Ogunbowale drained a similar last-second shot in overtime to hand mighty Connecticut its first loss of the season.

This one seemed even more improbable. There was a defender in her face, momentum pushing her out of bounds and a 10.0 degree of difficulty. As a kid growing up in Milwaukee, Ogunbowale says she practiced just these moments as an imaginary clock counted down in her head. But this one was for real. Her childhood dreams came true—again—and the Fighting Irish won the title, their first since 2001.

At the men's Final Four in San Antonio, Villanova cruised to a championship over the University of Michigan. Both men's semifinal games, and the title bout, were decided by double digits.

In the hours following her championship-clinching buzzer beater, Ogunbowale acted like the rest of us. "I keep watching it," she says of her miracle bucket. "I'm just like, 'This is insane how this happened.'" —SEAN GREGORY

*Notre Dame's Ogunbowale launches her championship-winning shot against Mississippi State on April 1*

PHOTOGRAPH BY EVERT NELSON—  
NCAA/GETTY IMAGES

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# The View

WORLD

## A battle of wills between the U.S. and China

By Ian Bremmer



One year ago, President Trump welcomed China's Xi Jinping to his Mar-a-Lago estate. Despite predictions that different temperaments would make for an uneasy encounter, the meeting helped the nations work closely on North Korea and avoid a trade conflict. ▶

### INSIDE

BILL GATES DISCUSSES  
THE LESSONS HE LEARNED  
FROM A LATE FRIEND

THE REASONS A NEW  
GENDER-NEUTRAL TERM  
HAS CAUGHT ON

A LIFELONG LIBERTARIAN  
RECONSIDERS GUN RIGHTS  
AFTER PARKLAND

# TheView Opener

Still, this is an election year in the U.S., and Trump wants supporters to see that he's keeping his promises to get tough on China and trade deficits. After he announced tariffs on steel and aluminum imports in March, he got a lot of pushback—from U.S. businesses that need cheap steel, allies who export steel as well as Republican governors and lawmakers. The Administration then announced exemptions from tariffs for Europe and countries including Canada, Mexico, Brazil and South Korea. But not for China, which has alienated many U.S. businesses by restricting market access and stealing their intellectual property.

This fight is about more than trade, though. Not long before Trump announced those tariffs, he signed into law the Taiwan Travel Act, which allows officials at all levels of the U.S. government to travel to Taiwan to meet their Taiwanese counterparts, and for high-level Taiwanese officials to enter the U.S. Although this move reversed a nearly 40-year-old policy, the story got little play in most American media. Not so in China, where some state officials saw this open rejection of the "One China policy" as evidence that U.S. trade action is designed not to revive American manufacturing but to block China's expanding influence.

**AMID ALL THIS** was a divergence on North Korea. Beijing was not happy that Kim Jong Un went so directly to Trump with an offer to meet—and that there has been no statement that a Chinese representative will be present.

Meanwhile, Trump declared on March 22 that he intends to impose \$50 billion in tariffs, this time targeted directly at China. Trump says there will be more unless Beijing takes actions that knock \$100 billion off the bilateral trade deficit.

On April 2, we saw China's first response: tariffs on 128 goods from the U.S. worth \$3 billion, with the threat of more to come, as a reply to the initial steel and aluminum gambit. The proportionate response from Beijing signaled that China doesn't want a fight but won't back down if Trump escalates. On April 3, the Trump Administration revealed its list of recommended Chinese products to target in his broader tariff proposal—including more than 1,300 of them. On April 4, China sharply upped the stakes, with tariffs on U.S. goods worth about \$50 billion.

There is a risk of further escalation, because both sides believe they hold the stronger hand. Trump knows that China's economy is susceptible to trade action, since



Trump and Xi walk together at the Mar-a-Lago estate in West Palm Beach, Fla., on April 7, 2017

it depends on it more than the U.S. does. According to the World Bank, 37% of China's GDP comes from trade—though that's down from more than 65% in 2006—vs. 27% for the U.S. That creates a vulnerability for China.

But Trump is more politically vulnerable than Xi. It's not an accident that among the U.S. goods targeted by China are ginseng and pork, products that will hurt farmers and business owners in states like Wisconsin and Iowa, which are essential for Trump's re-election bid in 2020. Trump will hear more public criticism for these moves than Xi will. There are no swing states in China.

Beijing's second round of tariffs targets many U.S. goods, including cars, orange juice and soybeans—a product that accounts for trade worth \$14 billion per year. This will have an even greater pocketbook effect on Trump's base. And this is just the beginning.

Trump wants U.S. companies to have greater access to China's vast marketplace. He wants a much lower trade deficit—and a political win. China needs access to the technologies that can help its economy make the leap from manufacturing powerhouse to cutting-edge creator of industries and jobs that flow from advances in artificial intelligence, robotics and advanced microchips. The U.S. may win some concessions on market access, but China won't end the practice of forcing U.S. companies to share technology as the price of admission.

Whatever happens next, it's clear that the Mar-a-Lago moment is long gone. □

## READING LIST

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

### How to protect user data with coding

"Wouldn't it be nice to live in a world in which you could **specify exactly how—and for how long—your data may be used**, no matter who the data is given to?" asks Jean Yang, professor of computer science at Carnegie Mellon. Yang explains, in user-friendly terms, how software must change before we can regulate sites and apps as well as we wish.

### 'The hunger for booze as the hunger for God'

In an excerpt from her new memoir, *The Recovering*, novelist and essayist Leslie Jamison shares **how she found faith while getting sober for the second time**: "I needed to believe in something stronger than my willpower."

### There's no such thing as 'science people'

Former astronaut Scott Kelly writes that it's time to **stop telling kids they aren't good at science** and fix the common belief that someone must be a genius to have a career in the field.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## Bill Gates on how humans misunderstand progress

The philanthropist emailed with *TIME* about the new book *Factfulness*, written by his late friend and trusted adviser Hans Rosling, the Swedish statistician. Rosling, who grew famous from his TED Talks and for his creative presentations of data, died on Feb. 7, 2017.

### You've called *Factfulness* "one of the most important books I've ever read." What makes it so significant?

Hans believed the world was making remarkable progress, and he wanted everyone to know about it. *Factfulness* is his final effort to help people identify areas where things are getting better and spread that improvement. It explains more clearly than almost anything else I've read why it's so difficult for people to perceive progress. He offers clear, actionable advice for how to overcome our innate biases and see the world more factfully.

### What fact in this book especially surprised you?

The framework that Hans uses to describe the world was a revelation for me. He categorizes people by four income levels and emphasizes the commonalities that exist in each one. For example, people tend to buy shoes and bikes when they double their income from \$2 a day to \$4 a day, whether they live on the outskirts of Kinshasa or in a remote village in Bangladesh. Organizing populations by how they live—rather than where they live—is a much more precise way to talk about the world

### If the world really is improving at a faster rate than people think, why does it matter whether people have incorrect notions about it?

It's easier to accelerate progress if you know how far we've already come. If you don't believe the world has improved, you're

more likely to look at a tragedy and think nothing can be done. But someone who knows how much progress is possible can look at a bad situation and say, "How can we make this better?"

Hans called himself a "possibilist," which is a perfect way to describe this worldview. He believed that things could get better, not that they will get better. A possibilist like Hans doesn't wait for improvement—he looks for the areas where progress is happening and finds way to duplicate it in other places.

### Rosling details 10 instincts that distort our perspective on the world, like an instinct toward negativity, or one toward fear. Which one do you find most concerning for our future and

why? I'm worried about the blame instinct, though not for the obvious reasons. When something happens, it's human nature to look for the person responsible. Everyone knows the problem with creating scapegoats. But our instinct to turn people into heroes can also be a barrier to progress.

With a few exceptions, things don't get better because of heroes. There were heroes 1,000 years ago, and the world was awful.

Modernity is a miracle of systems. Jonas Salk was an amazing scientist, but he isn't the only reason we're on the doorstep of eradicating polio—it's also thanks to the coordinated vaccination effort by health workers, NGOs and governments. We miss the progress that's happening right in front of us when we look for heroes instead of systems. If you want to improve something, look for ways to build better systems.

—SARAH BEGLEY

Gates in Beijing on Nov. 3



HINDSIGHT

## How liable should driverless-car companies be for accidents?

There is a paradox in the ascension of autonomous vehicles (AVs). By eliminating the human driver, AVs can greatly reduce the number of crashes. But to reach this level of performance, driverless cars will first kill some of us. In fact, they must be allowed to do so.

As we begin to see the first deaths from crashes caused by AV testing on public roads, we will need to balance encouraging companies to develop these technologies by not making the costs prohibitively high and also protecting the rights of those forced into harm's way during testing. A bill pending in the U.S. Senate fails this standard. Instead, it eliminates individuals' abilities to sue AV companies until the vehicles are governed by federal standards—likely years from now.

There is a better model: the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, which compensates (through a tax on vaccines) those injured, who in exchange waive their tort rights. The streamlined process reduces litigation costs and insurance premiums for manufacturers while protecting people. It proves we can encourage the development of a lifesaving tech without devaluing the well-being of those risking their lives to help make that better world a reality.

—Mark Geistfeld, professor of civil litigation at NYU Law

## Why ‘Latinx’ has succeeded where other new labels have failed

By Katy Steinmetz

THERE ARE PLENTY OF GENDER-NEUTRAL TERMS THAT people have tried to make a part of American English. Take upstart pronouns like *xe* or *zir*, which have been discussed for centuries and remain little-used. Consider *first-year student*, which has a long way to go before supplanting *freshman*. Or recall the discussions about genderless military titles, like *midshiperson*, which have yet to leave port.

There have also been success stories, from *flight attendant* to *alum*. And it appears that “Latinx”—an alternative to Latino or Latina—is headed in that direction. Academic centers are adding the word to their titles. It is becoming de rigueur among artists and politically active youth. Media outlets like NPR are using it without remark. Another sign that this term has staying power: dictionaries have recently taken the time to define it.

**FOR SOME**, using Latinx can feel feminist. The word bubbled up from college campuses, and G. Cristina Mora, an associate professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, says she first encountered it as a gender-neutral term that young people were using because they were “tired of reaffirming the patriarchy inherent in language.” For example, in Spanish, a group of women are referred to as Latinas, while a group of men or a mixed group—even one that is mostly female—is a group of Latinos. Feminists might balk at this the same way they would balk at using *he* as a default pronoun or referring to mixed groups as “guys” but never “gals.” The subtext is the same: *It’s a man’s world; you ladies are just in it.*

Mora notes that there have been other attempts to stake out gender-neutral territory, like writing *Latino/a* or fashioning the word as *Latin@*, because its symbol looks like the offspring of a feminine *a* and masculine *o*. But using a slash is clunky, and while there has been criticism that it’s not clear how to pronounce Latinx—many say “La-TEE-nex,” like Kleenex—it’s even less obvious how to utter @.

The *x* also jibes with LGBTQ politics. An increasing number of people, some of whom describe themselves as nonbinary, are pushing back on the notion that everyone falls into the categories of male or female. And as Mora says, the *x* pushes back on the “idea that we should be gendered in the first place.” Katherine Martin, head of Oxford’s U.S. dictionaries, says that, per their research, Latinx was thrust into the American consciousness by the media coverage of the 2016 shooting at the Orlando nightclub Pulse, a gathering spot where patrons were likely to have roots in both the LGBTQ community and Latin American culture.

In general, an *x* can refer to unknown quantities and has a rebellious appeal. Malcolm X used the letter to buck a system in which many black Americans had ended up with the surnames of slave owners.



**MANY VIEW LATINX AS INCLUSIVE**, but the term does have detractors. Critics have suggested that it sounds too American, erasing a Spanish language that needs to be preserved by immigrant communities. Others have said it creates distance between Americans and people in Latin America who aren’t using it. And some conservatives see the term as one more example of unnecessary political correctness.

There is a long history of political labels being adopted by—and forced upon—Americans with Latin American or Spanish roots, and none is universally embraced. Take *Hispanic*, which some people feel has vestiges of colonialism. The tussling over labels mirrors a complex history of attempting to politically unite people from disparate backgrounds, finding common cause for Cubans, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, for example. Mora suggests that some prominent immigrants’-rights groups may see a term like Latinx as a distraction at a time when they’re still trying to “affirm that Latinos belong to the U.S.”

Others see the mysterious, futuristic-looking term as the perfect label for a group that is hard to define. Ed Morales, a lecturer at Columbia University’s Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, may be biased, since he chose to use Latinx in the title for his upcoming book about race and politics. But he believes people will only see more of the term, one that his students have recently started wearing on T-shirts. “I see less and less resistance to it,” he says, “and I think it may actually become standard.” □



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## Why I'm no longer a Second Amendment absolutist

By Elise Jordan

WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, MY FAMILY LIVED IN MISSISSIPPI on the outskirts of a small town, near a hospital. Once in a while, an inmate receiving medical treatment there would escape. One night one knocked on our door, asking to use the phone. My aunt declined to show hospitality. The inmate bolted. Soon, the police knocked on our door too. Although my aunt never touched a gun that evening, she certainly had ready access to plenty of options. The incident impressed upon me why it could be helpful to have one in the house.

The Parkland, Fla., shooting was the culmination of several troubling years of legal guns winding up in the wrong hands. I am convinced that those of us who have believed nothing should infringe upon the Second Amendment should now support commonsense gun control, from universal background checks to closing loopholes for gun-show sales and person-to-person transfers of firearms. The U.S. government is so broken, it is literally killing people—at least 438 Americans have been shot in school shootings since the Sandy Hook massacre—as well-funded bureaucracies fail to keep guns out of the hands of people who are not fit for the awesome responsibility.

**THE EASE WITH WHICH** the alleged Parkland murderer obtained his rifle reminded me of an incident that was once funny but is now troubling. A decade ago, when I was in Afghanistan working at the NATO/ISAF headquarters, I bragged to my late father about shooting an AK-47, and he decided he wanted to buy one himself. One evening at around midnight, my mother answered the phone. The man on the line apologized for the late hour but told her he was on parole, and it was the only time he could call without getting caught by his mother. He had seen my father's want ad and had an AK-47 to unload. My mother told him to never call again.

More recently, another relative purchased an AR-15 in a legal person-to-person transaction with no oversight or paper trail. The process is easier than obtaining certain kinds of skin-care treatment. Consider the regulation of Accutane, which has been linked to depression and can cause severe birth defects. In 2000, then Representative Bart Stupak's 17-year-old son committed suicide while taking the drug, and the bereaved Congressman championed greater oversight. The eventual result was the creation of a patient registry, which required patient, pharmacist and doctor participation.

It's extraordinarily annoying to obtain the drug, but I went through the process—going to monthly doctor's appointments, getting blood drawn and taking a quiz over the phone to make sure I wasn't pregnant—because it was important to me. And, yes, I probably needed a skin drug that can kill you as much as my dad needed an AK-47. But that's the beauty of America. We should be able to get both, if we go through reasonable measures to do so.



▲  
*AR-15s on sale at Good Guys Guns & Range in Orem, Utah, on Feb. 15*

**97%**

Percentage of support for universal background checks from American voters, according to a Quinnipiac University national poll that was released on Feb. 20

**22%**

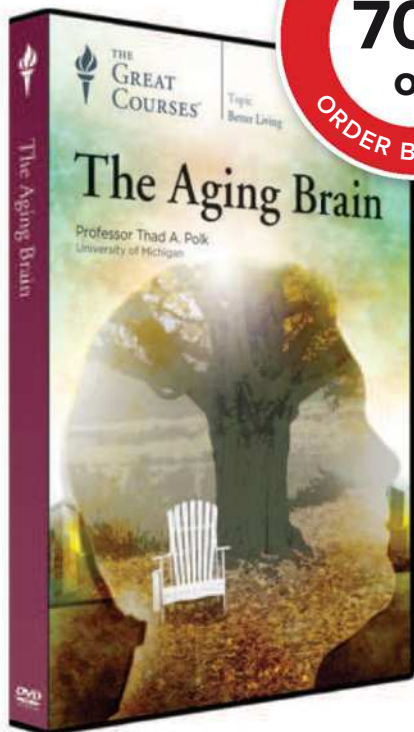
Percentage of gun owners who said they had obtained their most recent firearms (within the previous two years) without a background check, according to a 2015 survey published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*

**I OBSERVED** an evolution in viewpoint similar to my own in March, during Ashcroft in America focus groups held in Tennessee and Mississippi. Most of the participants were gun owners who believe in the right to bear arms but are open to banning bump stocks and high-volume magazines, enacting stricter background checks and increasing the age limit to 21 for buying semiautomatic rifles. They also reject arming teachers as a solution to school shootings.

These men and women would rather work for a solution than fight change that they consider necessary, and it is they who are the gun lobby's biggest constituency. If the lobby does not start listening to what they want, it will risk ceding its influence during a moment of major societal change.

As a libertarian, I don't want to surrender my individual liberties to a government that failed at so many pivotal points of the Parkland tragedy, including dozens of calls to local police since 2010 to go to the murderer's home and detailed warnings to the FBI. But just as in the aftermath of the Orlando nightclub, Las Vegas concert and Sutherland Springs church shootings, nothing will really get done unless voters—including those of us who support the Second Amendment—push Congress toward reasonable gun control. These are my new thoughts and prayers.

*Jordan is an NBC News/MSNBC political analyst and TIME columnist*



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World

# THE AUTOCRAT'S ASCENT

Saudi heir Mohammed bin Salman is pitching his plan to disrupt the Middle East By Karl Vick

There may not even be a name for what the crown prince of Saudi Arabia has been doing in the U.S. for three weeks, but he has been doing a lot of it. By the time 32-year-old Mohammed bin Salman departs, he will have visited five states plus the District of Columbia, four Presidents, five newspapers, uncounted moguls and Oprah. America has not seen the like





*Crown Prince  
Mohammed bin Salman  
photographed at the  
Plaza Hotel in New York  
City on March 29*

## STORMING THE STATES



Bin Salman arrived March 19 for a three-week tour and met:

James Mattis  
Washington

Christine Lagarde  
Washington

Michael Bloomberg  
New York City

since Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev arrived in September 1959 in a Tupolev 114 with cracks in the fuselage to knock around the country for 13 days, putting a reliable human face on America's most dangerous enemy.

Bin Salman's ride is a Boeing 747 with GOD BLESS YOU emblazoned under the cockpit in Arabic and English. And the kingdom he essentially rules—as ironfisted regent of his ailing 82-year-old father, King Salman—defines *frenemy*. His U.S. itinerary (a week longer than Khrushchev's) is as wide-ranging as the American distrust of his homeland: 55% of Americans disapprove of Saudi Arabia, according to the latest Gallup survey. In the 1970s, the Saudis engineered the oil embargo that had Americans waiting in gas lines; in the '90s, U.S. troops scrambled into the desert to save the Saudis in the First Gulf War; and when American families drew up emergency safety plans in the fall of 2001, it was after the terrorist attacks orchestrated by one Saudi, Osama bin Laden, whose countrymen accounted for 15 of the 19 people who carried out the attacks. A great deal has turned on the actions of men in red checkered headscarves and flowing robes.

So there could hardly be a more disarming question than the one bin Salman poses in the hotel suite where he has just sat for a formal portrait, once the cameras are finally gone:

“Can I take this stuff off?”

The instant transformation that follows—kerchief off, ceremonial robe handed to an aide—captures the entire point of his sojourn: to sell skeptical Americans on his audacious, risky plan to modernize Saudi Arabia and reassert its primacy in the Middle East. Over the course of three years since his father became king, bin Salman has ruthlessly

consolidated control over the kingdom's economic and security power centers. He has introduced modest liberalization and sharply escalated a proxy war with Iran across the region, creating a humanitarian crisis in neighboring Yemen. And he proposes to wean the kingdom off oil exports and diversify its economy for a post-petroleum future.

If it works, bin Salman's putative revolution could transform one of world's most retrograde autocracies from exporter of oil and terrorist ideology into a force for global progress. But sudden change often ends badly in the Middle East, and warning flags snap from the crown prince's actions at home and abroad. “He is an ambitious young man willing to act aggressively and decisively to consolidate power,” says Chas W. Freeman Jr., a former U.S. ambassador to Riyadh under President George H.W. Bush. “[But] the rashness of much of what the crown prince has been doing—it's pretty radical stuff—it does make him vulnerable.”

**‘We believe the practice today in a few countries, among them Saudi Arabia, is not the practice of Islam. It's the practice of people who have hijacked Islam after 1979.’**

—Mohammed bin Salman

**DURING THE 75 MINUTES** he spends with TIME at New York City's Plaza Hotel, Saudi bombs still fall on Yemen, Saudi bloggers remain in jail and 3 out of 4 Saudi citizens still collect a paycheck from a kingdom where poorer foreigners hold 84% of real jobs. But the man in charge no longer seems of that world. Folded into a corner of the couch in a brown smock, he looks like someone you knew in college, a big guy going on about something that seems really important to him. His thinning hair is matted. He holds a Coke Zero.

The heart of the pitch the crown prince has taken on the road is forward-looking, universal and delivered in the confident, fact-stippled surge of words that might describe a startup. Bin Salman in large part is looking for money, foreign funds being a crucial element of Vision 2030, his plan that promises to reconcile feudal society with the world around it. As hard as it once would have been to imagine, collapsing oil prices, and the economic and social demands of an exploding youth population, require economic reform. And for all his power and wealth, bin Salman needs outside help to do it.

That's partly because Saudis themselves are resistant to change. An impoverished desert wasteland a century ago, Saudi Arabia rode oil wealth through decades of change. “It's too hard to convince them that there is something more to do,” bin Salman says of the founding generation, “because what happened in their time, in 50 or 60 years, it's like what happened in the last 300 or 400 years in the United States of America.” But bin Salman was born into that modern world. Seven in 10 Saudis are even younger than him. And when they look up from their phones, they are less impressed. “Our eyes are focusing on what we are missing,” bin Salman says.



**Bill Clinton**  
New York City

**Bill Gates**  
Seattle

**Jeff Bezos**  
Seattle

**Richard Branson**  
Mojave Desert, California

But it's also because what he is proposing is potentially destabilizing. Bin Salman talks of repudiating not just the nation's dependence on oil, but also the kingdom's other leading export: religious fundamentalism, which has fueled al-Qaeda, the Taliban, ISIS and other Islamic terrorist groups for decades. "We believe the practice today in a few countries, among them Saudi Arabia, is not the practice of Islam," he tells TIME. "It's the practice of people who have hijacked Islam after 1979."

Yet since September, the crown prince has sent dozens of nonviolent clerics and Islamic intellectuals to prison, leading current and former U.S. officials to question whether his talk of reform masks a crackdown on dissent. "More people today probably feel better about their country, particularly young people," says a former top White House official. "But people have suffered, and the political repression has not lightened up. This is not a democratic reform."

In the U.S., bin Salman has found some important supporters, though, including President Donald Trump and his influential son-in-law Jared Kushner. The President has not only pursued a tighter alliance with the kingdom and embraced it as a bulwark against a surging Iran; he has also invested deeply in the crown prince personally, tweeting reassurances through a string of controversies.

If White House support were enough to gain backing for his reforms, bin Salman would not have proceeded from Washington to Boston, New York City, Seattle, Silicon Valley, Beverly Hills and Dallas. The question is whether others will buy what the White House has signed on for. "Is this a savvy transaction by a young guy who knows his country has to change, but who intends to maintain strict and authoritarian control at home, or is this

a transformation that will fundamentally alter the American conception of Saudi Arabia?" asks Aaron David Miller, a longtime State Department official now at the Woodrow Wilson Center. "When I was at the State Department, we prayed for a leader like this. [But] beware of wishing something you don't really want."

**UPON THE DEATH** or abdication of bin Salman's father, the throne will skip an entire generation—hundreds of middle-aged princes—and fall to him. The crown prince is a man in a hurry. "I don't want to waste my time," he says. "I am young."

The dire condition of the kingdom kindly accommodated his impatience. By 2015, when the crown reached bin Salman's father, the Saudi oil economy was running on fumes. The price of a barrel, which Saudis had projected to remain at at least \$100 a barrel, had fallen to \$50, and immense cash reserves stood a few years from exhaustion. At the same time, the U.S., having edged closer to energy independence with natural gas and oil shale, no longer needed Riyadh the way it once did, and was noticeably less attentive. More worrying still, President Barack Obama, unlike other past Presidents, was willing to engage persistently with Iran, the Saudis' chief nemesis. Iran, despite remaining a thorn in Washington's side, was aligned with the U.S. in its extreme to destroy ISIS, the Sunni extremists who executed Americans on camera and used Saudi textbooks in their schools.

Faced with this panorama, the young prince quietly but ruthlessly consolidated power in the kind of bold strokes that would have left Niccolò Machiavelli feeling bashful. At the time of King Salman's ascension, his son was so unknown outside the kingdom that even his age was a subject of speculation

(he was 29), yet the new monarch bet everything on him. He made bin Salman Defense Minister, in charge of what was then the world's third largest military budget, after the U.S. and China, and the young prince promptly launched a war, pummeling Iran-backed rebels in Yemen. He was also named head of Aramco, the behemoth state oil company, chief of economic development and deputy crown prince.

The final title designated bin Salman as second in line for the crown, behind his 55-year-old cousin Mohammed bin Nayef, who famously survived an attack by an al-Qaeda prisoner who detonated a suicide bomb hidden inside his own rectum. But bin Nayef was no match for his cousin's ambition. In June 2017, the king removed bin Nayef as crown prince and replaced him with bin Salman.

Five months later, bin Salman rolled the dice again, imprisoning dozens of people including princes, aides and businessmen in the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Riyadh. They were accused with corruption, though there was no formal legal process and no transparency. And at least one aide, who died in custody, showed signs of physical abuse, the *New York Times* reported. "He was far more powerful than people assumed and the opposition was far weaker," says Robert Malley, a former top White House official under Obama.

Allegations of corruption have long been used as a political bludgeon in Saudi Arabia, where pilfering from the public till has often been synonymous with royalty. In 2001, Prince Bandar al-Sultan publicly estimated that \$50 billion had been transferred to royals' private accounts since the kingdom's founding. Bin Salman's government claimed to recover twice that amount from its captives, but he

# World

hasn't been shy about his own spending. He paid more than half a billion dollars for a yacht and \$300 million for a gold-encrusted château near Versailles, all with money that he insists he earned on his own. "If I'm corrupted, please show me the proof," he says. "It is well known that King Salman and his sons and his team, they are super clean. Everyone in Saudi Arabia knows that."

Whether shakedown or rough justice, the Ritz episode eliminated his chief political rivals and cemented his power. "It was a kind of coup d'état—a bloodless coup d'état—of the old system," says former ambassador Freeman. But it also had the effect of rattling investor faith in the kingdom's stability. "All power that had been distributed under the previous constitutional arrangement very widely under a checks-and-balances arrangement has been compressed and concentrated into the hands of one man," says Freeman.

That in turn undercut bin Salman's revamp of Saudi Arabia's economy, society and world status—all the things he came to the U.S. to promote. Bin Salman's Vision 2030 plan calls for establishing a \$2 trillion sovereign wealth fund, the world's largest. Half, he says, would be invested inside the kingdom—he talks enthusiastically about the future of carbon fiber and plans to make Saudi Arabia the world leader in solar energy—and half in enterprises abroad. He also wants to partially privatize Saudi Aramco in what would likely be the largest initial public offering in history. But after the Ritz, the IPO came off the calendar and the U.S. tour went on.

**IN MANHATTAN**, the crown prince hit Starbucks with former mayor and billionaire Michael Bloomberg. He wore a blazer and a shirt open at the collar. It was full regalia at MIT, but a business suit in Seattle for Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates. Clothes may not make the man, but if your message is modernity and flexibility, they say more than "reformer," a label blanched of meaning by its application to a parade of more traditional Saudi royals. And bin Salman has turned heads. "No one has said what he has been saying in the entire history of the kingdom," says Bilal Y. Saab, a senior fellow at the Middle East Institute. "It's significant."



Bin Salman has made some concrete changes. In June, women will drive on Saudi roads, independent from male chaperones. Music festivals and movie theaters are opening, though questions remain about separate seating for men and women. The kingdom's religious police are being reined in. In a setting as sterile and controlled as Saudi Arabia, these modest changes have generated genuine enthusiasm among activists, many of whom had been skeptical of bin Salman.

The crown prince says the kingdom has to be sufficiently "livable" both to satisfy young Saudis and to attract foreigners to work there. He also hopes to draw tourists, and announced on April 2 that the kingdom will relax visas for them. "I believe in the last three years, Saudi Arabia did more than in the last 30 years," bin Salman says.

But the crown prince also fits into a larger global trend: authoritarianism. Bin Salman has taken even greater control of the Saudi media, and, in the judgment of members of a U.N. panel, has "arbitrarily" imprisoned 60 activists, journalists, academics and clerics since September. Saudi Arabia remains an absolute monarchy, the crown prince notes, adding that he has no plans to dilute his power in the coming 50 years that he might rule. "What we should focus on is the end, not the means," he says. "If the means are taking us to that end, that good end, and everyone agrees on it, it will be good." Bin Salman says he ultimately wants freedom of speech, improved employment, economic growth, security and stability for Saudi Arabia. And he says his absolutist approach is a better means to get it than the chaos that followed the Arab Spring elsewhere in the region.





▲  
*Houthi fighters inspect the site of a reported airstrike by the Saudi-led coalition that targeted Yemen's presidential palace in Sana'a on Dec. 5*

The war on Yemen has cost more than 10,000 lives and devastated the poorest country on the Arabian Peninsula

The problem for Saudi Arabia, the region and the world is that the means are wreaking havoc in the meantime. In the name of standing up to Iran, bin Salman launched a 2015 air war in Yemen that has cost more than 10,000 lives, and devastated what was already the poorest country in the Arab world. Of the 16,749 bombing runs recorded since 2015 by the Yemen Data Project, an independent human-rights monitoring group, nearly a third targeted nonmilitary sites. "You are waiting to die if you are here," says Radhya Almutawakel of the Yemeni nonprofit Mwatana Organization for Human Rights, speaking by phone from Sana'a, the capital. The U.N. calls it "the worst man-made humanitarian disaster of our time."

Bin Salman remains resolute. Although he told TIME he does not rule out sending ground troops, his priority is that the war remain painless for Saudis. "We want to be assured that whatever happens, the Saudi people shouldn't feel it," he says. "The economy shouldn't be harmed or even feel it. So we are trying to be sure that we are far away from whatever escalation happens." The White House so far is happy to play a supporting role in the Yemen war, providing intelligence, midair refueling and billions of dollars of munitions.

For decades, "stability" was what the U.S. expected Saudi Arabia to provide in the Middle East. But if anything the rapprochement with the White House has emboldened the new regime. Shortly after Trump departed Riyadh from his first foreign visit last May, the Saudis stunned the world by launching a blockade on Qatar. In November, bin Salman appeared to make a hostage of Lebanon's Prime Minister Saad Hariri for more than two weeks, after Hariri announced his resignation in a late-night video during a trip to Riyadh. Amid regional and global uproar, the Lebanese leader returned to Beirut and recanted his resignation days later.

The ultimate target in all these adventures was Iran, which arms the largely Shi'ite Houthis in Yemen, has warm relations with Qatar and plays a central role in Lebanese politics. It is also the great rival of Saudi Arabia both for regional power and leadership of the Muslim world. Bin Salman calls

## MBS IN HIS OWN WORDS

### ON U.S. TROOPS IN SYRIA

We believe American troops should stay for at least the midterm if not the long term, because the United States of America needs to have cards to negotiate and to apply pressure. If you get these troops out, you lose this card. Two, you need to have a checkpoint in the corridor between Iran and Hizballah. If you take troops from east Syria, you lose that checkpoint, and this corridor could escalate other things around the region.

### ON IRAN

If you see any problem in the Middle East, you will find Iran. Iraq? Iran's there. Yemen? Iran is there. Syria? Iran is there. Lebanon? Iran's there. Where is the stable country? Egypt? Sudan? Jordan? Kuwait? Iran is not there. But they are not a threat to Saudi Arabia. Why? Simple: Iran is not among the five largest economies in the Muslim world. Same thing goes for their army. They are not among the top five armies in the Middle East. But if you don't watch it, it could turn into a threat.

### ON PURSUING NUCLEAR ARMS

No, we have not started to do anything, and we will not start to do anything until we see Iran announce that they have nuclear weapon. This will not happen until that happens.

### ON EXECUTION BY BEHEADING

I believe the United States of America and a lot of states have executions of people. We've tried to minimize that so we have clear laws that we can change, like if a person kills a person, they have to be executed in our law. But there are a few areas that we can change from execution to life in prison. His Majesty the King doesn't wake up and just sign whatever he wants to sign. He works by the law, by the book. We are working for two years through the government and the Saudi parliament to build new laws in that area. And we believe it will take one year, maybe a little bit more. We will not get it 100%, but we will reduce it big time.

► To read the full interview with Mohammed bin Salman, go to [time.com/MBS](https://time.com/MBS)

Iran the source of every ill in the Middle East—including, to many scholars' astonishment, religious extremism in Saudi Arabia. The crown prince dates this extremism to 1979, the year Sunni radicals stormed the holiest site in Islam, the Grand Mosque at Mecca, and called for the overthrow of the House of Saud on the grounds of insufficient piety. In bin Salman's improbable telling, the zealots were inspired by the Islamic revolution that had installed a theocracy in Iran a few months earlier.

Whatever the cause, the result was catastrophic. Cowed by the accusation of impiety, the House of Saud, already long-dependent on religious conservatives for moral authority in the country, gave them a freer hand. The result was a Muslim fundamentalism that coincided with yet another fateful event of 1979: the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In confronting that Cold War threat, the U.S. made what turned out to be a shortsighted move: fighting the Russians by encouraging Muslims to embrace a war against the infidels. In that milieu, al-Qaeda came into being.

Historians note that Saudi Arabia itself was founded on a similar bargain. In the 18th century, the very first Saudi king struck a pact to get the services of the fanatical fighters who followed Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab. The allies agreed that the House of Saud would govern the temporal kingdom,

## 'When I was in the State Department, we prayed for a leader like this.'

—Aaron David Miller, who served under six Secretaries of State

but spiritual life would be the province of the severe brand of Islam named for its founder.

Bin Salman claims the severity is overstated: "What Wahhabist?" he asks, smiling. Wahhabism is universal shorthand for the unforgiving brand of Islam that millions of foreign workers have learned in Gulf mosques, and that Saudi Arabia's ministry of Islam has exported abroad. Bin Salman quibbles. "First of all, Saudi doesn't spread any extremist ideology," he insists. "Saudi Arabia is the biggest victim of extremist ideology."

Bin Salman says his government is intent on undoing lessons taught by extremists, and says he has Islamic

*Trump holds up a chart of military hardware sales to Saudi Arabia during his Oval Office meeting with bin Salman on March 20*



doctrine on his side. "If someone comes and says women cannot participate in sport," he says, "The Prophet, he raced with his wife. If someone comes and says women cannot do business, the wife of the Prophet, she was a businesswoman, and he used to work for her as Prophet. So the Prophet's practice is on our side."

The kingdom is also softening its public posture toward Israel, acknowledging an alignment against Iran that has existed discreetly for years in the realms of intelligence and back-channel diplomacy. "We have a common enemy, and it seems that we have a lot of potential areas to have economic cooperation," the crown prince tells TIME. "We cannot have relations with Israel before solving the peace issue with the Palestinians because both of them they have the right to live and coexist," he says, but "when it happens, of course next day we'll have good and normal relation with Israel and it will be in the best for everyone."

**ALL THIS ADDS UP** to a different Saudi Arabia, one way or another.

To outsiders, the most obvious danger is from bin Salman's impulsiveness in foreign policy. The running war in Yemen is the most worrisome example. "This was a somewhat immature, ill-advised and improvised action," says Stephen Seche, former U.S. ambassador to Yemen, that "raises questions about whether he can carry out other very ambitious plans."

The challenge is to reconcile that, and the iron fist he shows rivals at home, with the charming fellow flying around the U.S. For all the contradictions, few come away from an encounter with bin Salman unaware of the force of his personality, intellect and devotion to change.

"He really is trying to project a certain image, and he's worked on it extremely hard," says Saab. It is more than enough to give hope to those who want to see the possibility of positive disruption in the Middle East. Says the Woodrow Wilson Center's Miller: "I guarantee you that people who this man has sat down with are asking themselves: What's new in the Middle East? Two words: Saudi Arabia." —With reporting by HALEY SWEETLAND EDWARDS, EDWARD FELSENTHAL and W.J. HENNIGAN/NEW YORK and PHILIP ELLIOTT/WASHINGTON

VIEWPOINT

# THE PRINCE OF TIDES

By James Stavridis

IN TERMS OF TIMING, SHAKESPEARE SAID IT BEST IN *Julius Caesar*: “There is a tide in the affairs of men,/ Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;/ Omitted, all the voyage of their life/ Is bound in shallows and in miseries.” As the U.S. considers the young, dynamic and controversial Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia, it is important to remember that he believes his destiny lies in reshaping not only the Saudi nation, but also the Arab world and the broader Middle East. And I would not bet against him.

During a trip hosted and paid for by the Saudi Foreign Ministry, with the aim of discussing diplomatic education, I was invited to speak with the crown prince. Our meeting was held in his large office in the Royal Palace on March 12 at 11 p.m. as members of the royal court milled about outside.

In my 10 years as a very senior U.S. military officer and five years as dean of a graduate school of international relations, I have met with most of the major world leaders. I would put bin Salman near the top of the list in terms of energy, ambition and vision. His youth means he will be in power for a long time when he becomes king. But the challenges are immense, and his detractors—both inside the kingdom and globally—are formidable.

**THERE WAS A** particular need driving his deep personal engagement with the U.S. leadership during his lengthy visit to America. With a small population relative to Iran’s and a reliance on fossil fuels for revenue, the Saudis need a powerful partner—and only the U.S. can provide a full range of security guarantees. For the kingdom, a U.S. withdrawal from the Middle East puts in place a far more dangerous landscape. This should inform a Saudi approach that eases U.S. concerns about the war in Yemen, the relationship with the Qataris and cooperation with Israel.

Bin Salman’s reputation is not without controversy. Confining members of the royal family in a hotel in a crackdown on corruption led to a human-rights backlash. Likewise, the Saudi military campaign in Yemen has helped create a humanitarian crisis, and accusations of loose collateral-damage standards in terms of the air campaign continue to grow. The isolation of Qatar is contributing to tension in the Gulf Cooperation Council, traditionally led by the Saudis. And bin Salman’s reforms on behalf of women, from offering driving rights to allowing custody of children after a divorce, are stirring up trouble in traditional sectors of Saudi society.

There will be more challenges ahead. The plan to reinvent the Saudi economy and wean it off oil revenue will be difficult. If bin Salman cannot generate jobs



Students in a car-safety course at Effat University in Jidda, Saudi Arabia, on March 5

for Saudi youth, encourage technology transfer and direct investment, manage the sovereign wealth while protecting the post-hydrocarbon future, tap the human capital of women, reduce radicalization, strangle corruption, maintain the support of most young Saudis and continue to connect the kingdom to the global grid, then his path will be vastly harder. He cannot succeed by force of personality alone, something he knows well.

**CREATING A SENSE OF UNITY** among the fractious Arab states will be hard, and there are other leaders who could pose a challenge. Above all looms the shadow of Iran, which sees itself as inheritor of the Persian Empire and is striking out across the region, seeking to gain influence, including via an alliance with Russia, Syria and NATO member Turkey. In addition to relying on traditional Arab states, bin Salman needs a quietly cooperative Israel, European help in ensuring that the Iranian economy doesn’t swing into high gear, U.S. influence both in the region and in Europe, possible cooperation with NATO and direct investment from other parts of the world. The U.S. will be central to that coalition, and bin Salman will be a vital partner for its security.

The crown prince is determined to seize this moment and sail on the flood tide. But he would do well to remember that the play from which that famous quotation comes tells the story of a leader who faces a brutal end. I’d say the odds of his success are better than even, but there are rough seas ahead.

---

*Stavridis was the 16th Supreme Allied Commander at NATO and is dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University*

# AMERICAN DREAMER

One of the 700,000 immigrants with DACA status plans her future in the Trump era

**By Charlotte Alter/  
Lorain, Ohio**

CORINA BARRANCO STARTS EACH AMERICAN day the same way she started her American life: by putting one foot in front of the other. Thirteen years ago, when she was 5, she walked across the Mexico-U.S. border into Arizona. On this Thursday in February, Barranco leaves her home in Lorain, Ohio, at 6:50 a.m. to walk through swirling snow, under purple predawn skies, past empty houses where she suspects drugs are sold. Her family does not have a car, so Barranco's feet take her across this fading industrial city, from school to work to church, between a tangle of highways, on streets that lack sidewalks. Even when there is a hole in her boot, she is rarely late.

By 7:23, the high school senior is sitting in the front row of her computer class, plowing through brain puzzles. It's busywork, the kind of low-stakes activity that most kids skip when there's a substitute teacher, which is what they have today.

*Barranco walks to school in February; her family doesn't have a car, so she makes the daily trip on foot*



A few seats down, a boy is playing video games and watching YouTube. Then the loudspeaker crackles, and the voice of the principal fills the room. Barranco stands, hand on her heart; she turns toward the flag and recites the Pledge of Allegiance.

Barranco has lived in the U.S. since 2005, when she and a family member walked for more than a week before reaching the U.S. Barranco remembers getting new Converse sneakers with Barbie on them. She remembers walking for days without food and being carried on the backs of her traveling companions. She remembers seeing cows drink out of a puddle and then lowering her own face to drink the same water. She remembers digging through a trash can to find her first bite of food in three days—a small bag of Oreos—and lying on the floor of a red car and resting her head on men's boots. She remembers that when she arrived in Arizona, someone tried to feed her fried chicken, but her throat was too dry to eat it.

Barranco is one of some 700,000 young people in the U.S. who are shielded from deportation by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Enacted by President Obama, it gave legal protections to those brought to the U.S. illegally as children—a group dubbed the Dreamers. But in September, Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced that the Trump Administration would rescind DACA on March 5, nominally buying Congress time to renegotiate the program. The result has been predictably messy, ensnaring all three branches of government. Immigration advocates sued, and a federal judge blocked the Trump Administration from ending DACA while the lawsuits proceed. The Supreme Court has declined to step in.

Congressional leaders from both parties have tried to find consensus. A bipartisan deal failed in the Senate, earning just eight Republican votes as the White House campaigned to kill it. (President Trump's favored alternative won just 39 votes.) DACA has not ended as promised, but the court-ordered stay means Congress lost a deadline that could have spurred action to fix the program. Trump has not offered much help or clarity; after urging Congress to pass a law protecting the Dreamers, he has rejected multiple DACA deals, including one that would

have given him money for his border wall. Yet in recent weeks he has taken to blaming Democrats for the quagmire. "DACA is dead because the Democrats didn't care or act," Trump tweeted April 2.

Barranco doesn't know any of this. She has never heard of Sessions and she doesn't have Twitter. All she knows is that her DACA was just renewed, allowing her to stay in the country for two more years that will be fraught with anxiety if a permanent solution can't be found. "It feels like *boom, boom* in my chest. I get panicky," she says over lunch. "If they take away DACA, I won't be able to work at McDonald's. Immigration has my records. What if they come to get me?"

## **'WITHOUT DACA, WE'RE BACK TO SQUARE ONE.'**

BRUNA BOUHID, spokesperson for United We Dream, an advocacy group that works on behalf of immigrants and fights to defend them from deportation

She calms herself down by forcing a smile and counting her blessings. Her family may not have a car or a computer or a way to pay for her to go to college. But they are together, she reminds herself, and they are in America. She has her teachers and her church in her corner. She twists her purity ring around her finger and tells herself that God is with her.

"If I'd stayed [in Mexico], I'd be working in the fields right now. Even if I don't have the benefits of my peers, I truly am blessed. I have things I never would have had," she says. "Like a bed."

**BARRANCO**, who is short and cheerful, says she has only two friends, but that's not exactly true. Kids say hello when she sits down in class and ask to work with her on projects. As she walks through the corridor at Lorain High School, a skinny boy stops in front of her, says, "Hi!" and then blushes and flees. She passes a couple making out in the hallway and mutters, "Ew, get a room!"

Barranco walks into her college-

readiness class on time and takes a seat alone in the front row. "I usually sit by myself," she says. "I try to concentrate more." For a long time, she had been fixed on a clear goal: to join the Army. Then, in her junior year, a military recruiter told her that only U.S. citizens could serve. (The military makes a few exceptions for immigrants with special skills.) Last year, Barranco was invited to participate in a local Citizens Police Academy program. After meeting Lorain's chief of police, she decided she wanted to be a cop.

College acceptance letters are posted on the classroom wall. The teacher projects a list of scholarships and orders the students to write them down. Barranco copies the names of the scholarships in neat pink handwriting, even though she knows she's eligible for virtually none of them. They all require FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which Barranco is afraid to use. DACA students are not eligible for federal aid, and although Barranco has a Social Security number and can use the federal application to apply for state and local scholarships, she's worried that using FAFSA at all could risk her DACA status.

Several teachers urged her to apply to Oberlin College, a prestigious liberal-arts school in Ohio that offers generous financial aid to undocumented students. Yet Barranco doesn't want to. She has a 4.0 grade point average and is in the National Honor Society, but she struggled with the ACT; she didn't like the math or the pressure of being timed, and she couldn't afford private tutoring. Once she realized federal scholarships were out of reach, she gave up trying to improve her scores. "My classmates, if they get a good ACT score, they qualify for scholarships," she says. "For me, what's the point?" Besides, because of its conservatory, Barranco thinks of Oberlin as a school for kids who study music. Her dream is to go to Lorain County Community College (LCCC), which has a criminal-justice program that could prepare her for the police academy.

Teachers want to help Barranco. They've written her recommendations, given her tips for filling out paperwork and even offered to introduce her to admissions officers. But in the labyrinthine system of scholarships, aid and work-study programs, DACA students occupy a gray area: they have Social Security



numbers but can't get federal assistance, which means it's difficult to figure out which scholarships they're eligible for and where they'd have to shoulder the full burden. Even some administrators at LCCC don't know whether DACA students are eligible for local tuition pricing. "Having to teach kids about all of the opportunities available to them but realizing that some of them might not have the same opportunities, it's really frustrating," says Roxanne Ocasio, who teaches Barranco's college-readiness class. "I sometimes sit in my office and cry."

Immigration advocates say that even though DACA recipients can't receive federal aid, the program has made it much easier to get a college education. Sixteen states allow DACA students to pay in-state rates at state universities; major scholarship funds like TheDream.us help Dreamers foot the tab for tuition (Amazon founder Jeff Bezos recently donated \$33 million), and DACA allows students to work and earn money. According to a University of California, San Diego (UCSD), study in collaboration with immigrants'-rights groups and the left-leaning Center for American Progress,

▲  
*Barranco says the  
Pledge of Allegiance at  
Lorain High School on Feb. 22*

45% of DACA recipients are in school, and nearly three-quarters of those are pursuing a bachelor's degree or higher. Of the group that isn't currently in school, many have already graduated. "Before DACA, we didn't have that financial support, and we weren't able to work to put ourselves through school," says Bruna Bouhid of United We Dream. "Without DACA, we're back to square one."

**BACK IN CLASS**, Barranco is quietly flipping through index cards, memorizing common college terms like *admission* and *undergraduate* and *commencement*. The group next to her is goofing off; someone has dropped index cards on the floor. Barranco stays focused and says nothing. But it bothers her. "I feel like it's not fair. When I see that my classmates don't take their education seriously, it makes me sad," she says outside class. "If they only knew what I would give to be in their shoes."

The bell rings, and Barranco shuffles into the hall, which has become a crush of teenagers. It's 10:38 a.m., and lunch is served, which means the hallways smell of smushed Wonder Bread, chicken fingers and reheated pizza. She heads to the cafeteria, where she waits in line to buy her cap-and-gown package—nearly \$300 that will come out of her McDonald's paycheck. She wants to buy a sweatshirt featuring the school mascot, the Titans, but the least expensive option is \$30. She walks away without it. The cap and gown alone cost more than she wants to spend. Throughout the day she will bring up the sweatshirt, wondering if the vendors will be back next week. Maybe she could buy it then.

Barranco's two best friends are Maria and Mercedes, sisters who also have DACA. Maria is in Barranco's class; Mercedes graduated last year. (TIME agreed to withhold their last names out of concern for their immigration status.) When they're not at church with Barranco, the sisters spend their time watching YouTube makeup tutorials, which means they have perfectly sculpted eyebrows and elaborate plans for future looks they

want to try. Not at prom, though. Their parents will not allow them to go. “I want to dress up,” Maria says. “You would just sit there and stare at people,” Mercedes shoots back. Maria has already decided how she would do her makeup if she ever went: a turquoise color palette, with sparkly accents.

“It’s too much money,” Barranco says with a flick of her hand, dismissing the idea of prom as she recalls the price of her graduation robe. She pays her own phone bill, and her braces cost her \$6,000, which she paid out of pocket by helping her mom clean houses. “I want to experience how it feels to get all pretty and dolled up, to have a date and dance with your friends,” she says. “But I have other stuff to worry about.” Her parents want her to stay home: they’re worried she’ll mix with kids who are trouble, who smoke weed or drink beer. One ordinary teenage misstep could cost the family everything.

Even though Barranco cuts through the Lorain Titans’ football stadium every morning on her way to school, she’s never been to a game. Instead, Barranco mostly stays at home, reading John Green novels or watching TV shows of Bible stories. She hasn’t seen the latest movies—her favorite actor is Tom Hanks—and the theater is too far to walk. She hears stories about things that happen at parties she doesn’t go to, and she rolls her eyes and pretends she doesn’t care. “My mom is always like, ‘You have to be more careful than the rest,’” she says. “I’m just staying in the house, and life is passing before my eyes.”

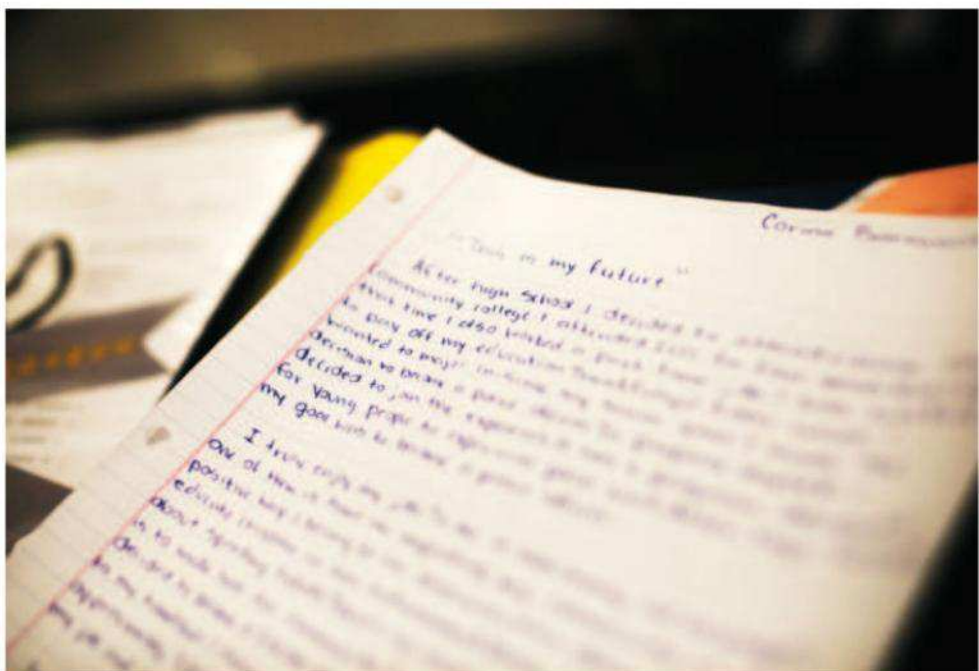
**AFTER SCHOOL**, Barranco walks almost a mile to the McDonald’s where she works. It takes her about 25 minutes, which is better than her walk to her old job at a diner, which took an hour each way. She was hired at McDonald’s in November, and she spends her shift making french fries and handing out burgers and sodas through the drive-through window. Her smile at the customers is genuine: she likes her gray uniform, she likes the people she works with, and she likes the \$8.15 an hour she makes. She’s saving up to buy a car.

About 90% of DACA recipients are employed, according to the 2017 University of California study; 69% said the program’s work permit helped them find a job with better pay. About 8% of DACA

recipients over 25 say they’ve started their own businesses, which outpaces the rate of entrepreneurship among Americans overall. Tom K. Wong, an associate professor of political science at UCSD, who has been studying Dreamers since 2012 and co-authored the study, says that overall, DACA has been “an integration success story.”

The best parts of Barranco’s job, she says, are when she’s called on to translate for a customer who speaks only Spanish.

the phone call the family had been fearing since they arrived. There had been a minor car accident; her father had been in the passenger seat. Nobody was hurt, but the Lorain police department asked to see his ID. He called his 12-year-old daughter to translate for him. “I told them, ‘No, he doesn’t have an ID. He doesn’t have anything,’” Barranco recalls. After she got off the phone, the police called federal immigration authorities. Barranco’s father was detained for nearly a week, but



▲  
*An essay Barranco wrote for class; the high school senior hopes to become a police officer*

“I know what it’s like to be new somewhere, to not speak English, to not see a friendly face,” she says. “They need help, and I like that I’m able to help them, even if it’s just at a fast-food restaurant.”

Barranco has been translating for her parents since she learned English in kindergarten, shortly after she arrived in the U.S. Her father works in landscaping, and her mother cleans houses. Neither of them finished middle school, and they speak only Spanish. Her father can write his name but not much else.

At 2 a.m. on July 28, 2012, Barranco got

their church helped the family pay for a lawyer who was able to negotiate his release. Since he wasn’t driving the car and hadn’t committed a crime, the case was eventually administratively closed, which means he’s not a priority for deportation.

The incident stuck with Barranco. She had always avoided cops, but she became even more scared after her father was detained. “Every time I heard sirens, I would start shaking,” she says. “My heart would start beating fast. I felt like a criminal just hearing them.” Worse was the guilt. As her father’s translator, she blamed herself for his detention. “I felt like I could have done something better,” she says. “I could have prevented them from taking my dad.”

In 2013, a year after Barranco’s father was detained, Lorain police chief



Cel Rivera went to a community meeting with immigration advocates. During his 47 years as an officer, including 24 years as chief of police, Rivera had paid close attention to the rising tensions between local communities and the officers who police them. He saw a growing mutual distrust in Lorain, where most of the police force is now from out of town. So he decided to create the Citizens Police Academy, a 10-week program to introduce ordinary citizens to police work. He had

and the correct protocol for responding to a call. The first car she ever drove was a police car. The best part, she says, was learning how to use the siren. “I was so scared of that,” she says. “But now every time I hear it, I’m like, ‘Oh, they’re just coming to help.’”

*Barranco changes into her work uniform at home before heading to her shift at McDonald’s*



seen Barranco speak at local immigration meetings and heard she worked as an aide at her school library. He learned she was in the National Honor Society. So he invited her to join.

Every Thursday afternoon for 10 weeks last year, Barranco trained with the local police. She learned how to shoot a gun, how to use handcuffs, the proper procedure for drug investigations and arrests

Rivera is Barranco’s idol, so she’s excited to visit his office in the Lorain police headquarters. He keeps a figurine of the Statue of Liberty guarded by police officers on his desk, near a Blue Lives Matter mug and his official police hat. Rivera says Barranco “excelled” in the Citizens Police Academy program and that she would be a “gift to law enforcement.” He tells her he needs more officers who live in Lorain,

who have deep ties to the community. He says her compassion would make her an excellent officer.

“So you think I can do it?” Barranco asks him.

“Absolutely. You can do it,” he says.

There is one snag, however. Under Ohio law, only U.S. citizens can become police officers. Rivera isn’t sure whether DACA students are eligible. “My heart would say yes,” he says. “But I guess I would have to check.”

**ONE MORNING** in late February, Barranco found a letter on her kitchen table informing her that she had been accepted to Lorain County Community College. The first thing she felt was relief. Then came a nagging question: How would she pay tuition?

LCCC offers free tuition to minority students who graduate from Lorain High with a good GPA. But Barranco’s DACA status created some hurdles. LCCC typically requires students to fill out the FAFSA so that the school only covers the costs left over after Pell Grants and other federal aid. A guidance counselor at her high school told Barranco that she couldn’t get the free ride unless she filled out the form.

That was a chance Barranco wouldn’t take. “I don’t want to risk myself,” she says. “Maybe the government will think I’m taking their money.” She resigned herself to using her McDonald’s money to pay the more than \$8,000 per year it would cost to go to a college her classmates could attend for free.

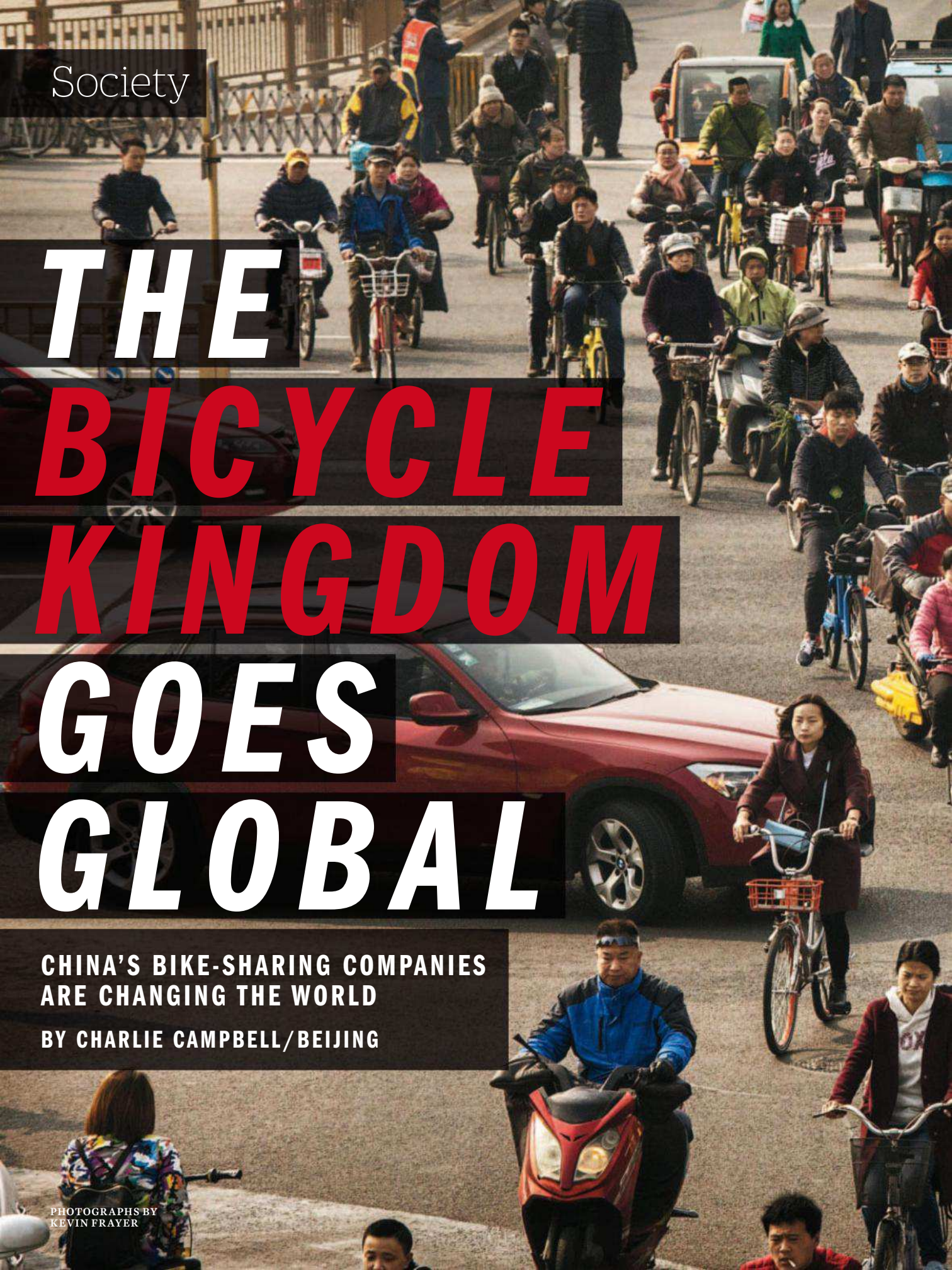
But after inquiries from TIME, LCCC cleared up the confusion: because Barranco is not eligible for federal student aid in the first place, the school waived the FAFSA requirement for her and other DACA students. When an administrator called Barranco to tell her, she was shocked. “At first, I thought it was too good to be true,” she said. Then she asked if her friend Maria qualified as well. The next day at school, she stood a little straighter, smiled a little wider. “Now I feel like one of them,” she says.

All the while, life goes on. Congress keeps bickering over the fate of the DACA program. Trump keeps tweeting. And Barranco plods forward, one tentative step after another, toward what she hopes will be her American future. □

## **‘I’M JUST STAYING IN THE HOUSE, AND LIFE IS PASSING BEFORE MY EYES.’**

BARRANCO, on forgoing typical teenage activities to avoid trouble that might jeopardize her DACA status

Society

A high-angle, wide shot of a busy street in Beijing. The scene is filled with people riding bicycles, some with baskets or bags. A red car is visible in the middle ground. The background shows a crowd of pedestrians and a yellow bus. The overall atmosphere is one of a bustling, active urban environment.

# THE BICYCLE KINGDOM GOES GLOBAL

CHINA'S BIKE-SHARING COMPANIES  
ARE CHANGING THE WORLD

BY CHARLIE CAMPBELL/BEIJING

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
KEVIN FRAYER



**2.4 MILLION**  
Number of shareable  
bikes in China's  
capital. About half of  
Beijing's population,  
or 11 million people,  
are registered users

## IN

IN 1987, MY FATHER, A DOCTOR, ATTENDED a medical conference in communist China. He returned from Beijing with tales of a sea of bicycles upon which millions of workers in identical inky blue tunics pedaled to farms and factories. By the time I'd moved to Beijing, almost three decades later, China's process of reform and opening had hauled 600 million people out of poverty, and turned the world's most populous nation into its No. 2 economy. Pedal power had been supplanted by chuntering motorbikes and the polished chrome of sleek sedans and SUVs. According to Beijing's transportation commission, bicycles accounted for 63% of all journeys in the 1980s but only 17.8% by 2014.

Lately, something remarkable has happened: the self-styled "Bicycle Kingdom" has risen from the scrap heap. China has been infected by a bike-sharing fever where brightly colored common-usage bikes are located and rented via smartphone apps. About 60 firms have put as many as 18 million bicycles onto China's streets. In Beijing alone there are more than 40 times as many registered shared-bike users as those who use New York City's Citi Bike, America's largest bike-sharing firm. The bikes are ridden for a time and then parked at the roadside for the next customer. No bike stands. No set docking stations. In China's central city of Chengdu, more people ride shareable bikes than use the subway. "For me, shareable bikes are not only a way of commuting but also a form of entertainment," says student Cao Yueqi, 22. "I like to ride them to get close to nature, or tour the different architecture styles of Beijing."

It's a simple idea that is spreading across hundreds of cities around the world, including on U.S. roads in places like Seattle, Miami and Dallas, where those same Chinese companies are helping solve the "last mile" problem: getting people between public-transport

hubs and home. Bike sharing has become a global phenomenon, thanks in no small part to Chinese enthusiasm and expansion.

Just as the old Bicycle Kingdom spoke to impoverished collectivization, today's sharing phenomenon suggests larger shifts: how a highly educated, young, entrepreneurial class is unleashing technology to shape society, an aspiration largely off-limits politically in an increasingly authoritarian one-party state. And perversely, how the state is co-opting the very tools of that benevolent movement to tighten control on its citizens.

**LIKE MOST** technological leaps, bike sharing in China was spawned as the solution to a common problem. For former student Dai Wei, losing a fifth bicycle was the final straw. It was not just the expense that had Dai fuming. More annoying was that before long, he would no doubt spy another student at Peking University riding his stolen bike around the campus, having unwittingly purchased it at northwestern Beijing's no-questions-asked secondhand market. It was a bitter merry-go-round that irked all his peers. "I thought that maybe I could solve all these problems for every student in China," Dai, 26, tells TIME. "Maybe you don't need to own a bike, you just need to use it."

Tens of millions agreed. Within just four years, Dai's simple vision had mushroomed into a \$2 billion business that operates across 21 countries and 250 cities. Users of Ofo, the company of which Dai is co-founder and CEO, make 32 million trips every day on 10 million distinctive yellow bikes. In Beijing, they are found stacked by the dozen at every

**SCORES OF 'BIKE HUNTER' VIGILANTES LOCATE BROKEN OR DISCARDED SHARED BIKES. THEY ARE NOT PAID TO DO IT**



subway and bus station, saddled by selfie-snapping tourists and construction workers puffing on cigarettes as they weave their way home. "We want our yellow bikes in every city and every street," says Dai, adding that he still rides Ofo bikes to commute to the office. "Just like when you come to a new city, you will find Starbucks or McDonald's."

Ofo—a name chosen because the combined letters resemble a bicycle—was China's first dockless bike-sharing firm and remains one of two major players. Dai, an economics graduate, wants to rekindle China's lost love of cycling. All his fellow Ofo founders were cycling enthusiasts, bound by their passion for two wheels. He enlisted China's storied manufacturers to produce Ofo's traditional-looking bikes, which are almost identical to the early models that navigated Beijing's streets decades ago. But Ofo's chief competitor, Mobike, took a different tack: redesign the bicycle from scratch.

Mobike's latest space-age bikes have a drive shaft rather than chain propulsion,



reducing scope for breakage, with GPS and smart locks powered by a solar panel that lines the front basket. Airless rubber tires can't be punctured, and a single-tire wheel release allows for easy maintenance. The firm recently opened in Australia, where some models even boast surfboard racks. "Technology cannot guarantee success, or winning the market, but it's very important to have a belief in technology," says Mobike co-founder Hu Weiwei, a former journalist.

Despite their divergent strategies, it's hard to call a leader between Ofo and Mobike, with the latter operating more than 9 million smart bikes in over 190 cities across China, Singapore, Italy, Japan, the U.K. and the U.S. Meanwhile, Ofo is already in more than a dozen U.S. cities and aims to be in 100 by the end of the year. Whereas Mobike is backed by Chinese tech giant Tencent, Ofo has partnered with the Beijing-based ride-sharing app DiDi Chuxing. Both have similar 10-figure market valuations and are locked in a cash-burning race

*A worker from bike-share company Ofo unloads new bicycles during rush hour in Beijing in March 2017*

to dominate market share by pumping out bikes. Both have upended the traditional bike industry. One in three of China's 1.3 billion people once owned a bicycle, meaning production, repair and maintenance were mammoth industries. The sharing phenomenon undercuts that demand. "It's changed the whole industry, it's subversive, catastrophic, we've lost almost all clients," says Yan Yiming, chairman of China's renowned Forever bike manufacturers. "Nobody needs their own bike now."

In China's contemporary cycling industry, if Dai is the student enthusiast, and Hu is the geek, Yan approaches cycling from an aesthetic vantage point of design purity. The firm he heads, which he joined straight out of high school, has the requisite pedigree: it is the oldest bicycle manufacturer in the Bicycle

Kingdom. In China, there's a time-honored saying: "To get married you need four things: a radio, a wristwatch, a sewing machine and a Forever bike." When former President George H.W. Bush lived in Beijing as U.S. envoy to China in 1974–75, he and former First Lady Barbara Bush pedaled around the city on a pair of Forever's. "In the old times," says Yan, "a Chinese person owning a Forever bike was equivalent to a BMW or a plush villa today."

That the sharing economy is disruptive to traditional industry isn't, of course, surprising. At a sports complex in Beijing, a smart locker spits out basketballs for 30¢ an hour at the flash of a smartphone QR code. Similar devices offer umbrellas, portable chargers and books. There are street gym pods where passersby can pop in for a workout, and a service where designer handbags can be rented by the hour for a posh night out. There was even a sex-doll-sharing station—\$45 a night—until the police shut it down for "vulgarity."

**BROAD BACKING** from the Beijing government has catalyzed the disruption. China's sharing economy reached \$500 billion in transactions by 600 million people in 2016, according to official figures, about nine times U.S. user levels. Beijing has 2.4 million shareable bikes and 11 million registered users—verging on half the city's population. By comparison, New York City's Citi Bike has 10,000 bikes and 236,000 subscribers. Paris has 21,000 shareable bikes; London just 16,500. While American and European ventures must battle stringent municipal regulations, China is generally more permissive of innovation—especially when it is championed from the top.

China's President Xi Jinping has repeatedly hailed the sharing revolution as his nation's gift to the world. The government has backed the industry with perks like tax breaks and free office space. And with officials predicting a 40% growth rate, the sharing economy should comprise 10% of China's GDP by 2020, rising to 20% by 2025. But the hurry to embrace the industry means little heed was paid to the economics and now firms fall by the wayside. "I think it's overheated," says Jeffrey Towson, a private-equity investor and business

professor at Peking University. “They threw a lot of money into it, there were too many competitors, most aren’t going to make it.”

In November, Bluegogo, once China’s third largest bike-sharing startup with 20 million users and 700,000 bikes, went bust, reportedly owing millions of dollars to customers and suppliers. More than 20 other companies have ceased operations over the past six months. On March 13, Ofo announced a new \$866 million round of funding amid rumors it was running out of cash. (Dai denies this.) On April 4, Chinese e-commerce giant Meituan Dianping acquired Mobike for a reported \$2.7 billion. It’s uncertain whether bike sharing will consolidate behind one or two leading firms or if the bubble will pop. Mobike co-founder Hu has no doubt that the model is sustainable. “We’ve had a lot of suggestions, handwritten letters and social-media posts from users giving us ideas about how to monetize,” she says, adding that one piece of fan mail was even titled “60 ways to make profit.”

**CHINA’S SHARING ECONOMY** hides a utopian vision borne of young people’s wanting to use technology to reshape their society into a more caring, cooperative alternative. Asked whether she is pleased with her success, Hu is blunt: “What success?” She says her objective is to foster a city ruled by bicycles. A city on bikes needs trees for shade; good air quality; and small, independent high streets, instead of gargantuan shopping malls. “When this dream is realized, I will define it as a success,” she says.

Ofo’s Dai says he has similar motivations, highlighting the \$15 million he has pledged to the U.N. Development Programme, and the hundreds of bikes donated to schoolchildren in Malawi via singer Rihanna’s foundation. “It’s the reason we started our business,” he says. “Ofo is not only a company. It’s a company and an NGO.” Dai has even partnered with Chinese design firm Tezign and Dutch artist Daan Roosegaarde to create a prototype shared bike that cleans polluted air as you pedal.

These lofty ideals have inspired a cultish following. Around China, scores of “bike hunter” vigilantes are taking it upon themselves to locate broken or discarded shared bikes. They are not

## RUNAWAY GROWTH

China’s bike-sharing phenomenon is saddled with dubious economics

# 18M

NUMBER OF shared bikes in China

# \$40

COST to build one Ofo bike

# 15¢

COST for an hour’s ride in China

# 100

NUMBER OF U.S. CITIES THAT Mobike is targeting in 2018

paid a wage but do it, they say, for love of the cause. “On an average day, I can fix seven or eight bikes; 20 at the most,” says Huo Ran, a 22-year-old real estate agent by trade. “Bike hunters are people filled with a sense of justice. We get together and just want to contribute to society.”

But like all utopian enterprises, the sharing economy has significant flaws. In attempts to gain market share, rides are given out for free or mere pennies. Meanwhile, ever more bikes are strewn onto the streets, and many end up flung into trash heaps. Major cities like Beijing

and Shanghai have reached saturation point, say officials, and no new bikes can be added to the millions already in circulation. Across China, provinces have nominated refuse dumps for shareable bikes, where thousands are discarded in jagged aluminum mountains as bikes break frequently. The chains come off, the brakes fail, the seat-adjustment clasps are wrenched off. There are so many bikes that the companies’ own employees cannot fix them. “I get frustrated that so many bikes are broken,” says Yang Xu, 26, an e-commerce worker in Beijing. “I just want a bike that works, but I have to try 10 broken ones first.”

If there are question marks over the economics of the sharing economy, the sharing aspect is no less fraught. China’s cutthroat development has fostered income inequality to rival the U.S.’s in an ostensibly communist-run nation, as individuals race to succeed. It’s tempting to ascribe this unshackling from socialist values as a natural reaction after decades of enforced privation. But the truth may be simpler. Throughout history, the Chinese have been a mercantile people, whose ceaseless industry meant they thrived wherever they settled.

When the first Chinese students came to the U.S. in the early 1900s, they wrote stirringly that America’s culture of participation and extracurricular activities was a critical glue that taught university students how to become citizens: a glue that China lacked. Sun Yat-sen, who founded the Republic of China in 1912, bemoaned Chinese society as “a pan of loose sand” that lacked common values. This lack of social cohesion “is something that has troubled China’s society for centuries, but that’s probably been made worse by the Communist Party’s failure to allow for the creation of civil society and freedom of association,” says veteran China journalist John Pomfret, author of *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom*, a history of U.S.-China relations.

Competition and sharing are not easy bedfellows. Many customers vandalize bikes’ QR codes so others cannot decipher the unlocking combination, thus annexing a particular one for their own private use. It’s common to see shareable bikes padlocked outside homes.

Antipathy is common even within



the sharing industry. At a panel during the *Fortune* Global Forum in Guangzhou in December, representatives from different shared economies argued over how each was impinging on the other. Pan Shiyi, co-founder of office-sharing service SOHO 3Q, complained of all the shareable bikes blocking the entrance to his buildings. Mobike co-founder Davis Wang, in turn, grumbled about overzealous security guards tossing away his bikes. Pan then took aim at Zhang Xuhao, founder of food-delivery service Ele.me, about the swarms of drivers undermining the harmony of his offices. Zhang replied that nobody would rent SOHO 3Q cubicles if food deliveries were banned and suggested that Pan should install more lifts to reduce congestion.

**SO HOW TO** encourage people to share responsibly? Ofo's Dai points to how positive use of China's sharing economy accumulates social capital though a system of social credit called Zhima, or Sesame Credit, run by Jack Ma's online shopping goliath Alibaba. Higher ratings mean preferential access to products

▲  
*Damaged Ofo bicycles, collected from Beijing's streets, at a repair depot in March 2017*

and services; lower ratings block access or entail higher costs. Beijing Airport briefly had a priority security check line for passengers with high Zhima scores. In China, these informal credit ratings have become peacock feathers, flaunted on dating apps as a mark of eligibility.

Of course, those regulations can become just another means of control. The Chinese government is already wielding Zhima as a means to encourage "good" behavior from its citizens.

Despite becoming the world's second largest economy, China's rapid rise meant it never developed a Western-style credit system. In its place, the autocratic Chinese Communist Party has eyes on harnessing Zhima credit and systems like it. Since last August, virtual-payment firms must connect to a central government clearinghouse, giving regulators access to transaction data. Even in the U.S., the controversial harvesting of Facebook user

data by Cambridge Analytica spotlighted how easily American consumers' privacy can be compromised. But China's inchoate privacy laws mean its government can subpoena consumer data on a whim. Concerns over data security prompted Washington to block Alibaba subsidiary Ant Financial's proposed \$1.2 billion takeover of U.S. cash-transfer firm MoneyGram in January.

Today Chinese train passengers are routinely warned that breaking carriage rules will harm their personal credit scores. It's only a matter of time, it seems, until that seeps into other avenues of life. "It's completely predictable that the Communist Party would use Big Data to monitor, limit and subscribe the behavior of the people," says Pomfret. "That's just how they roll—they are interested in control." To thrive under Beijing's gaze and to achieve their global ambitions, the Chinese companies that are winning in the country's sharing economy must play by its rules, turning a sharing Shangri-la into another prop for its Orwellian state. —*With reporting by ZHANG CHI/ BEIJING* □

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# Time Off

**ON THE CASE**  
Sandra Oh  
returns to TV  
as an MI5 agent  
chasing a  
psychopath in  
the subversive  
thriller *Killing Eve*



## INSIDE

A SURPRISINGLY  
PROGRESSIVE TEEN SEX COMEDY  
BREAKS NEW GROUND

R&B'S MOST  
PROMISING RISING STAR  
FINDS HER VOICE

ON NETFLIX, IMPERFECTLY  
MADE DESSERTS GET SOME  
WELL-DESERVED LOVE

# TimeOff Opener

TELEVISION

## A detective intoxicated by the scent of a killer

By Eliana Dockterman

**V**ILLANELLE SKETCHES PICTURES OF EVE'S hair. She steals Eve's suitcase and demands that a lover wear Eve's clothes. She uses Eve's name as an alias as she flits across Europe, assassinating colonels and moguls in increasingly creative ways.

Audiences have watched psychopaths taunt the agents who are chasing them down countless times before. Yet actor Jodie Comer offers a chilling portrayal as soulless assassin Villanelle in the new BBC America series *Killing Eve*, premiering April 8. *Grey's Anatomy* alumna Sandra Oh—finally in a much-deserved leading role—plays Eve, a whip-smart MI5 agent who's still vulnerable enough to run screaming when hit woman Villanelle breaks into her house.

But *Killing Eve* quickly subverts the tropes established by a long line of British mystery series. Those shows often hint at sexual tension between the hunter and hunted, usually two men (Sherlock and Moriarty) or a man and woman (Luther and Alice).

Eve and Villanelle's longing is more explicit. *Fleabag* creator Phoebe Waller-Bridge adapted *Killing Eve* from a series of Luke Jennings novellas but aged up Eve from a young upstart to a bored 40-something desk jockey. The change places her firmly in midlife crisis, a stage in a woman's life rarely seen on TV.

"Eve hits a plateau in her marriage, in her job," says Oh. "Then Villanelle comes along with her finesse, her style, her lack of inhibition—everything Eve doesn't have. Villanelle ignites something in Eve." Eve yearns for Villanelle's apathy toward the rules. Villanelle admires Eve's sense of purpose. They want to kill each other. They also fantasize about being each other—or being *with* each other.

Eve begins to risk the lives of her colleagues and husband just to catch a glimpse of Villanelle. At one point, the agent dreamily describes Villanelle's honey-colored hair and catlike eyes to a sketch artist. "She's totally focused, yet almost entirely inaccessible," Eve muses.

"So is that, like, a square face or an oval face?" the sketch artist asks.



↑  
Creator Waller-Bridge, left, coaches Oh on the set of *Killing Eve*

Writers typically portray female obsession as one-sided. Crazy women stalk the wives of the men they can't have (*Fatal Attraction*, *Obsessed*) or try to subsume another's life (*Single White Female*, *Ingrid Goes West*). Eve and Villanelle's mutual fascination is rare.

But creator Waller-Bridge is skilled at flipping the script on tired genres. She similarly rethought another cliché—the female "hot mess"—when she wrote the dark comedy *Fleabag*. On that show, Waller-Bridge starred as a grief-stricken woman who steals from a bad date and declares at a feminist meeting that she would trade five years of her life for the perfect body. Most writers would

PREVIOUS PAGE: MAARTEN DE BOER—CONTOUR/GETTY IMAGES; THESE PAGES: KILLING EVE: BBC AMERICA; OH: NETFLIX (2)

## What I'm streaming now

By Daniel D'Addario

### Nailed It!



The recent wave of food game shows—in which, over a brisk hour, contestants vie to outdo one another with the perfect tilapia fillet or poached pear—runs on predictable tropes: there are always challenges of near overwhelming difficulty, friendly but critical judges and amateur home cooks gifted with impossible talent.



make a woman like this the butt of a joke. But Waller-Bridge deftly navigates issues like mental illness and guilt. “As an audience member and an actor, I was just screaming for a woman who doesn’t have all the answers,” she says.

Amazon acquired the BBC series, and Waller-Bridge ascended to It girl status: she was cast in the upcoming *Star Wars* spin-off *Solo*, and *Fleabag* was greenlighted for a second season. All along, she was working on the script for *Killing Eve*. She pored over research on female psychopaths, which she says she found oddly empowering.

Audiences, too, may find themselves cheering for Villanelle when she stabs

a lascivious man in the face. Depictions of female power remain so rare that Villanelle’s manipulation of others’ sexist expectations of her can feel heroic.

“We’re familiar with this idea that men would kill someone and not have a care in the world,” Waller-Bridge says. “But Villanelle’s male victims, especially, have this complete meltdown at the idea that she could be a threat to them.”

Though spy thriller *Killing Eve* may not seem the most obvious follow-up to a comedy lauded for its realism, Waller-Bridge easily makes the leap to drama: Many *Fleabag* fans thought the main character in that show was also a sociopath. And Waller-Bridge’s favorite kind of joke ends with a sadistic twist. She likes to make her audience feel guilty for laughing. “When people are laughing, they’re vulnerable, they’re open,” she says. “It’s a great opportunity to kick them.”

**FOR KILLING EVE**, Waller-Bridge and Oh worked together to find a balance between comedy and tragedy, homing in on Eve’s envy of Villanelle. In one scene, Eve flirtatiously asks her husband how he would murder her. “Flatter you to death?” he suggests. She rolls her eyes. “O.K., how would you kill me?” he asks.

“I’d paralyze you with saxotoxin and suffocate you in your sleep,” Eve deadpans. “Chop you into the smallest bits I could manage. Boil you down. Put you in a blender. Take you to work in a flask and flush you down a restaurant toilet.”

Oh delighted in these exchanges. “You so rarely get to be creepy and hilarious at the same time,” she says. The actor never expected to be tapped for the titular role on the show, in part because

many fans of the books imagined Eve as white. Oh encountered a similar issue when Shonda Rhimes cast her as Cristina on *Grey’s Anatomy*, a character that network executives also expected would be played by a white actor.

“Most people assume, unless it’s otherwise specified, that every character on the page is white,” says Oh. “There are certain people who can be open-minded and see beyond that unconscious bias when they’re casting and certain people who can’t.

**‘Villanelle’s male victims have this meltdown at the idea that she could be a threat.’**

PHOEBE WALLER-BRIDGE,  
writer of *Killing Eve*

I’ve worked with a lot of the people who can, and they happen to be women and women of color.” When *Killing Eve* premieres, Oh will become one of just a handful

of Asian actors with top billing on a TV series.

Waller-Bridge had been a fan of Oh’s for years, and Oh quickly fell for Waller-Bridge: they share an irreverent sense of humor, and Oh appreciated Waller-Bridge’s impulse to surprise the audience. But Oh wanted to test their in-person chemistry. When they first Skyped, they found they were wearing the same shade of red. When they first met in person, they accidentally wore the same pair of pants. That unconscious creative alignment carried them through the making of *Killing Eve*. “Committing to a show is like a marriage,” says Oh. “It’s potentially a multiyear relationship. With Phoebe, I thought, I could fall in love with this person.” □

Netflix’s new baking competition, *Nailed It!*, keeps the first two parts of that equation but ditches the third. These contestants construct elaborate desserts with much brio but none of a great confectioner’s grace. The results look tragically unlike the model—that’s what makes it so fun.



**HOW TO WATCH**  
*Nailed It!* is streaming  
on Netflix now

*Nailed It!* is studiously low-stakes; the contestants needle one another while sharing advice, and the judges seem baffled by the misshapen, clumpily frosted cakes in front of them. Host Nicole Byer sets a charming tone, rooting for the contestants while knowing that some light teasing is the order of the day. “What do you

think went well?” she asks one vexed baker. It would be unkind if the contestant had been aiming for perfection, but the magic of *Nailed It!* lies in the fact that its contestants are striving to be only adequate. In a genre known for over-the-top perfectionism, that makes this show a sweetly amiable pleasure.

## A silent parable for parenthood

By Eliza Berman

A FEW WEEKS INTO DATING, JOHN KRASINSKI AND Emily Blunt watched one of their first movies together: *Jaws*. They watched it over and over again, Krasinski says, as many as nine times in the next few months. It wasn't for the thrill, as Blunt puts it, of "seeing people's legs get munched off." What they loved most are its human moments. The one in which Roy Scheider's defeated police chief is uplifted by a game of copycat with his young son at the dinner table blew Krasinski away. "The fact that in a genuine horror movie, the first big blockbuster in history, you have a scene that is one of the most beautiful parenting moments in film..." He can't quite find another word for it. "It's just *beautiful*."

A decade, two children and many career-establishing moves later, the pair have made an homage to the movie that helped bring them together. *A Quiet Place*, directed and co-written by Krasinski and starring both actors, follows a family trying to survive after an invasion of blind monsters that attack when they hear noise. They live in silence, knowing that the crunch of an autumn leaf could trigger a violent end. It's a horror movie, a monster movie even, but like the 25-ft. shark off the waters of Martha's Vineyard, the creatures are peripheral to the human story.

**KRASINSKI IS THE FIRST** to admit that horror is an unexpected direction for his career, not only because he long considered himself "a card-carrying member of the too-scared-to-see-horror-movies" club, but also because it's so far from his prior credits as an actor on *The Office* and a director of dramedies. "I don't think anybody sees my name and goes, 'That guy—I want to see a horror movie from him,'" he says. For her part, Blunt sat terrified through *Scream* and "decided never to put myself through something like that again."

But both felt a visceral connection to this story, at its core a parable for the bottomless dread that comes as part of the package deal of parenting. Their second daughter was 3 weeks old when Krasinski read an early draft. "I was like a wide-open nerve," he recalls. "You have all these fears of keeping her safe—am I a good enough person to be her dad?" Blunt felt an immediate pull too. "It sounds like a strange draw, to live out my deepest fears as a mother with two young kids," she says. "But this was very close to home for me."

Almost *too* close to home. Krasinski couldn't picture anyone but Blunt in the role but feared she'd take it only as a favor to him. Blunt wanted in too,



▲  
In *A Quiet Place*, Blunt and Krasinski play parents facing an unthinkable horror

but didn't want their marriage to overshadow the film. (The pair have lent voices to the same animated film and both cameoed in a 2011 *Muppets* movie but had never appeared onscreen together.) "Everyone was like, 'You're gonna be divorced by the end,'" she recalls. "Actually, we're closer."

The secret language that can only result from years of cooking dinner and changing diapers together was particularly useful in a film with no dialogue, save for the sign language the family in the movie learned because their teenage daughter is deaf. So, too, was what Blunt calls "our own beautiful library of memories" of laughing and playing with the couple's real-life daughters. Drawing upon these memories helped them to sell the pain of not being able to share such moments with their onscreen children (played by the wildly talented Noah Jupe and Millicent Simmonds), lest the monsters hear them and attack.

*A Quiet Place* met with a rapturous response at its South by Southwest premiere in March, taking its place in a catalog of recent genre fare, like *Get Out* and *The Witch*, that has mined the human condition to chilling effect. Its giant-eared monsters are a blank canvas onto which audiences can project any of the terrors that keep them awake at night—gun violence, rising nuclear tensions, ever more devastating natural disasters. But it's as timeless as it is timely. Forty years on, you remember the shark, but it's the tender moment at the dinner table that moves you. "In the best horror movies," says Krasinski, "the scares are just the backdrop." □

REVIEW

## Poetic horror in *A Quiet Place*

The back-to-the-land fantasy has long been a staple of horror movies and literature. Dystopia is a bummer, but there's an upside to being driven out of the city and into the country, either by nature or something eerily outside it: we get a chance to return to our more elemental innocence, and to find out whether our better impulses can triumph over our primal ones.

That's the essence of John Krasinski's third film as a director, *A Quiet Place*, and he's worked it out beautifully. Krasinski and Emily Blunt (who are husband and wife off-screen) star as the parents of three young children, all living somewhere in the country outskirts of New York City. But their lives are hardly Instagram-worthy. They're terrorized by speedy, moist mystery beasts with fang-faced mandibles, creatures whose hearing is so acute, they can sense the snap of a twig. And so this little family pads about silently in bare feet, both at home and in their woody environs. They can't laugh out loud; they don't even dare whisper. Instead, they communicate in sign language, a habit that has probably saved their lives, though they're used to it anyway: their oldest child—played by the marvelous young actor Millicent Simmonds—is deaf.

If *A Quiet Place* has one flaw, it's that it never lets up. There's little breathing space between its breathtaking moments. Even so, Krasinski has made one of the most poetic horror movies of recent years. Its sound design alone is glorious, locating the infinite gradations in that thing we so casually call silence.

*A Quiet Place*, its shivery terrors aside, captures the imperfect textures of family life. Families are complicated even when monsters aren't hunting them. And a glance often says more than even a whispered endearment can.

—Stephanie Zacharek

## Girls just wanna have fun. Finally, they get to

IT'S BEEN ALMOST 20 YEARS SINCE THE BOYS OF *American Pie* made a pact to lose their virginity, declaring: "We will fight for every man out there who isn't getting laid and should be." It seemed innocent enough back then, but that male entitlement would never work in the woke sexual climate of 2018. Consider, too, the peeping toms of *Porky's* (1981) and rape by deception in *Revenge of the Nerds* (1984). Decades of teen sex comedies have positioned boys as subjects and girls as the objects of their conquests.

The new movie *Blockers*, the directorial debut of *Pitch Perfect* scribe Kay Cannon, sets the record straight. Teen girls do have libidos, and they are not, as the canon suggests, confined to either end of a spectrum bookended by *slut* and *prude*. In the R-rated comedy, at once raunchy and sweet, three parents try to intervene after learning—via a secret code involving eggplant emojis—of their daughters' prom-night pact to lose their virginity. But these girls know exactly what they're doing. It's their folks who must reckon with the double standard they're enforcing.

"I'm constantly asking, How can we flip this trope?" says Cannon. Here, the girls are in control, and the boys aren't salivating horndogs but consent-minded gentlemen. (Not all the girls are interested in boys to begin with.) And what's the last teen comedy to show a girl demanding pleasure? Cannon, who grew up in a Catholic family that preached abstinence or bust, hopes the movie's impact transcends its jokes. "I hope it can get people laughing," she says, "then get parents talking with their kids."

Although it was conceived before the #MeToo movement, *Blockers* feels tailor-made for this moment, and Cannon says she's heartened by young people's evolving attitudes: "There seems to be no more slut-shaming. Girls are finding empowerment in making their own decisions." Bye, bye, Miss American Pie. —E.B.

**'I'm constantly asking, How can we flip this trope?'**

KAY CANNON,  
director of  
*Blockers*



**BREAKOUT STAR**  
Millicent Simmonds, a deaf actor who plays the teenage daughter, delivers a defiant turn that establishes her as an exciting young talent.



*The liberated young women of Blockers, played by Geraldine Viswanathan, Kathryn Newton and Gideon Adlon*



## FICTION

### Feminism and its fictional discontents

By Clare McHugh

WHAT MAKES A GOOD FEMINIST? WHO IS PERMITTED TO claim the title? Meg Wolitzer poses these questions and others in her cheerful, sprawling and well-meaning new novel, *The Female Persuasion*. She doesn't provide definite answers. Instead, she explores how three young people and a couple of older ones become the individuals they were meant to be.

The most recognizable portrait is that of Faith Frank, a women's libber and magazine editor—in other words, a Gloria Steinem knockoff. Faith runs a feminist organization, fires up audiences on the college lecture circuit, and strides through the world in sexy knee-high boots. Her first name is also her brand: she gives women permission to have faith in themselves.

One of Faith's acolytes, Greer Kadetsky, is a lovely, bookish young woman who has a gross encounter with a loutish frat boy during her first week of college. Enraged by the incident, she sets out to make the world a better place for women. The dynamic between mentor, Faith, and mentee, Greer, is the most intriguing one in a book fundamentally concerned with relationships, and with what people owe each other.

The novel also explores the friendship between Greer and her classmate Zee. How Zee empowers Greer, and is in turn betrayed by her, provides Wolitzer with the opportunity to dissect stereotypes about female friendship. Are women cattier and more competitive with their friends than men, or just more

willing to delve into the details of who did what to whom, and when?

**IN THIS ERA** of call-outs and take-downs, Wolitzer reinforces a more old-fashioned concept: no one is perfect. Greer seethes after her pothead parents don't fill out her Yale financial-aid form correctly, thus consigning her to non-Ivy exile. But her slacker-ish mother turns out to be reliable and wise when called upon. The feminist paragon Faith has the furthest to fall, and she tumbles off her pedestal in two ways, embracing distasteful compromises and railing against her protégé when Greer calls her out for them.

Sharp observations about status anxiety, social pretensions and upper-middle-class sexual mores are Wolitzer specialties. They offer welcome relief from the novel's facile politics—eye-catching seashells on long stretches of deserted beach. The novel rambles too much and has too many main characters. As befits a work with *female* in the title, the male protagonists are secondary. Greer's boyfriend Cory, whose career falls apart after a family tragedy, and Faith's benefactor, the fabulously wealthy Emmet Shrader, who is reminiscent of former Steinem paramour Mort Zuckerman, don't resonate like the women in the book. Millennial Cory is at least more sensitive—more evolved—than baby boomer Emmet. Maybe the author included them as contrasting figures, evidence of a better world to come, but they muddy the story's focus.

Near the end, in a scene set after President Trump's election, the current political plight is referred to as “the big terribleness.” But even here Wolitzer eschews stridency; she's less interested in scoring points than in presenting engaging characters. In that realm, the novel is sporadically successful. The moral of her story is that women owe it to each other, and to the world, to be their best selves. Now there's a feminist message we can all find persuasive, if far from revolutionary. □



#### BY THE DOZEN

*The Female Persuasion* is Wolitzer's 12th novel, and her first for adults since *The Interestings* (2013).

## R&B triple threat Tinashe grows up and hits her stride

By Raisa Bruner

WHEN TINASHE'S PANTS RIPPED AS SHE WAS STRETCHING before an invite-only February show in Brooklyn, there was no time to fix the split seam. "I ended up wearing the sweats I was wearing on the airplane," she says, laughing. She went on to perform a high-octane, hour-long set to a small crowd of fans, dancing and singing to sinuous pop-R&B tunes like the single "No Drama," taken from her new album, *Joyride*. No one blinked an eye at her choice of apparel; she sold the look. At 25, Tinashe is a pro at dealing with curveballs. She's had to be. "There's no Plan B," she says.

Tinashe has been in the trenches as a working artist for a decade. She's banking on *Joyride* (out April 13) to clarify her position as a full-package urban pop artist in the mold of Janet Jackson. She writes. She sings. She dances. She transcends genre. Yet despite her prescience and hard work, the limelight has so far remained frustratingly elusive.

Born Tinashe Jorgensen Kachingwe to college professors—her father is from Zimbabwe, and her mother hails from the Midwest—she started on the California audition circuit when she was just 6. By 15, she tested out of high school and joined a girl group called the Stunners. Tinashe never intended to be in a group, but the Stunners snagged a prime gig as tour openers for Justin Bieber, who was then a rising star. Perks included time spent learning the ropes of the recording studio; quickly, she signed a solo deal with RCA.

In 2014, her track "2 On" with Schoolboy Q, taken from her debut album, soundtracked dance floors, earned platinum status and had some suggesting that she could be the next Aaliyah. But Tinashe didn't follow it up with more mainstream singles; instead, she released two vibey mixtapes of self-produced, futuristic R&B. Her label couldn't figure out how to classify her music, and even her fans wanted her to be someone she wasn't. "I don't like being told what to do," Tinashe says. "It's easy for people to marginalize you—if they hear you do a certain type of song, they expect that from you every time. But that's so boring!" In a market crowded with young female artists, the ultimate challenge is how to evolve as a voice without losing your fan base along the way.

After teasing an album release that never materialized in late 2016, Tinashe was left embarrassed. "They were looking at me as a failure," she says of the public. Yet she also wasn't ready to accept defeat. Until then, she had lived at her parents' suburban Los Angeles home, writing and recording in her childhood bedroom. Finally, she was ready to strike out on her own.

**SO TINASHE RENTED** a house in the Hollywood Hills, establishing a creative sanctuary and hangout spot for other artists and friends to make music. She hosted Taco Tuesdays, she went clubbing, she painted at an easel. In other words,



### FAMOUS FANS

Tinashe has toured and collaborated with many of pop's reigning queens



KATY PERRY



BRITNEY SPEARS



NICKI MINAJ

she lived life outside of the intense focus that came with being a child star and music-industry stalwart—and she wrote about it candidly.

Out of that newfound freedom came *Joyride*, a slinky, triumphant album that is as self-assured as it is vulnerable. Tracks like "He Don't Want It" conjure a late-night reverie, echoing with floating falsettos. In "Salt," she drops into a lower register, letting her voice fill with a rich, bluesy strain of regret. And then there's the light and infectious "Stuck With Me," with Swedish electronic group Little Dragon. "I'm a train wreck, I'm a car crash," she sings sweetly. "Get an ice pack for the weekend, 'cause you're stuck with me."

For Tinashe, *Joyride* is a statement of purpose. "I'm a fighter and a warrior and I'm here," she says. "And it's not an accident that I'm here." Wardrobe malfunctions and all, she's ready for the spotlight. "To me, it's not a matter of if," she says. "It's a matter of when." □

# 11 Questions

**Glenda Jackson** The two-time Oscar winner and former British parliamentarian is back on Broadway in Edward Albee's *Three Tall Women*

**Y**ou acted for 35 years and won two Oscars, and then you spent 23 years in the British Parliament. Now you're acting again, at 81. Any fears? Absolutely. I didn't think I would have the physical or vocal strength for it. So I swam every morning at my local baths until I could swim a half hour unbroken.

**It's a small club, the people who have been successful in acting and in politics. How are the jobs similar?**

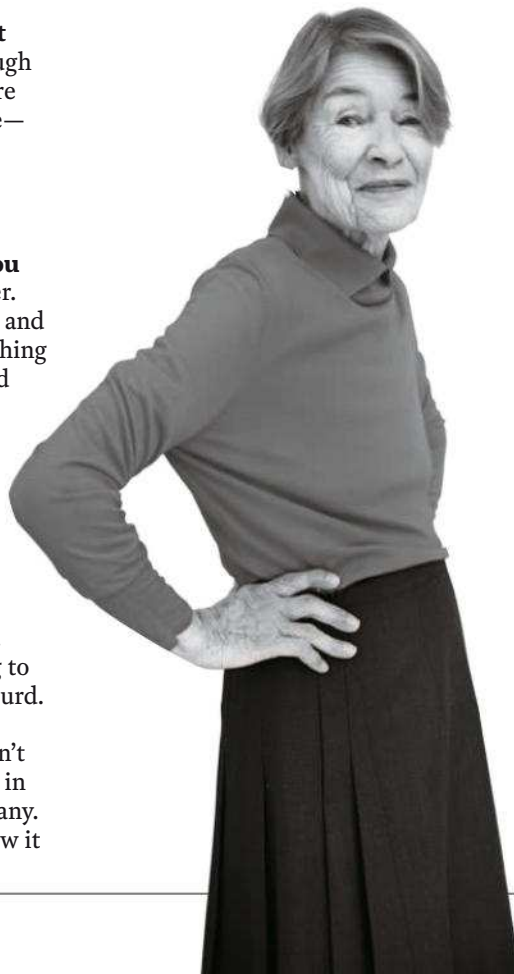
All great drama is essentially trying to tell the truth about what we are. All Shakespeare ever asks is, Who are we, what are we, why are we? And I think politics at its best is trying to find out how you do create a society in which there is genuine equality which acknowledges that we are different.

**You can afford to be choosy about roles. Why this play?** It's a very tough play to do. A major plus is that you're acting with other actresses, because—and this has never changed in my lifetime—contemporary dramatists don't find women interesting.

**How has theater changed since you left?** A theater is a theater is a theater. It's a dark space which strangers fill, and you're in the light. Hopefully, something from the light goes into the dark, and the dark increases that and sends it back, and you create this perfect circle.

**How do you feel about the recent outing of all the sexual harassers in show business?** In my country, two women die every week at the hands of their partners. The idea that this is suddenly going to transform the lives of women is absurd. Violence against women is as old as we are. The trafficking of women isn't going to stop because some big guy in Hollywood has to give up his company. And to think that people didn't know it was going on. Come on.

**THE EGOS THAT I SAW IN PARLIAMENT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN TOLERATED FOR 30 SECONDS IN THE THEATER**



**Ronald Reagan, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jesse Ventura and even, in a sense, President Trump all made the transition from entertainer to politician. But not so many women. Why?** It's much, much harder for a woman to go into politics. There are so many roadblocks. I remember speaking to a conservative MP, and she said she'd get questions like, Well, who will look after the children if you're campaigning?

**A record number of women are running for election in the U.S. this year. What's your advice?** You have to acknowledge it's going to be hard. You're asking people to give you something which, in my opinion, is their most precious possession: their vote. Voters have every right to question you on the level that goes beyond the usual social exchange. You have to be ready for that.

**Is there something you mourn about growing older?** It irritates me that I can't cut my own toenails.

**What do you think you've gained in return?** I have realized how much I don't know. That's a real revelation. This idea that age blesses you with some kind of knowledge is rubbish.

**Your mother was a cleaner and your father a bricklayer. What did you try to give to your son from your upbringing?** He went to a local school, he never came near a theater or a film set, he was never photographed. He said to me once, "Are you famous?" I said to him, "Well, possibly." He said, "What are you famous for?" I thought then we'd done pretty well.

**Who have the bigger egos, actors or politicians?** The egos that I saw in Parliament wouldn't have been tolerated for 30 seconds in the theater.

—BELINDA LUSCOMBE



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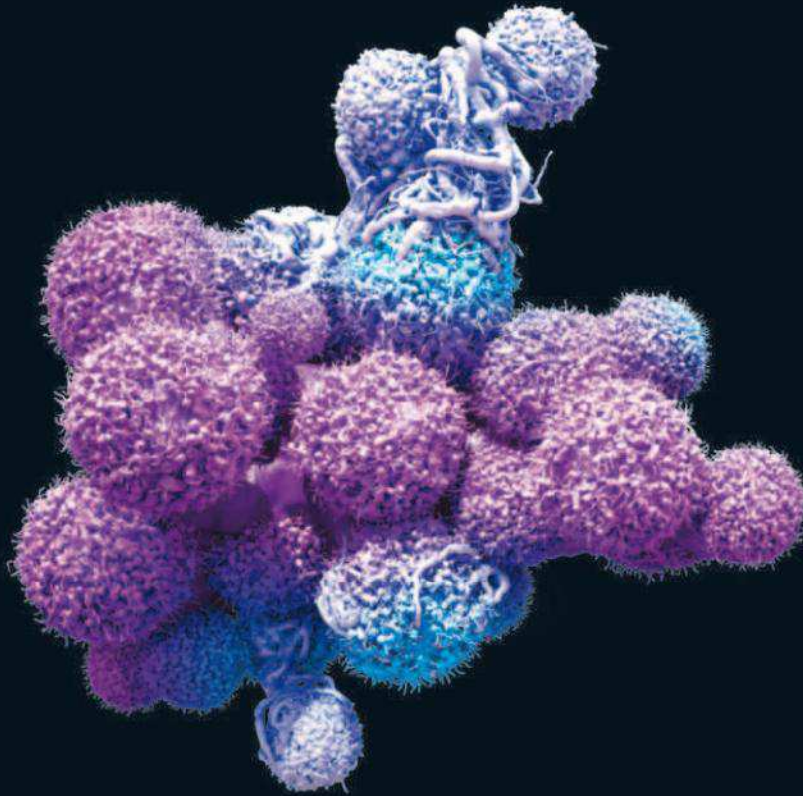
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