

DIGITAL Magazine

Eric Alterman The Games Journalists Play

It's no exaggeration to say that John Heilemann and Mark Halperin's Game Change proved to be one of those brief, earthshaking events in the value of the set being the set of the set of the set of the bear one of those brief, earthshaking events in the set of the set of the set of the set of the bear one of those brief, earthshaking events in the set of the set of the set of the set of the bear one of the set of the set of the set of the bear one of the set of the set of the set of the bear one of the set of the set of the set of the bear one of the set of the set of the set of the bear of the set of the set of the set of the set of the bear of the set of the set of the set of the prevident in new mine places, and the set of the

en transmission of the more independent resporters. Halperio of mean disformed or disparks Anas Winners and dispark data disparks and Winners and dispark data disparks and Winners and dispark data disparks and Winners and disparks and the disparks and disparks and Winners and disparks and the disparks and disparks and Winners and disparks and the disparks and disparks and Winners and disparks and the disparks and disparks and winners and disparks and the disparks and disparks and winners and disparks and disparks and winners and disparks and the disparks and disparks and winners and disparks and the disparks and the disparks and disparks and disparks and the disparks and d



the number of the section of the more information of the more considerable space in the section of the more information of the section of the more information of the more inf

gn toos para fson the go-ahead to r campaign chief, Pa son to be learned fro 3-m somebody's just



Villagers and human rights officials accuse the United States military of torturing suspects in hidden detention centers.

Used to Centrolos events are in the castern Aghan toom of Khon, a young government employee named harmalian simply variable. It has had neve seen its the town harmar with a group of french. Even you they sourced Khon's downless in the area who were considered and the spectra point worked, ordering in the spectra point of the spectra point worked, ordering the the spectra point worked, ordering that some-time with out on participance for ransom, then the spectra with out on participance point point of the spectra of the spectra point point of the spectra point worked, ordering the spectra point point point point point point point point with out on participance point point point point point of the spectra point point

nn no sign of Ismaruliah. Then one day, long after nd village elders had abandoned their sarch, a cou-ed a neat handwritten note on Red Cross stationery ly. In it, Ismarullah informed them that he was in American mene merican prison more than 200 mil ked him up while he was on his way e terse letter stated, and he didn't ke

The first of the second starting our to be second to be s

, M 🛐

.....

27 1

night raids have become ghanistan than coalition little known or understy been turning Aghans greeted as liberators ju One Dark Night in N

formed and hated in Af-

November 19, 20 s of a leafy neigh! in Kabul a

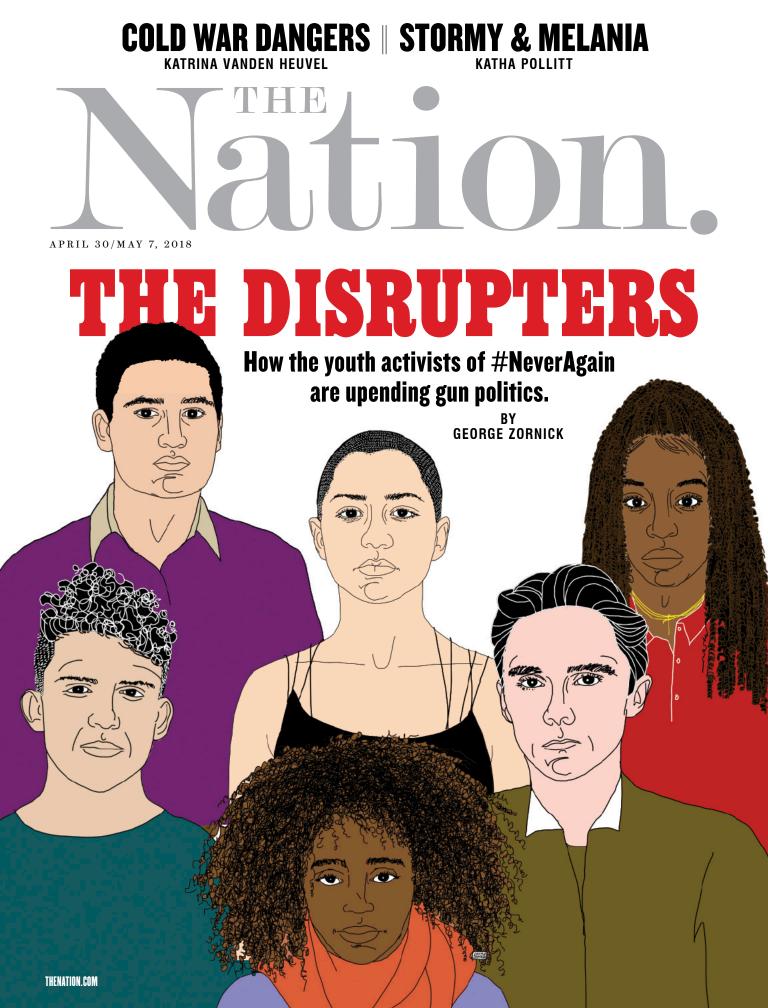
then we the floo Finally Rahm

The Nation's new Digital Magazine format offers:

-The Page-turning experience of a print magazine PLUS: -Live Web Links

-Multimedia Access









Artistic Dispatches From the Front Lines of Resistance



Phantoms / Edel Rodriguez

Trumpworld Map



Trumpworld Map / Peter Kuper



Hit Parade / Tim Robinson

Sign up for our new *OppArt Weekly* newsletter at TheNation.com/OppArt





Bills and Strikes

2

Hopefully, the West Virginia teachers' strike will establish a precedent for other public-employee unions that are increasingly dealing with union-busting legislation rather than employer-initiated anti-teacher directives ["It Takes a Crisis," April 9].

In Michigan, even though the two main public-educator unions (the Michigan Education Association, an NEA affiliate, and the Michigan Federation of Teachers, an AFT affiliate) bargain directly with local school boards, Republican legislative initiatives are an integral part of the bargaining. For example, all employees must pay 20 percent for health care, regardless of the cost of the plan. If a local votes to improve coverage for its members in collective bargaining, it is asking its members to pay a 20 percent surcharge on whatever new costs are incurred in the health-care plan. Similarly, Republican legislators have increased the employee cost for retirement benefits while slashing the actual benefit.

So a strike targeted at any district, no matter how large (Detroit being the largest), has no bearing on state legislation, which hamstrings the bargaining not only with direct legislative initiatives, but with a reduced school budget as well. Kudos to West Virginia; may the rest of us join you! SIDNEY KARDON HUNTINGTON WOODS, MICH.

Cold as ICE

← While I sympathize with Sean McElwee's article ["It's Time to Abolish ICE," April 9], all I gotta say is: Good luck with that! The mainstream Democratic Party is known for its cowardice and will have nothing to say on this issue, now or anytime soon. MICHAEL E. PETERSON

■ I agree that all countries need to

control their borders, but ICE as it is currently constituted, with its ultra-authoritarian leadership and overwhelmingly pro-Trump union members, is little more than a de facto goon squad wreaking terror on immigrant communities. On paper, it might well serve a necessary purpose, but to reduce it to that necessary purpose, it's going to take a wholesale purging of the agency as well as new guidelines that are strictly adhered to, restricting deportations to actual violent criminals and not those who are merely in the country without the proper papers. ANDY MOURSUND

This is exactly the type of demand that the Republicans would love to use against Democrats in the upcoming 2018 election. It's a bad idea on all possible grounds. We have immigration laws to restrict and control immigration. Those laws are legitimate, to protect American workers against having our communities flooded with foreign labor willing to work on the cheap. There is no support in the nation for open borders. That means somebody has to round up and deport unauthorized immigrants (or those who came legally but later committed a felony, which legally requires that they be deported). It's just that simple. If ICE is using inappropriate tactics, let's deal with that. But to support demolishing the entire police system responsible for stopping unauthorized immigration and deporting people who make it across the border without permission just plays right into Republican hands. And we know where that has gotten us. You could not come up with a better way to ensure that Republicans keep control of Congress. Entirely a bad idea.

NANCY A. BUTTERFIELD

The Nation.

Cold War II

n recent weeks, the world has seen an alarming flurry of diplomatic expulsions and counter-expulsions in what has clearly become a new Cold War. In response to the poisoning in England of Sergei Skripal, a Russian intelligence officer turned British spy, and his daughter Yulia, the British government expelled

23 Russian diplomats. In a show of solidarity with their British ally, 23 European Union and NATO countries announced that they would send more than 130 Russian diplomats home. Moscow responded by expelling over 50 British diplomats. In a further step, the Trump administration announced that it would close the Russian consulate in Seattle; Russia responded by announcing that it would close the US consulate in St. Petersburg.

These tit-for-tat expulsions come at a time when Washington and Moscow are locked in multiple crises, from Europe to the Middle East. Indeed, the

new Cold War is shaping up to be every bit as dangerous as the old one, if not more so, especially when you consider that the US and Russian militaries are standing eye-to-eye in eastern Syria; that NATO and Russian fighter jets have come close to clashing on numerous occasions in the Baltic region; that the simmering war in Ukraine—where the Trump administration has decided to send lethal weapons—threatens the security of the entire

region; and that Russian President Vladimir Putin just announced the development of a new generation of nuclear cruise missiles, said to be capable of eluding the US missile-defense systems in which Washington has invested so much. And now the extremist John Bolton—long known as a hawk on Russia—will be joining the Trump administration as nationalsecurity adviser. Nevertheless, many political figures and media outlets are calling for the administration to take even harsher action.

Calls for tougher measures border on the irrational, given the stakes involved—not least, the threat of nuclear war. Even the *New York Times* editorial page, not known in recent years to shy away from stoking US-Russian conflict, expressed concern that the communications channels set up during Cold War I, which kept unexpected crises from spinning out of control, either had been dismantled or had deteriorated to an alarming degree. A few senators have recognized the danger: Bernie Sanders, Dianne Feinstein, Jeff Merkley, and Edward Markey recently sent a letter to now-ousted Secretary of State Rex Tillerson calling for a new strategic dialogue between the two nations. As Senator Merkley told *The Nation*, issues such as Russia's violations of the landmark 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the revival of the New START nuclear accord can only be resolved "if the two sides are engaged in talks."

Does calling for dialogue and ratcheting down tensions show a blatant disregard of Russian interfer-

ence in US elections, or the possibility that the Trump campaign—even the president himself—may have colluded with the Kremlin? Certainly not; engaging in dialogue does not mean we have to ignore Russian malfeasance or state-sponsored criminality. Diplomacy, as history teaches us, is absolutely essential in the relations between rival superpowers bristling with thousands of thermonuclear weapons.

The poisonous atmosphere now inflaming US-Russian relations is putting US national security at risk. Those who think otherwise ignore the fact that during Cold War I, there were numerous nuclear near misses, which often occurred at times of heightened tensions.

Cold wars are also bad for progressives. They empower the military-industrial complex and the worst forces on both sides. Nationalist fervor rises, diplomacy is sidelined, and the space for dissent closes. Having worked with courageous Russian dissidents, journalists, and feminist NGOs for three decades, I have seen how Cold War tensions have been used to suppress independent voices in that country. Indeed, the space for dissent on Russia policy has never been narrower than it is today, and those who stray from the dominant narrative are often the target of toxic smears. Take, for example, a recent op-ed in *The Hill* that accused California Representative Ro Khanna of being "duped by Russia" and complicit in

UPFRONT

4 DC by the Numbers: Climate-Change Know-Nothings; 10 Facebook: Fuel, Meet Fire

- 3 Cold War II Katrina vanden Heuvel
- 4 Midterm Militants
- 5 **Q&A:** Armando lannucci
- 6 Asking for a Friend Liza Featherstone

COLUMNS

- 8 **Subject to Debate** Stormy Weather Katha Pollitt
- 10 Diary of a Mad Law Professor Leading and Bleeding Patricia J. Williams
- 11 **Deadline Poet** Laura Ingraham Picks On Parkland High-School Student Calvin Trillin

Features

- 12 **The Disrupters** George Zornick #NeverAgain is poised to unite the gun-control and anti-racist movements under the banner of youth.
- 16 **Fifty Years Since King** Michael K. Honey Remembering the final days of Martin Luther King Jr. and asking, "Where do we go from here?"
- 20 Is Dutch Bad Boy Thierry Baudet the New Face of the European Alt-Right? Sebastiaan Faber What the young politician's rapid ascent portends for mainstream political discourse in the Netherlands and abroad.

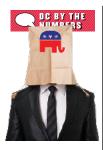
Books & the Arts

- 27 In Marx's Republic Daniel Luban
- 32 Freedom for Every Citizen William P. Jones
- 35 Suffuse With Light Jillian Steinhauer

VOLUME 306, NUMBER 13, April 30/May 7, 2018 The digital version of this issue is available to all subscribers April 5 at TheNation.com.

Cover illustration by Louisa Bertman.





New polling from Gallup shows that Republicans are increasingly skeptical of climate change.



Republicans who think that most scientists believe global warming is real—down 11 percent from 2017

18%

Republicans who think that global warming will pose a serious threat in their lifetime

69%

Republicans who think that the seriousness of global warming is being exaggerated (compared with just 4 percent of Democrats)



Republicans who are concerned about climate change (compared with 91 percent of Democrats)

300K

Estimated number of premature deaths in the US that will be caused by air pollution by 2030 if emissions are not reduced

-Emmalina Glinskis

a Kremlin "active measure." Khanna's offense? Sponsoring eminently sensible legislation that prevents the Ukrainian neo-Nazi Azov Battalion from receiving US military aid.

In short, we need a sober understanding of national security, a sense of proportionality, and more reason and less bluster when it comes to our relations with Russia. In that regard, the news that Trump invited Putin for what would essentially be a summit meeting during his call to the Russian leader on March 20 should not be treated as spineless capitulation. During that call, Trump specifically mentioned "the arms race," which is indeed a grave danger that must be dealt with through negotiation.

The collateral damage flowing from the increasingly charged atmosphere of Cold War II—over issues ranging from nuclear proliferation and counterterrorism to the conflicts in Ukraine and Syria—can only damage US national security and the possibility of a more just and peaceful world. Arguing that the United States and Russia have a mutual interest in maintaining a working relationship to resolve escalating conflicts may not be popular these days, but it's the only realistic option. KATRINA VANDEN HEUVEL

Midterm Militants

Ten contenders who promise to fight the status quo.



he 2018 midterm elections offer Americans a vital opportunity to check and balance the disastrous presidency of Donald Trump, to prevent Mitch McConnell from continuing to enable Trump as Senate majority leader,

to finish Paul Ryan's failed speakership in the House, and to end the crisis in the states created by the Republican governors who helped set the stage for Trump and Trumpism. For The Nation, these are essential political goals. But they are not the only ones. It is insufficient simply to oust bad players. This election must also empower leaders who are prepared to make a truly progressive change-and we will not get that change merely through a shift of power from one party to the other. Americans who want an alternative to Trumpism are seeking an end to status-quo politics. As new polling by Celinda Lake for the Congressional Progressive Caucus reveals, proposals for Medicare for All and for a crackdown on Wall Street "make voters more likely to support Democrats." Going bold on those issues doesn't just secure the base, it excites swing voters far more than tepid centrism.

This campaign season, *The Nation* will highlight candidates who recognize the need for issue-driven progressive politics. As the electioneering hits its stride, here's an initial list of 10 we've got our eyes on.

Ben Jealous, Maryland gubernatorial candidate: The prospect that a crusading champion of voting rights and criminal-justice reform—who served as the youngest-ever leader of the NAACP and director of the US Human Rights Program at Amnesty International—could become the governor of Maryland offers a sense of what's possible in 2018. Jealous supports Medicare for All and makes connections between guaranteeing a living-wage

and building a new economy. He recognizes "an economic responsibility to cultivate the talent immigrant families bring to Maryland" and offers "a comprehensive police reform plan to stop the killings of unarmed civilians and improve community relations." Friends of the Earth Action president Erich Pica hails Jealous as "a leader who builds strategic coalitions to solve big problems."

Stacey Abrams, Georgia gubernatorial candidate: In 2014, *Governing* magazine named the leader of the Democratic minority in the Georgia House as one of the nation's "Public Officials of the Year," noting how she had "walked that tricky line" between resistance where necessary and coalition-building where possible. Abrams did so with such agility that, four years later, her bid to become the first African-American woman governor in the nation is being championed by national organizations from Emily's List to Our Revolution and by in-state leaders such as Congressman John Lewis, who hails Abrams's work to "build coalitions to protect the poor and middle class, fight voter suppression, and register hundreds of thousands of people to vote."

Cynthia Nixon, New York gubernatorial candidate: After launching her insurgent Democratic-primary challenge to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Nixon declared, "We can't just elect more Democrats, we have to elect better, bluer Democrats." That's a smart premise on which to base a run against an entrenched Democrat in a very Democratic state, and the actress turned candidate is focusing on issues that matter to progressives: funding education, fixing the subway, responding to the needs of neglected rural regions, breaking the corrupting grip of big money on politics. Echoing the appeal of Bernie Sanders's 2016 presidential bid, the Nixon campaign promises that "Cynthia hasn't been bought and paid for by special interests and won't be accepting any corporate contributions in this campaign. Instead our campaign will be powered by the people."

Dennis Kucinich, Ohio gubernatorial candidate: Often underestimated by national pundits and Ohio pols, the former Cleveland mayor and congressman remains a potent force in his home state, as a late-March poll confirmed when it showed him tied with presumed frontrunner Richard Cordray in the race for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. Cordray, former director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, has an impressive résumé, but he's run a cautious campaign. Not so Kucinich, who has outlined one of the most ambitious agendas of anyone running for anything this year. He says, regarding fracking, that clean water is "not negotiable"; proudly touts his "F" rating from the NRA; and backs an assault-weapons ban. An unapologetic progressive populist, Kucinich declares in his pro-labor platform that "we must establish once and for all, as a moral and political imperative, the rights of workers. The right to join a union. The right to organize. The right to strike."

Mandela Barnes, Wisconsin lieutenant governor candidate: A former state representative who was a fierce foe of Governor Scott Walker's assaults on labor rights, Barnes is campaigning for the state's No. 2 job in a year when Democrats believe they can finally defeat the anti-labor governor. Barnes's appeal to people of color, young voters, and union activists marks the veteran grassroots organizer as a contender who can energize and expand the base with unapologetic responses to economic inequality ("Company profits belong in workers' paychecks, not CEO bonuses"), a tough line on environmental abuses that calls for reining in corporate exemptions, and a stance on gun violence so bold that the gun-safety group Moms Demand Action named him a "Gunsense Candidate of Distinction."

Jocelyn Benson, Michigan secretary of state candidate: A former dean of Wayne State University Law School and current Southern Poverty Law Center board member, Benson has for more than a decade advocated election protection, campaign-finance reform, and redistricting reform while outlining a vision for how secretaries of state can promote voting rights. Now she's running for the job, promising to make Michigan a national model for election integrity where "the voting rights of every citizen are protected."

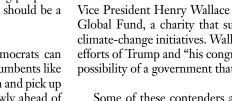
January Contreras, Arizona attorney general candidate: Democratic state attorneys general are fast becoming key players in national policy fights, on issues ranging from Trump's travel bans to net neutrality. Arizona's Contreras is one of a number of super-qualified contenders who have stepped up to wrestle the mantle of justice away from red-state Republican AGs. A former assistant attorney general and policy adviser to the state's most recent Democratic governor, Janet Napolitano, Contreras is running a campaign that speaks to Arizona's rising electorate, promising to fight corruption, defend civil liberties, and put Arizona on the side of DACA youth. "With the liberty of 28,000 of our state's inspiring young people at risk," Contreras says, "this is a legal fight that Arizona should be a part of." If she's elected, it will be.

Beto O'Rourke, Texas US Senate candidate: Democrats can take charge of the Senate if they reelect progressive incumbents like Wisconsin's Tammy Baldwin and Ohio's Sherrod Brown and pick up two more seats. Congresswoman Jacky Rosen is narrowly ahead of the most vulnerable GOP senator, Nevada's Dean Heller. But where does the second seat come from? Could it be Texas? O'Rourke gave up a safe US House seat to mount what the Texas Observer has called a "seat-of-the-pants, DIY, break-the-rules campaign" against Ted Cruz. O'Rourke's road-trip race has taken him to regions where Texans haven't seen many Democrats in recent years, and he's getting traction with a campaign that rejects PAC money and-on the strength of more than 55,000, mostly small donations-outraised Cruz in the fourth quarter of 2017. O'Rourke's doing it as a prochoice, pro-LGBTQ-rights supporter of gun control who highlights his last NRA rating, an "F," and his NRA money total: \$0.

Liz Watson, Indiana US House candidate: "Our laws have yet to acknowledge the reality of people's lives-parents working two jobs who need affordable child care, daughters and sons caring for aging parents who need paid family leave, women who need equal pay, people who made mistakes in their lives who need a second chance, and working people who need stronger protections for organizing so that we can restore unions' strength," says Watson, former executive director of the Georgetown Poverty Center and labor-policy director for congressional Democrats. Running in a region that used to send Democrats to DC, she's up against Trey Hollingsworth, a first-term Republican known more for his deep pockets than his legislative skills. Watson's got strong Indiana roots and solid support from unions that know she'd hit the ground running in Congresswhere, as a policy aide, she helped develop the \$15 minimum-wage bill introduced by Senator Bernie Sanders.

Scott Wallace, Pennsylvania US House candidate: Bucks County is the sort of suburban region where Democrats are hoping to gain the seats they'll need to retake the House, and Wallace vows to grab the local seat from a first-term Republican. A former counsel to the Senate Judiciary Committee and general counsel for the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Wallace is the grandson of former Vice President Henry Wallace and for many years ran the Wallace Global Fund, a charity that supports women's empowerment and climate-change initiatives. Wallace says he's running to overturn the efforts of Trump and "his congressional enablers" to "tear down the possibility of a government that serves the common good."

Some of these contenders are likely to win, and some are long shots. What they have in common is what the nation is looking for in 2018: candidates who promise a transformation toward the bolder and more progressive politics of the post-Trump era.



The Nation.

Don't Play It for Laughs

A Q&A with Armando Iannucci.

t's routine to hear that the best depiction of politics in Washington isn't The West Wing or House of Cards but rather Veep, the HBO comedy series created by the British satirist Armando Iannucci. In the former two shows, DC is populated either by fast-talking knowit-alls or sociopathic Richard IIIs. In Veep-as in The Thick of It (2005-12) and In the Loop (2009), Iannucci's earlier political satires-insider politics is full of hapless public officials desperate not to cross their party's leaders.

Iannucci's latest film, The Death of Stalin, has received major critical praise. Russia expert Masha Gessen called it "perhaps the most accurate picture of life under Soviet terror (continued on page 7)

Asking for a Friend



Featherstone

Dear Liza,

My 11-year-old daughter is obsessed with makeup. She spends all her free time watching how-to videos on YouTube and all her money buying eye shadows and highlighters. Her idea of a fun Saturday outing is going to Sephora and "swatching." She also has her own Instagram account, where she has started posting pictures of herself wearing 10 pounds of makeup—and looking a tiny bit like JonBenét Ramsey. (Her friends write things like, "You look soooo gorgeous.") She insists that it's just a "hobby" and that makeup application is an "art form," but it's starting to freak me out.

Should I shrug my shoulders and assume it's just a passing phase? Or should I object on feminist grounds and begin restricting her activities? I'm worried that, if I protest too vehemently, I'll only make the whole business more exciting!

I like and wear makeup too, but it's never been of all that much interest to me. I also now feel (in middle age) that I spent way too much of my young life stressing about my appearance! And it was both corrosive and, in the end, a waste of time. —Muddled Mom

Dear Muddled,

e shouldn't fall into the sexist trap of dismissing girlish preoccupations as inherently silly. Makeup artistry is probably more creative than *Minecraft*, for example, which obsesses many boys her age. (One of my former students is now applying to law school, inspired, in part, by the intellectual-property problems she encountered as a YouTube makeup artist.) And what a pleasure to acquire a skill, be publicly admired for it, and get praised for your beauty, all at the same time!

Still, you're right to worry, Muddled. It's not the makeup that's troubling here; it's your daughter's relationship to media and to her own appearance that should concern us.

Enjoying one's beauty and its social power is fun. But in the image-drenched and still male-dominated world we live in, girls' value is too often reduced to their looks. Your daughter needs to understand that she is so much more than her pretty Insta pics, and the medium makes this hard to keep in perspective. Like you, I worry that if she's getting too much praise for her good looks, at such a crucial time in her development, beauty will become too central to her identity. And on social media, notes Kris Harrison, a professor of communication studies at the University of Michigan who has extensively researched girls and media, "They quantify the heck out of it: 'How many "likes" did you get?'"

Additionally, the time your daughter spends on Instagram and YouTube may be taking her away from spending time with friends face-to-face, says Harrison. Brain research shows that those "likes" from total strangers give us the same dopamine rush as real-life social approval—a huge problem because the more time girls spend communicating electronically, the lower they score on critical measures of well-being. What boosts real happiness and sanity especially for early adolescents, who are newly developing as social animals—is hanging out with friends in person. Your daughter's brain, then, is giving her the wrong incentives, rewarding her for activities that aren't good for her mental health.

mental health. (Speaking of incentives, the social-media industry, like Big Pharma, is set up to profit from more use, not to help us figure out how to use sensibly.) Harrison adds, "It sounds like that horse has left the barn, but 11 is too young for Instagram."

Questions? Ask Liza at TheNation .com/article/ asking-for-afriend.

While you're right not to forbid the makeup, you should limit your daughter's Instagram use. Research shows that a purely authoritarian approach backfires ("It's forbidden fruit, and they just use it all the more at their friends' houses," says

Harrison), but if parents and kids discuss the restrictions and parents explain the reasons for them, setting rules can work.

One strategy is to sign your daughter up for makeup-artistry classes or summer programs, where she could move her focus away from the Internet and her own body and meet, in person, people who share her passion. Better yet, encourage an interest in theatrical makeup, which would allow her to get involved in school or community theater, meeting other artistic kids. And the theater would give her skills a healthier—and an equally public—platform.



April 30/May 7, 2018

Dear Liza,

Is passive aggression especially acute under capitalism? It seems so to me. It seems to afflict a lot of my friends and relations. Is this because everyone is just exhausted? —WTF?

Dear WTF?,

posed your question to Marxist psychoanalyst Harriet Fraad, who answered with an emphatic yes. This is because there's "anger everywhere," she explained, and, in American society in particular, people have "no political outlet for it." ("Passive-aggressive" behavior expresses anger covertly, acting out in a hostile manner while appearing to politely comply—for example, agreeing and then "forgetting" to run an errand that you were annoyed to be saddled with in the first place.) Psychologist Leon Seltzer wrote in 2008 that passive aggression is common in people who experienced the following problems in their childhood: Their needs were not met; they could not express anger without fear of retaliation; and they felt helpless, dependent for their survival on people they feared who did not care for them well. That's an apt description of how many people, living under American-style capitalism, feel about their bosses, government, and fellow citizens. No wonder you're seeing a lot of passiveaggressive behavior in your daily life.

Fraad finds psychic and political hope in our moment's embrace of people who reject these familiar passive roles to defy power. Emma González and her fellow high-school survivors of the Parkland massacre have turned their rage into action. Fraad notes that on the day of the March for Our Lives, the students' eyes were shining and they looked joyful; no longer victims, they "had a mission." Stormy Daniels, too, is an inspiration. "Instead of being intimidated and helpless," Fraad told me, "she's standing up to the most powerful bully in the United States, and she is quite happy. She's a real hero for the American people."

(continued from page 5)

that anyone has ever committed to film." Here, Iannucci describes the challenge of finding comedy in such an unlikely place. —Joseph Hogan

AI: Hit me with some absolutely original questions!

JH: Oh, God... all right. The Death of Stalin is funny, but it's also darker than anything you've made. What was difficult about bringing together the terror and absurdity of Stalinism? How did you get people to laugh? AI: I realized you could only make a satire of something so dark well after the event. Initially, I was thinking about doing something on a fictional contemporary dictator. But from the moment I read the graphic novel The Death of Stalin, which is darker and less overtly comedic, I instantly thought, "This is the story." I read it, and it was funny and yet horrific and crazy and absurd and horrifying. And I was thinking, "But this is all true." And the fact that it was true made me feel confident in it. The key, I realized, was to play out everything that happened. Don't try to play it for laughs-play it like, literally, your life depended on it.

JH: Your other political satires—*The Thick of It, In the Loop, Veep*—are about the present. What made you want to take a step back and satirize the past? Did any themes of Stalinism resonate with our own moment?

AI: Stalin gave birth to 1984 and Animal Farm and Darkness at Noon. Those are seminal works about totalitarianism. And yet it's not something Western cinema has looked at. It's strange that we don't look at Stalinism, even though it's the thing that's given rise to our take on big government. It

felt to me like we should take another look. Plus, again, I don't think you could do a fictional take on what's happening right now for a number of years. You need a certain allowance of time.

JH: So much of your work is about power and how it shapes people. In *Veep* and *The Thick of It*, power often makes people close to it obsequious. In *The Death of Stalin*, it makes everyone terrified.

AI: Yes! The big difference is that, in *Veep*, if someone gets something wrong, there's a day and a half of embarrassing headlines; someone somewhere might lose their job. But in *The Death of Stalin*, you could be killed. It's not about getting through the day—it's about survival. It's the comedy of anxiety and fear rather than

of fallibility. The jokes feel different; the notes are slightly louder, but there are fewer of them.

JH: I think one critic, Jackson Kim Murphy, put it well: In your film, a careerist move is a survivalist one.

AI: It's like *The Godfather*. When you watch it again, it's kind of funny. "I'll make him an offer he can't refuse"—it's a recurring gag. Shooting someone in a car and then making sure to leave the gun and "take the cannoli"—that's funny. It has to do with the fact that, well, it happened all the time. Shooting a guy is on par with a box of cannoli. The comedy is about turning torture and death into a form of bureaucracy and accountancy.

JH: *In the Loop*, your satire of the run-up to the Iraq War, was probably the first time

American viewers really got a sense of your work. Would you say your vision as a political satirist was formed by the Iraq War? **AI:** Absolutely. It was the reason I did *The Thick of It.* I just wanted to know how, in a democracy like ours in the UK, a prime minster could take a country to war against its will—against the will of those around him, those advising him, against the will of security forces, experts, and the people—

"I realized you could only make a satire of something so dark well after the event." and yet somehow the media could fall in line and not really question it... or question it in merely a polite way. I wanted to find out how that happened.

JH: Would you say your satire is informed by a political project?

AI: I've always described myself as a woolly left-of-center liberal. But I don't want to make come-

dy that tells people how to vote. If that's what I wanted to do, I should just write an op-ed, or campaign, or lobby, or sign a petition, or go knock on doors, or make a speech.

JH: Have you figured out how to approach Donald Trump—someone who satirizes himself?

IA: That is the issue. You shouldn't, really. I think it's far better that people like John Oliver don't try to do a fictional version of Trump; they just look at the facts and lay them out.

Comedy is taking something that sounds true and exaggerating it, finding the contradictions in it, twisting its logic. But that's what Trump already does. He contradicts his previous tweet; he willfully exaggerates; he goads people into responding to him. So it's about finding the cheat codes for Trump. And that's going to take a while, I think.

Katha Pollitt

Stormy Weather

Could Trump become a victim of his own licentiousness?

y aunt thinks Stormy Daniels will bring down Donald Trump. Not because the American public won't accept a president who had an affair with a porn star while his wife was nursing their new baby. Trump's fans will probably like him all the more for his walk on the wild side. His evangelical army has already forgiven him—that is, the 40 percent who don't believe it's fake news. After all, Trump wasn't president in 2007, so it doesn't count. And what about King David? He had plenty of concubines and God loved him anyway.

No, says my aunt, it's not the sex that will bring him down; it's the nondisclosure agreement, sealed with a \$130,000 payment appar-

ently made by Trump's hapless lawyer Michael Cohen, which could be seen as an illegal campaign contribution. Trump's fans wouldn't care about that either, of course. They already know he's dishonest, or else they've persuaded themselves that God is using Trump as His instrument, just like King David, and so He can't be expected to observe the niceties of federal election law.

There would be a kind of poetic justice if Trump was the victim of his own licentiousness-talk about pussy grabbing back!---and if his assumption that he could buy anyone off came back to bite him. Still, I'm a little skepti-

cal that Stormy will save us. If a small financial irregularity could ruin Trump, wouldn't that have happened already? The man violates the laws of business every single day-in fact, the plethora of scandals may be part of the problem: The news media don't have time to delve into any one before the next one pops up, and it's too much for the public to stay focused on. It's just "Trump being Trump."

Still, Stormy is great: She's smart, plainspoken, unashamed, and funny. As she is quick to remind people, she is not just an adult-film star; she also directs and writes screenplays. Even if you aren't a porn aficionado, you've probably seen her on-screen: She's done cameos in Judd Apatow's The 40-Year-Old Virgin and Knocked Up. ("She's very nice and super smart and great to work with," Apatow says.)

Stormy's Twitter feed is feisty and amusing, too. After @Angela_Stalcup tweeted that "Stormy Daniels is the member of the First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas," Daniels responded, "This is THE most offensive lie I've read about myself to date. Can we please go back to calling me a drug addicted male prostitute from outer space? Thanks!" It's hard not to compare her favorably to Melania, that miserable bird in a gilded cage. Does Melania even know how weird it was for her, the wife of the biggest Twittermonster on the planet, to have chosen cyberbullying as her pet project? Paging Dr. Freud! Or is it a coded cry for help? I am the only person I know who feels the least bit sorry for Melania. "She made her choice," says my aunt and practically everyone else on the planet. People don't like trophy wives, but Melania wouldn't be the first woman who married a man because it seemed like a good idea at the time and has been forced to live with her youthful mistake. The two women are a perfect 21st-century illustration of the 19th-century feminist equation

SUB JECT to DE BATE

of marriage and sex work. I'd say Stormy got herself the better deal.

The Trump Stormy described in her much-anticipated interview with Anderson Cooper on 60 Minutes was very much the man we know, utterly capable of sending some goon to threaten her in a parking lot while she's trying to put her child in a car seat. He's also just the sort of guy who would invite a woman to his hotel room and dangle the hope of a slot on his TV show in order to get her into bed. The bit about her spanking him with a magazine on whose cover he appears was startling and also suggestive: After she gave him a "couple swats" on the behind, he became "a completely different person"-he finally stopped talking about himself. Hmmm, maybe women should try that on men more often! But then her story takes a somber turn:

She goes to use the bathroom, and when she comes back he's "perched" on the bed. The casual dinner had turned into something else.

As Stormy recalled it, "I realized exactly what I'd gotten myself into. And I was like, 'Ugh, here we go.' [Laughs.] And I just felt like maybe [laughs]...I had it coming for making a bad decision for going to someone's room alone and I just heard the voice in my head: 'Well, you put yourself in a bad situation and bad things happen, so you deserve this.""

After confirming that Stormy had sex with Trump, Cooper asks her: "You were 27, he was 60. Were you physically attracted to him?"

"No," she replies.

"Did you want to have sex with him?"

"No," Stormy says. "But I didn't-I didn't say no."

Sleeping with someone because you went to his room, because

he expects it, because you can't think of how to get out of the "bad situation," and then blaming yourself for it because sex is something that women somehow owe men, and the fact that you're not attracted to him doesn't really matter? That was more or less the plot of "Cat Person" by Kristen Roupenian, the New Yorker short story that touched a nerve with so many millennial women (and enraged so many millennial men).

Consent is the central principle in contemporary sexual mores, and that's a big step forward. But as Stormy's admission makes clear, consent takes place in

a context that can be subtly coercive-even if it's just you coercing yourself. When "yes" really means "OK, I came to your hotel room, so you got me-let's get this over with," it's not very liberatory. In fact, it's not all that different from the old understanding that a married woman had permanently consented to sex with her husband, whether she wanted it or not.

Stormy and Melania, sisters under the skin.

The Trump Daniels described was very much the man we know, capable of sending some goon to threaten her in a parking lot.





KATRINA VANDEN HEUVEL

Join us on *The Nation* Cruise, sailing August 18-25.

Book now to secure your spot on this iconic itinerary. You'll join *Nation* editor and publisher Katrina vanden Heuvel, publisher emeritus Victor Navasky, and writers including Dave Zirin, Laura Flanders, John Nichols, Greg Grandin, Laila Lalami, Ruth Messinger, Zephyr Teachout, Patricia Williams, and Sasha Abramsky.

Many more speakers to be announced soon!

The Nation Cruise hasn't sailed to Alaska since 2007—we hope you're as excited as we are to explore a wildly different landscape while discussing the critical midterm elections, the #MeToo movement, how to repeal and replace Trumpism, and much, much more.



JOHN NICHOLS



DAVE ZIRIN



LAURA FLANDERS



RUTH MESSINGER



LAILA LALAMI

nationcruise.com



Ads: Fuel to the Fire

n March 27, as Facebook scrambled to address the outcry over the misuse of user data, the social-media giant was hit with a lawsuit. The National Fair Housing Alliance alleges that Facebook allows advertisers to discriminate against potential home buyers and renters in violation of the Fair Housing Act.

These issues were first raised in October 2016, when ProPublica developed an ad to test the limits of Facebook's "exclusion" options. After the ad-which excluded anyone with an "affinity" for African-American, Asian-American, or Hispanic people-was approved, Facebook promised to build an automated system to spot discriminatory ads. But when ProPublica repeated a similar study in 2017, it found that little had changed: The exclusion category called "Ethnic Affinity" had been renamed "Multicultural Affinity" and was included in a drop-down menu titled "Behaviors" rather than "Demographics."

Facebook disputes the allegations: "There is absolutely no place for discrimination on Facebook. We believe this lawsuit is without merit, and we will defend ourselves vigorously," Facebook spokesman Joe Osborne said in a statement.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act, but stark racial disparities persist: Black and Hispanic families are twice as likely as white families to rent their homes and to experience "extreme housing costs," spending at least half of their income on housing. —Sophie Kasakove

Patricia J.Williams (

Leading and Bleeding

The attacks on the Parkland teens are designed to humiliate and dehumanize.

t has been unsettling to hear the language with which the survivors of the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School have been attacked. They've been accused of being crisis actors, dupes, paid agitators, hooky-playing homosexuals, attentionseeking mental cases, pawns for the FBI, and communist traitors. If it is rare in American history to see upper-middle-class white children so viciously described, it would be wrong to consider it altogether anomalous. Looking at the list of epithets hurled at these young survivors—Emma González and David Hogg in particular—I am reminded of

the hateful stereotypes used to demonize the young white Freedom Riders who challenged segregation nearly 60 years ago. And, perhaps predictably, the rhetoric has become even more vitriolic since a number of the students called attention to racial disparities in the media's coverage (one could easily have assumed from the initial images that Stoneman Douglas was entirely white) and reached out to align their

movement with the black youths who have advocated gun control under the broad umbrella of Black Lives Matter.

One of the most disturbing features of this mockery is its calculated dehumanization. The most searing comments seem far less concerned with the Second Amendment than with personalized humiliation, designed to threaten, break, or even destroy young people who are protesting in the name of peace. This discourse far exceeds mere incivility. We have witnessed the massive circulation of allegations that March for Our Lives activists are profiting from the blood of their fallen classmates, dancing on their graves, and ripping up the Constitution. We have heard guitarist Ted Nugent calling the anti-gun-violence protesters "soulless" and "mushy-brained"; indie-rock performer Jesse Hughes-himself a survivor of the horrific slaughter at the Bataclan music hall in Paris-likened giving up guns to prevent violence to "chop[ping] off my own dick to stop rape." Leslie Gibson, the nowformer Republican candidate for Maine's House of Representatives, has called González a "skinhead lesbian." Actor Frank Stallone described Hogg as a "pussy" and a "headline grabbing punk" who "is getting a little big for his britches," adding, "I'm sure someone from his age group is dying to sucker

DIARY OF A MAD LAW PROFESSOR

punch this rich little bitch." At Arkansas's Greenbrier High School, three students who walked out of class for 17 minutes were given "two 'swats' from a paddle." (As Wylie Green, one of the students, later observed: "The idea that violence should be used against someone who was protesting violence as a means to discipline them is appalling.") Most notoriously, Fox News host Laura Ingraham mocked Hogg as a "whiner" when he didn't get accepted by his top four choices for college.

The statistics of who is actually dying in our society have been drowned out by all this cruel noise. But the combination of gleeful misogyny, gratuitous

> threat, and just plain bullying is its own culture of disgrace. Unfortunately, dehumanizing our youngest citizens isn't a new feature in our most vexed political encounters: I am thinking of Ruby Bridges, who in 1960, at the age of 6, integrated the William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans; she made her way each morning through hordes of angry white parents—mostly women—who spat at her, threw eggs

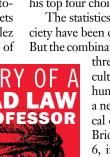
at her, and threatened to poison her. I am also thinking of Linda Brown, who died on March 25 of

this year; as a child, she was the brave (and victorious) plaintiff, along with her sister Cheryl, in the 1954 Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education*.

I am also remembering a significant precursor to the March for Our Lives: the Children's March of 1963. Fifty-five years ago this May, thousands of schoolchil-

dren marched through the streets of Birmingham, Alabama, to protest racial inequality. Freeman Hrabowski, now president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, was 12 at the time, and recalls encountering the infamous public-safety commissioner, Bull Connor: "My knees were shaking. He looked at me and said, 'Little nigra, what do you want?' I said, 'We want to kneel and pray.'" Hrabowski and hundreds of others were thrown in jail before the day was out, and Connor went on to

The most searing comments seem far less concerned about the Second Amendment than with personalized humiliation.



use attack dogs and fire hoses to disperse the crowds. (The water pressure was so great that it not only tore clothing and flesh, but dislodged bricks from nearby buildings.) The brutality captured in news footage from that day endures as the symbol of repressive racial separatism in a city whose nickname—"Bombingham"—stemmed from the frequency with which black homes and churches were bombed by white vigilantes.

Journalist Charlayne Hunter-Gault, who spent her own youth on the front lines of the civil-rights movement, has written poignantly of the four young girls who died in the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham and of the "wounds that are less visible and harder to reconcile." She writes that bombing survivor Sarah Collins Rudolph, whose sister Addie Mae was killed, and who lost one of her eyes in the blast, "is seeking financial compensation for the extensive medical expenses she incurred after the attack. After suffering the consequences for the past five decades, she said, even after all these years, nobody remembers her."

González, Hogg, Naomi Wadler, and the other speakers at the March for Our Lives are the most memorable of the young people affected by our scourge of gun death. But more than 187,000 students have been exposed to school shootings since Columbine in April 1999. Many remain in various degrees of physical or mental pain; they are a population whose remaining years will be etched with the stresses of catastrophe. And while many of the young leaders of this new movement are smart, strong, and media-savvy, we should never forget the toll taken on their lives—not only with regard to the unspeakable trauma they've already endured, but in the reiteratively staged depravity that sics hungry dogs upon those who kneel to pray, codes cruelty as freedom, and takes decency for weakness.

While many of these young leaders are smart, strong, and mediasavvy, we should never forget the terrible toll taken on their lives.

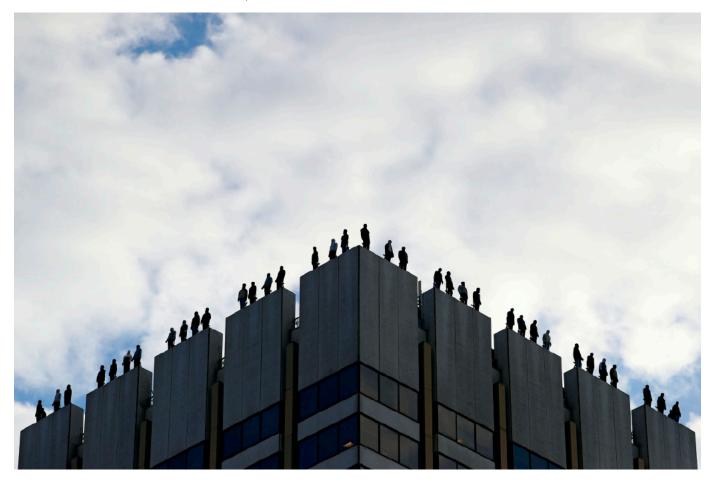
Suicide Figures

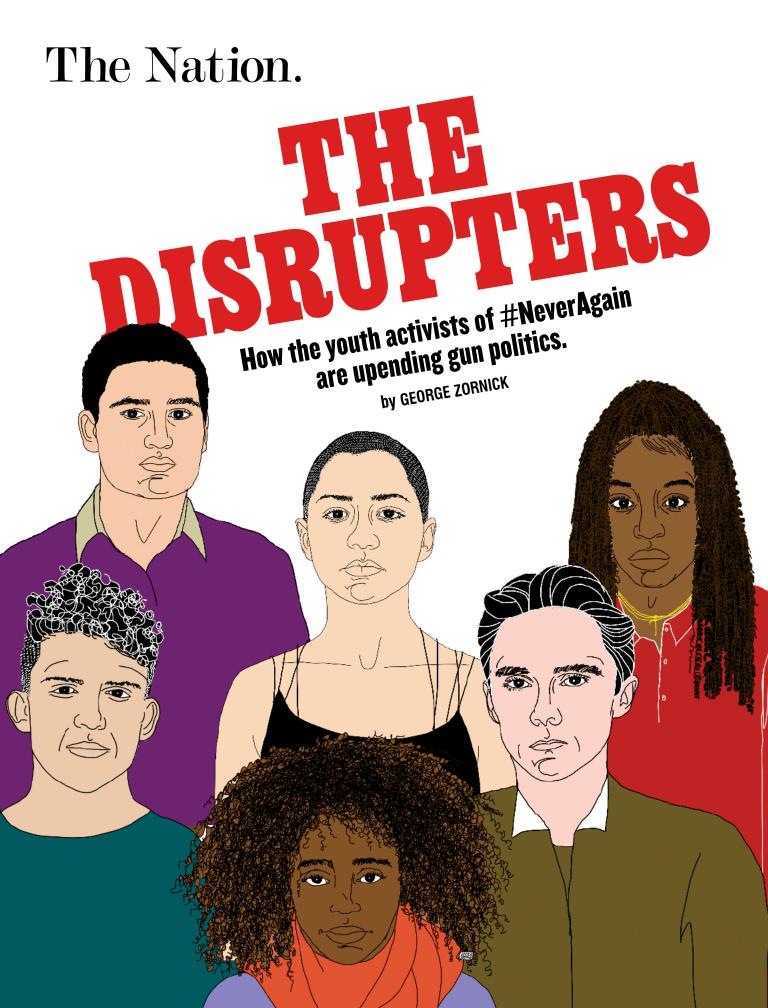
As part of an installation by Mark Jenkins, 84 sculpted figures loom at the edge of rooftops in London. The project is meant to raise awareness of male suicide rates in the United Kingdom, where, on average, 84 men kill themselves every week. Calvin Trillin Deadline_Poet

The Nation.

Laura Ingraham Picks On Parkland High-School Student

Perhaps she's now embraced the cause Of feminism fully— Confirming you don't have to be A male to be a bully.





WO DAYS BEFORE THE MARCH FOR OUR LIVES DREW AS MANY AS 800,000 demonstrators to Pennsylvania Avenue, students at Thurgood Marshall Academy in southeast Washington held their own rally in the school gymnasium. "Living in DC, it's easy to be in a bubble. We live in the nation's capital. There's the monuments, the statues, the memorials, and all of that," Jayla Holdip told her classmates. "But we need our stories to be heard. It should not be normal for everybody in this room to be affected by gun violence."

In 2016, 77 percent of all homicides in Washington, DC, were committed with a gun, and Thurgood Marshall is located in one of the most dangerous zip codes in the city. In the past two years, the Sixth and Seventh Police Districts, which cover the neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River, recorded 154 homicides and 829 assaults with a deadly weapon in which a gun was used. By comparison, the Second Police District, which encompasses a geographical area about as large as the Sixth and Seventh combined

but also has a richer and whiter population, saw just five homicides and 37 gun assaults over the same period.

"Gun violence is an issue that our DC community and other cities have experienced for generations. Although we personally have not experienced a school shooting, we know the destruction of guns all so well," said Zion Kelly when it was his turn to speak. At the beginning of the school year, Kelly's twin brother Zaire, also a Thurgood Marshall student, had been shot and killed on the way home from a college-prep class. He was 16. In January, Paris Brown, a junior, was shot to death less than two miles away-the second person in a school of fewer than 400 students to be killed with a gun since the school year began.

Murders in this part of the city, much less meetings of student activists, aren't normally headline news. But that day, two risers full of news cameras were on hand to record the rally. "To these cameras," said one of the students, Aaron Woods, staring directly at the camera to the laughter of his classmates, "and these government officials who we're trying to reach-yeah, we're looking for y'all."

The cameras were there because some of the nowfamous students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High in Parkland, Florida, had come to join the rally. They didn't waste any time noting the irony. "We've seen again and again the media focus on school shootings, and oftentimes be biased towards white, privileged students," said David Hogg, one of the most visible Parkland survivors. "Many of these communities are disproportionately affected by gun violence, but they don't get the same share of media attention that we do."

Hogg's admonition wasn't immediately absorbed by at least some of the media people present that day-when Hogg had to depart early, a good number of the camera crews followed him into the hallway, even as the Thurgood Marshall students were still speaking. But the Parkland survivors and other youth leaders of #NeverAgain have made it clear that they're aiming to build a movement that's multiracial and inclusive-one that addresses gun violence everywhere, not just in suburban schools and movie theaters. In so doing, they are trying to eliminate one of the central paradoxes of our gun-control debate: While a disproportionate number of the victims of gun

REUTERS / AARON P.

'lt should not be normal for everybody in his room to be affected by gun violence. -Jayla Holdip,

student at Thurgood Marshall Academy

March for Our Lives speakers included Alex King and D'Angelo McDade from Chicago.

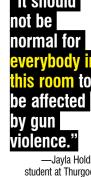
violence are black, most mainstream gun-control advocacy is conducted by white people, and the subjects of race and racial inequality have, for the most part, gone unbroached.

HE CONTEMPORARY GUN-CONTROL MOVEMENT was essentially born again after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, in late 2012. Until that point, politicians very rarely talked about new gun laws. Even when a gunman killed 12 people and injured 70 in a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, right in the middle of the 2012 presidential campaign, then-President Barack Obama refused to call for any new legislation.

Then Newtown happened. Six adults and 20 children, all between 6 and 7 years old, were massacred in 11 minutes by a 20-year-old shooter wielding a semiautomatic rifle and two handguns. In the shock and outrage that followed, several new gun-control groups were born: Americans for Responsible Solutions, now called Giffords after its founder. Gabrielle Giffords, the former congresswoman who was shot in 2011, and Everytown for Gun Safety, which is funded by Michael Bloomberg, the billionaire businessman and former New York City mayor, and which absorbed Mayors Against Illegal Guns and Moms Demand Action. The first real gun-control push in decades revolved around the 2013 bill proposed by Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Pat Toomey (R-PA), which would have expanded background checks for gun purchases and heightened gun-trafficking penalties. It failed to get the necessary 60 votes in the Senate.

These post-Newtown groups genuinely care about gun violence in the inner city, and the policies they're advocating really would help: Background checks and tighter enforcement against so-called straw purchasers would stem the flow of handguns into big cities, where they are overwhelmingly responsible for most of the violence. (In Chicago, for example, over 90 percent of the guns recovered at crime scenes were handguns, and in 95 percent of the cases where police could identify the possessor, that person was not the first purchaser of the gun.) But in the same way that the opioid epidemic suddenly focused national attention on the pointless, punitive nature of the War on Drugs only after the crack-cocaine epidemic had ravaged cities





and exploded the prison population, the political space for gun legislation didn't truly open up until white kids in the suburbs started becoming victims, too.

Shaped by this political context, the post-Newtown gun groups are, at their core, small-C conservative. They emphasize soccer moms who want to protect their children, or law-enforcement officers who think the streets have become too dangerous, or veterans who believe weapons of war should not be used by civilians. They also haven't been able to get hundreds of thousands of people out into the streets—preferring an inside game of slow consensus building with lawmakers and taking small legislative wins where they can.

Yet during almost exactly the same period that these post-Newtown groups took off, in what often seemed like a universe parallel to the Newtowns and Auroras, a vibrant, youth-led, anti-racist movement against police and vigilante shootings was rising up across the country. "We've been marching. We've been rallying. We've been saying our chants and our calls for justice," said Samantha Johnson, co-chair of the Million Hoodies Movement for Justice, which formed in response to Trayvon Martin's death.

"We, as activists, understand the ebb and flow of how society views individuals in certain communities of color. We understand that."

The #NeverAgain movement is poised to bring these two streams together. "It's important, as people of the American society and people in the media, [that we] recognize this inequality and that we work to solve it," said Hogg. "First, though, we must call it out, and we must call it for what it is, and that's racial bias towards us and many other people that's not only in the media, but that's in our society, too, as a whole."

The March for Our Lives rally featured several speakers of color who drew specific, sustained attention to the toll that gun violence takes in inner cities. It wasn't just a pro forma checking of that box, but a central part of the movement that the students are trying to build. Edna Chavez told the crowd in DC about her brother, killed by a gun in Los Angeles. "My brother, he was in high school when he passed away. It was a day like any other day. Sunset going down on South Central. You hear pops thinking they're fireworks. They weren't pops. You see the melanin in your brother's skin turn gray." Sixteenyear-old Mya Middleton described having a gun stuck in her face in Chicago. "He said, 'If you say anything, I will find you.' And yet, I'm still saying something today." And the star of the rally, who created perhaps its most viral moment, was Naomi Wadler, an 11-year-old from Virginia. "I represent the African-American women who are

victims of gun violence, who are simply statistics instead of vibrant, beautiful girls full of potential," she said. "For far too long, these black girls and women have been just numbers. I am here to say 'Never again!' for those girls too."

HESE KIDS ARE DISRUPTING politics as usual in other ways as well. #NeverAgain's key tactical innovation has been to call bullshit on the country's broken dialogue around guns—that's literally one of the movement's slogans. "We call BS," Parkland student Emma

14 April 30/May 7, 2018

"When they give us that inch, that bump-stock ban, we will take a mile."

—Delaney Tarr, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High student

Naomi Wadler, an 11-year-old from Virginia, was one of the rally's viral stars.



González declared in the speech that helped jump-start the movement. "Politicians who sit in their gilded House and Senate seats funded by the NRA telling us nothing could have been done to prevent this, we call BS."

That's an explicit rebuke to the National Rifle Association's tired talking points, but also an implicit repudiation of the cautious incrementalism that has characterized the post-Newtown gun-control movement. When the Las Vegas shooting happened last October-the deadliest mass shooting in the United States-there was no federal policy response except for a clarification of federal rules that may ban bump stocks, which allow semiautomatic guns to operate at nearly an automatic rate of fire. The youth leaders of #NeverAgain are much more maximalist in their views and straightforwardly unafraid to reject small-scale compromises as insufficient. "When they give us that inch, that bump-stock ban, we will take a mile," said Delaney Tarr, one of the Parkland survivors, at the rally. This radicalism-or, some might say, utopianism-is rooted in a strange mix of youthful confidence that all the world's problems can be solved, and a horrendous and very adult experience with flying bullets and bloodshed. "Talking to politicians, they're always gonna try to talk around in circles and say that you're wrong because of X, Y, and Z. But that's not true. They don't know what it's like to be 20 feet from an AR-15," Alfonso Calderon, a 16-year-old Parkland student, told the crowd at Thurgood Marshall. "They don't know what it's like to have somebody that you love die because of laws that are inadequate. And it's heartbreaking. They're presenting ideas that aren't solutionsthey're bandages to stab wounds. It's just not gonna work."

The Parkland students have not been afraid to frame the gun problem in stark moral terms—without worrying about the discourse police. "It just makes me think: What sick fuckers are out there that want to sell more guns, murder more children, and, honestly, just get reelected?" Hogg vented in an interview with *The Outline* earlier this month. "What type of person are you, when you want to see more fucking money than children's lives? What type of shitty person does that?"

All of this has thrown pro-gun politicians and activists off their game. At the heart of their panic is the notion that the passion gap that has long characterized the gun debate—one in which, for example, 21 percent of gun own-

ers contact a public official to express an opinion on gun policy, versus 12 percent of non–gun owners—may be suddenly, and resoundingly, closing.

The NRA's Twitter account fell silent on the day of the march, an occurrence usually reserved only for the hours after a mass shooting, when the NRA feels that its advocacy would do more harm than good. On Fox News, as footage rolled of a massive, energetic march expanding the terms of the gun-control debate by the minute, the network's "young" talking heads criticized the event in boilerplate terms, deploying the shibboleth that armed guards were present at the rally, so guns must de facto be good. (In fact, the only armed guards I saw during the march in Washington were DC police officers.)

There has also been a pervasive effort on the right to discredit the Parkland kids as simply not real. Naturally, some prominent conservatives dubbed them mere pawns of George Soros. The hugely popular blog *RedState* ran a long post after the march in which the author claimed to have discovered that Hogg wasn't even at school during the shooting. (He was; *RedState* retracted the entire post with one long strike-through, but blamed a "confusing" CBS report.) After the march, a photoshopped video of González ripping up the Constitution flew around rightwing Twitter accounts and blogs. (In the actual video, she was tearing up a shooting-range target.)

In the days following the Parkland shooting, as the student survivors were becoming household names, the top trending video on YouTube purported to show that some of the kids were actually "crisis actors," part of some inscrutable mega-plot to confiscate everyone's guns. (You-Tube was forced to remove the video after an outcry.) Normally the purview of niche conspiracy cranks like Alex Jones, the crisis-actor theory was spread by a Florida legislator's aide, who was later fired, and reached all the way to Donald Trump Jr., who "liked" posts about it on Twitter. Hogg, one of the main targets of these charges, had to go on CNN to publicly declare: "I'm not a crisis actor—I'm somebody that had to witness this and live through this, and I continue to have to do that."

Many adults simply cannot accept that high-school kids are sick and tired of mass shootings in their schools, nor that their moral outrage is real. "The fact that these people refuse to believe that something like this could happen is something that all of us don't want to believe," Hogg said on CNN. "But the sad truth is that it is."

T SEEMS CLEAR THAT IN THE WEEKS SINCE THE Parkland shooting, the student survivors have been winning their battles. Whether they win the war depends a lot on how this movement evolves and is able to channel the energy of the streets into actual changes to gun policy.

So far, the results have been mixed. In the wake of the shooting, the notoriously gun-friendly, Republicancontrolled Florida Legislature did pass a raft of new gun laws: It raised the minimum age for gun purchases to 21, created a three-day waiting period for sales, and banned bump stocks. But it left out most of the Parkland students' key demands: banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines and expanding background checks. The adults of the gun-control movement haven't cracked that particularly tough nut either—but the kids have, in a way, taken on a much larger task, by very publicly putting on the mantle of solving inner-city gun violence, too.

If you live in a wealthy suburban neighborhood where crime is low and the schools are good, and somebody shoots up the local shopping center, the policy solution is simple: Get rid of the guns, and life can resume hap-



David Hogg, one of the most visible Parkland survivors, speaks at the March for Our Lives.

enough that we have to return with clear backpacks. Should we also return with our hands up?"

it's bad

—Kai Koerber, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High student pily after that. In the country's largest urban areas—which have less than one-tenth of the US population but more than one-fifth of the country's gun violence—shootings are the final coda to a tragic story of economic segregation, terrible educational options, over-incarceration, and a flourishing underground drug trade.

And some of the proposals that accompany guncontrol legislation, such as increased criminal penalties and heightened policing, have the potential to harm people of color more than they would help. When Florida legislators passed their post-Parkland measures, they included more law enforcement inside schools and made searches of students much easier. "It's bad enough we have to return with clear backpacks," said Kai Koerber, a black student at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High, speaking to reporters recently. "Should we also return with our hands up?"

While reducing the number of illegal guns flowing into big cities has been a priority of community activists' for decades, it's far from the only one, and complex demands will lead to an even more complex political strategy for achieving the fundamental goal: that Americans should be able to live free of the fear of being killed in their neighborhoods or schools.

Black Americans worry about gun violence by a much larger percentage than do either white or Latino voters, and therefore are likely to support drastic solutions. A new, intersectional gun-control movement can thus expand the political base agitating for change. But it might also find itself in a trap in which gun violence can't be solved until racism and inequality are, too; it might fail thanks to the bigotry of incredibly high expectations.

Reconciling sky-high dreams with the realities on the ground is the very definition of growing up. And the Parkland survivors will grow up alongside their movement. We don't know where it will go yet, but could anyone else have started it and disrupted decades of bullshit about guns?

"People believe that the youth of this country are insignificant," said Parkland student Alex Wind during the rally. "People believe that the youth have no voice. I say that we were the only people who could have made this movement possible."



Eifty Years Since King

Remembering Memphis and the Poor People's Campaign.

by MICHAEL K. HONEY

IFTY YEARS AGO, ON APRIL 4, 1968, a bullet robbed us of one of the great human-rights leaders of the 20th century. The assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis, Tennessee, accelerated the racist backlash of the late 1960s. Along with the murder of Robert F. Kennedy two months later, this tragic trajectory led to the election of Richard M. Nixon, who escalated the Vietnam War and unleashed police and FBI forces against movements for change.

> However, the bonds of memory cannot be so easily dissolved. Ending poverty and fighting for union rights

are back on the economic-justice agenda today. Fifty years after King, Memphis remains an appropriate launch pad for these campaigns. "Fight for \$15" organizers met there, picketing McDonald's and marching on the anniversary of the Memphis sanitation workers' strike. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), which will be meeting in Memphis on the 50th anniversary of King's death, launched its "I Am 2018" campaign to fight for racial and economic justice and combat so-called right-to-work laws. The Rev. William Barber, the Rev. Liz Theoharis, and others also met in Memphis to begin their new Poor People's Campaign to end poverty, which is modeled on King's original crusade.



Yet even as Memphis's now-multiracial political leadership celebrates the accomplishments of the civil-rights movement in the city, the challenges remain daunting. A majority-black city of more than 600,000 people, Memphis has among the highest rates of poverty and infant mortality of any US city its size. Although higher wages for working-class people would clearly benefit both a consumer-based economy and the city's tax base, the traditional low-wage, anti-union business model is back in style in Republican-run Tennessee. Nationally, privatesector unions—which now represent less than 10 percent of the American workforce—are under attack, as are their public-sector counterparts.

In our own time of escalating crisis, why return to the story of Memphis and Martin Luther King? Activists and historians tell us why: Understanding the critical year of 1968 and King's agenda for social change can help us clarify the organizing imperatives of today. In Memphis and elsewhere, the bonds of memory 50 years since King are helping people to remember, and to fight.



HEN KING CAME TO MEMPHIS ON March 18, 1968, as part of his Poor People's Campaign, it appeared that the economic-justice movement he'd struggled to build was firmly on track.

Some 1,300 black workers in the AFSCME Local 1733 had gone on strike on February 12, after enduring years of abuse and the needless deaths of two members, Echol Cole and Robert Walker, due to faulty equipment on February 1. Police attacks on workers and their allies during a march on February 23 had angered the black community and brought together the working poor, church leaders, unions, students, and teachers. King was ready for this fight: He had long worked with the left-leaning side of organized labor to build a labor/civil-rights alliance.

In Memphis, King called for a second phase of the freedom movement that would go beyond its first phase—the struggle for civil and voting rights—and begin a fight for "economic equality." Phase two would demand that the nation shift its priorities away from war and military spending and toward housing, health care, education, decent unionized jobs, economic opportunity, and a sustainable income for all. He also proposed a new tactic: During his riveting speech, King called for a "general work stoppage in the city of Memphis."

Memphis provided an alliance of the middle class and the working poor that could stop the city's anti-union campaign and help fuel King's national movement to end poverty. It brought together direct action in the streets and in the workplace in order to create a new and powerful direction for the movements of the 1960s: a general strike for freedom *and* economic justice.

On March 19, King left Memphis for the Mississippi

Michael K. Honey is the Haley Professor of Humanities at the University of Washington, Tacoma, where he teaches labor and civil-rights history. He is the author of To the Promised Land: Martin Luther King and the Fight for Economic Justice (W.W. Norton & Company, 2018), from which this article has been adapted with the permission of the publisher. Delta. Here, he confronted the desperate poverty of the unemployed poor. During a visit to Marks, Mississippi, a town of less than 2,500, King told an interviewer, "I found myself weeping before I knew it. I met boys and girls by the hundreds who didn't have any shoes to wear, who didn't have any food to eat in terms of three square meals a day, and I met their parents, many of whom don't even have jobs." In Marks, he found poor people cast off from the cotton economy by the mechanization of cultivation and harvesting. They lived in shacks without plumbing, lighting, or ventilation through extreme heat and humidity, many subsisting on foraged berries, fish, and wild rabbits. Yet King also found here a core of poor people who would go to DC to energize his campaign and later help to elect scores of black leaders in the Delta.

King once recalled a conversation he'd had on a plane with a white man who told him that black people needed to lift themselves by their own bootstraps and advance through individual initiative. "It is a cruel jest," King replied, "to say to a bootless man that he ought to lift himself by his own bootstraps."

Few black people received the kind of government support—the New Deal's low-interest home loans, the homesteads and land-grant colleges and subsidies, the federal land acquisitions and military protection for

Worthy causes: Supporters of the Poor People's Campaign march on Washington with signs announcing their demands.



'It is a cruel

to a bootless

iest to sav

man that

he ought to

lift himself

by his own

bootstraps.'

-Martin Luther King

railroad and oil magnates in the West-that had boosted some immigrants into the ranks of the middle and upper classes.

Then too, Africans didn't come to America looking for prosperity, as Ben Carson, the black Republican who heads up the Department of Housing and Urban Development under President Trump, ludicrously suggested recently. Rather, they were ripped from their freedom in Africa to work as slaves in America. "My grandfather and my great-grandfather" helped build the wealth of this nation as slaves and sharecroppers, King said, but ended up in poverty. In contrast to the stereotypical "self-made man," King spoke of a man unjustly kept in prison for years: "And you just go up to him and say, 'Now you are free,' but you don't give him any bus fare to get to town. You don't give him any money to get some clothes to put on his back or get on his feet again in life. Every court of jurisprudence would rise up against this. And yet, this is the very thing that our nation did to the black man."

Remarkably, given the brutality that people had faced in the civil-rights struggle, King warned that the second phase of the freedom movement would be even harder. "It is much easier to integrate a lunch counter than it is to

guarantee an annual income," he said, and the resistance from capitalist elites as well as Southern sheriffs would be much worse. Yet King insisted that the country needed a moral revolution that would "raise certain basic questions about the whole society." Like Malcolm X, he saw the agenda for organizing as global and revolutionary.

King had spoken out sharply against the Vietnam War and wasteful military spending but went even further, criticizing capitalism itself. He told his congregation at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church that a system that put the wealth of a few ahead of a decent life for the many needed fundamental transformation. He envisioned the Poor People's Campaign as a way to gather the sick, the hungry, and the destitute in a shantytown in the nation's capital to "demand that the government address itself to the problem of poverty."

N THE 50 YEARS SINCE KING'S DEATH, THE MEDIA and most historians have cast the Poor People's Campaign as a failure, and Memphis has come to be remembered primarily as the site of his tragic assassination. Instead, as the people taking up the struggles to end poverty and create a living wage today point out, we should embrace King's final effort as a necessary turn that we can emulate. In the Poor People's Campaign, dispossessed people learned skills and crossed cultural boundaries, beginning a fight for economic justice that many continued for the rest of their lives.

In the Memphis strike, black workers declaring "I Am



a Man" paved the way for AFSCME's successful national campaign to unionize thousands of public employees, including many African Americans and women. The percentage of public employees who are unionized is now five times the percentage of private-sector employees. Unions look back on King as a labor hero as well as a prophetic advocate for the disinherited and the working poor. AFSCME's "I Am 2018" campaign seeks to rekindle the memory of what happened 50 years ago and spark a nationwide movement to organize workers and poor people in the fight for racial and economic justice.

The national media love to focus on anniversaries, but 50 years after King's death, we should remember that he dreamed of much more than simply winning the fight for civil and voting rights. We should remember, as former AFSCME secretary-treasurer (and Memphis organizer) William Lucy told me some years ago, that "Dr. King really highlighted the great contradiction.... If you relieve the civil-rights shackles or barriers, that does not necessarily guarantee that your economic situation will change. There is something wrong with the social structure. There is something wrong with the economic structure." As King put it, when "profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered."

It might also be time to dispense with the standard notion of King as a top-down leader and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the New Left as the bottom-up movements of that time. Movements require many kinds of agitators, organizers, and leaders. We should embrace the many different movements fighting for rights and freedom today—women's rights, immigrant rights, LGBTQ rights, peace and nonviolence—as well as people of all ethnicities. But we should also bring labor issues and union rights to the forefront of our concerns, as Coretta Scott King did after her husband's death. Advocating for a federal holiday in his memory, she pointed out that it would be the first one to honor an American who "gave his life in a labor struggle."

Fifty years after his death, King's message of *agape* love, or love for all, lives on. He urged that, while most of us think that "self-preservation is the first law of life," in fact "other-preservation is the first law of life." Ending racism, poverty, and war in a global economy and on a global scale requires everyone to develop an "overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole," to choose love instead of hate. From Memphis to Seattle and beyond, people who march and organize continue to draw inspiration from King, remembering him as a hero for the American working class, the poor, and the world's oppressed peoples.

In Memphis, King called for "dangerous unselfishness" and declared "either we go up together or we go down together." Years earlier, he had told the AFL-CIO that the key human ideal must be solidarity, "a dream of a nation where all our gifts and resources are held not for ourselves alone but as instruments of service for the rest of humanity."

Are we moving in that direction? Many are still asking, as Martin Luther King did in the last year of his life: "Where do we go from here: chaos or community?"

King spoke out against the Vietnam War and wasteful military spending but went even further, criticizing capitalism itself.

Back to the future: Activists today are taking up Dr. King's mantle.

A EXCEPTIONAL WINES FOR JUST \$29.99

Each wine comes with a detailed tasting note from our buyers featuring insights into what makes the wine unique, the stories behind the wine, a rundown of its flavors and aromas, and delicious food-pairing suggestions.

Your membership supports *The Nation*'s indispensable, one-of-a-kind journalism. *The Nation* Wine Club sources wines that reflect progressive values.



World-Class Wines That Support Progressive Journalism

Each month you'll receive a new shipment of four captivating wines for just \$15 per bottle plus \$9.99 delivery. Cancel anytime.

ORDER NOW AT <u>THENATIONWINECLUB.COM/SPECIAL</u> OR CALL 800.946.3568 AND MENTION CODE: NATSPECIAL

April 30/May 7, 2018

IS DUTCH BAD BOY

by SEBASTIAAN FABER

THE NEW FACE OF THE EUROPEAN ALT-RIGHT?

Amsterdam

N THE FIRST DAY OF JUNE IN 2017, DUTCH NATIONAL TELEVISION CREWS WERE AT THE READY when a moving truck pulled into the stately cobblestone courtyard of the parliament in The Hague. The truck's load, a black grand piano, had been the subject of conversation for months. As the movers wheeled the blanket-covered instrument into the parliament building under the watchful eyes of its 34-year-old owner, it was clear they were ushering in a fresh chapter in the history of Dutch right-wing populism. The movement to save Dutch national culture has a new leader—and he plays Brahms.

Three months earlier, the Netherlands had held parliamentary elections. To the relief of many on the left and right alike, the anti-immigrant Freedom Party (PVV), led by the peroxide-blond populist Geert Wilders, failed to win the victory that some earlier polls had predicted. Still, it earned a record 1.4 million votes, coming in second with 20 of the 150 available seats, behind the neoliberal People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) of Prime Minister Mark Rutte, but far ahead of the social-democratic Labor Party, which was governing with the VVD and saw its support decimated. As the crestfallen social democrats resigned themselves to a stint in the opposition, the other major parties agreed that Wilders, too, should be barred from joining the government. His radical anti-Islam positions-he wants to shutter all mosques and ban the Quran-placed him too far outside of the mainstream. And his obstructionist attitude did not jibe with the Dutch political culture of consensus, coalition, and compromise. Given his behavior, some commentators openly wondered whether Wilders aspired to govern at all. In the wake of the election, disillusion began to set in among the PVV's disgruntled constituency.

The man who stood to benefit most from Wilders's deflation was Thierry Baudet, the freshman deputy who excused himself from a parliamentary debate last June to personally supervise the arrival of his piano. Shortly after the election, he had requested official permission to move the instrument from his Amsterdam apartment to his new office in The Hague, making good on a flippant campaign promise. The piano was a necessary part of his "entourage," he argued, and would allow him to decompress in between sessions with some Schubert or Brahms. After three months, Baudet got his wish.

Thierry Henri Philippe Baudet, who just turned 35, is an intellectual who claims to loathe politics, modern art, and popular culture. He is also the rising star of the Dutch alt-right. His flamboyant image and rapid ascent resemble that of Pim Fortuyn, the gay populist pioneer who railed against Muslim immigrants and was killed by an environmental activist in May 2002, in the country's first politi-

RIGHT: CC 3.0

SERGE LIGTENBERG:

LEFT: AP

Sebastiaan Faber, who was born and raised in Amsterdam, is a professor of Hispanic studies at Oberlin College. His most recent book is Memory Battles of the Spanish Civil War: History, Fiction, Photography. Polls indicate that if elections were held today, Baudet would win as many as 15 seats in the Dutch parliament,

Pim Fortuyn (left) and Theo van Gogh, whose assassinations changed the face of Dutch politics. cal assassination since the 17th century. Two years later, a radicalized Dutch-Moroccan Muslim murdered progressive filmmaker and Islam critic Theo van Gogh in broad daylight on a busy Amsterdam street. Both deaths changed the face of Dutch politics. Since then, disagreements over national identity and the integration of immigrants have dominated public debate and divided the country into sharply opposed camps. In topic and tone, the boundaries of the acceptable have been shifted to the right. Fueled by social media, mainstream political discourse has gone places that were unthinkable 20 years ago.

Baudet is poised to push it even further. He is the leader of the Forum for Democracy (FvD), which he founded as a think tank in 2015. Transformed into a political party only six months before the March 2017 elections, the FvD won a surprising 1.8 percent of the vote, good for two seats. (The Dutch electoral system is strictly representative, making it relatively easy for small parties to break through but almost impossible for any single party to win an absolute majority.) By June, when the piano was delivered, the polls pegged the FvD at five seats. Ten months later, Baudet's party now boasts more than 20,000 dues-paying members and a fast-growing youth movement. Polls indicate that if elections were held today, Baudet would win as many as 15 seats—and he hasn't hit his ceiling yet. "I think 30 seats are within reach," Baudet declared in a television interview in December. According to a leading pollster, such a gain is not unlikely. This would make Baudet a candidate for prime minister-a position he has said he doesn't covet but is willing to take on. After all, he says, someone has





to save the Netherlands—and Western civilization—from their impending downfall.

For Baudet is convinced that his country is on the brink of disaster. He believes that Dutch political and intellectual elites harbor a pathological hatred of their own national culture. Fed by cultural Marxism, postcolonial guilt, victim culture, and political correctness, this *oikophobia*—Baudet's fancy term for "fear of the home"—has sapped the country's defense mechanisms, leaving it open to the invasion of non-Western values. These threats are embodied particularly in Muslim immigrants and refugees.

"The West is suffering from an autoimmune disorder," Baudet said when he addressed his party's congress in January of 2017. "Part of our organism—an important part: our immune system, that which should protect us—has turned against us. We're being weakened, undermined, surrendered in every respect. Malevolent, aggressive elements are being smuggled into our social body in unprecedented numbers, while true causes and consequences are kept hidden. Police reports about violent incidents at refugee centers are not made public. The attorney general's office looks the other way when it runs into sharia courts."

Instead, Baudet proudly defends Western values, which he predictably associates with the Judeo-Christian tradition—but in which he less predictably includes the defense of women's and gay rights against the religious intolerance of fundamentalist Islam. His party has proposed a "Law in Defense of Dutch Values" that, among other things, would prohibit arranged marriages, demand that the Holocaust be taught in all schools, and ban any face-covering garments, including balaclavas and niqabs, from public spaces.

Like Wilders, Baudet is a so-called Euroskeptic. While immigration and multiculturalism have been "diluting" national values from below, he says, the sovereignty of the Dutch nation-state has been further undermined by its subservience to the European Union and other international bodies. "Control over our lives is insidiously and increasingly taken away from us by devious acts of surrender that transfer our sovereignty to impersonal political mega-projects in which citizens have lost all forms of democratic control," he said at the "We're being weakened, undermined.... Malevolent, aggressive elements are being smuggled into our social body."

—Thierry Baudet



Geert Wilders, whose supporters protested in 2010 outside the court where he was charged with inciting hatred against Muslims (below).

party's congress in January of last year.

With less than 5 percent unemployment and a healthy 3 percent economic growth, the Netherlands has been faring better than many other EU nations. Still, Baudet's apocalyptic rhetoric has proved a hit among voters who are anxious about national identity, suspicious of the European Union, and disenchanted with Dutch politics-as-usual—as manifested by the current four-party, right-of-center governing coalition, once again led by Rutte, and installed in October after a grueling six-month negotiation.

OME OF BAUDET'S RAPIDLY RISING SUPPORT COMES directly from Wilders'S PVV. But he is also expanding and diversifying the base of the radical right, says Leo Lucassen, research director at the International Institute for Social History. As Lucassen, an expert on migration who frequently calls out far-right fearmongers, told me when I met with him in Amsterdam, "Baudet is popular among new voters, but he is also attractive to higher-educated people who always found Wilders too lowbrow or too coarse. Although Baudet's ideas are clearly very extreme, he packages them in a tremendously charming, attractive way."

FvD meetings attract a disproportionate number of young white men. But the party has also found support among ethnic minorities and the intellectual elite. Among its early supporters was Frank Ankersmit, an internationally renowned philosopher of history. (Ankersmit left the party in December.) And one of its initial top candidates in the City Council elections in Amsterdam this past March was Yernaz Ramautarsing, a libertarian of East Indian descent born in Suriname, who maintains that black people have a lower IQ than other races. A follower of Ayn Rand, Ramautarsing first became known as a vocal critic of "leftwing indoctrination" at Dutch universities. Following a controversy over homophobic comments, he withdrew from the City Council race. But Baudet's party still won three out of the 45 available seats in those elections.

Baudet is certainly no Wilders. For one thing, he is smarter, more photogenic, and much more coy. The 54-year-old Wilders, born in the southern province of Limburg, was raised a Roman Catholic, though his mother is of Indonesian descent. He founded the PVV in 2006,

> after a 14-year career in the right-liberal VVD. The target of frequent death threats, Wilders has lived under permanent police protection for more than 13 years. Baudet, 20 years younger, is from a nonreligious middleclass family in Haarlem descended from 18th-century Huguenot exiles. He learned Latin and Greek in high school and exudes the aristocratic air of a Leiden University fraternity member. After earning undergraduate degrees in history and law, he finished a PhD thesis in



April 30/May 7, 2018

2012 co-directed by the British conservative philosopher Roger Scruton. Published in English as *The Significance of Borders* and in Dutch as *The Assault on the Nation-State*, the book became an unlikely best seller in the Netherlands. In it, Baudet argues that democracy and the rule of law can only thrive in a strong, self-confident nation. Both have been eroded, he continues, by the weakening of national sovereignty in Europe.

In his latest book, *Break the Party Cartel!*, Baudet describes the Dutch political class as a cabal of incompetent administrators who put their own and their parties' interests above those of the country. As a result, he says, all top public management positions—ranging from board seats at state-run entities to posts as city mayors, who in the Netherlands are appointed by the national government—

are neatly divvied up among the party elites in a self-serving "job carousel." The cartel, he says, stifles political change and suffocates democracy "like a thick blanket covering society." To break up the power of the established elites, the FvD proposes to replace appointments to all public or semi-public management positions with an open application process. It also wants to move to mayoral elections and install an electronic voting system in the parliament so that deputies can be held individually accountable for their votes.

To further weaken the power of professional politicians, the FvD wants to introduce Swissstyle direct democracy through binding referendums on important political issues. Here, the party is tapping into a source of widespread discontent. Since 2015, Dutch law has allowed for grassroots-initiated referendums—which

are put on the ballot after 300,000 signatures have been collected—but they are nonbinding, meaning that the government can ignore the results. In April 2016, when the country voted on an association treaty between the European Union and Ukraine, Baudet played a leading role in the "no" campaign. With a 32 percent turnout just barely clearing the validity threshold—the "no" camp won, with 61 percent, though polls showed that many voters were uninformed and confused. In 2017, the parliament voted in favor of the treaty anyway.

The current government has openly expressed its unease with the referendum law. In late February, a narrow majority of the Dutch parliament voted to repeal it. Nonbinding votes create false expectations, Interior Minister Kajsa Ollongren argued. "As a result, [they] do not contribute to [voters'] faith in politics."

"There she is," Baudet said after the parliamentary vote, looking directly at Ollongren, "the assassin of democracy."

AUDET IS NOT YOUR TYPICAL POPULIST. FOR ALL HIS elite-bashing, he is a full-blown member of the cultural upper crust. Rather than hide his highclass tastes and manners, however, he has turned them into a signature brand. In March of last year, he baffled his fellow deputies by kicking off his maiden speech in parliament in Latin. At the same time, he hates modern art, contemporary classical music, and contemporary architecture, which he considers arrogant scams. He idealizes the 19th century and is inspired by Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West*, a classic of cultural pessimism. Having recently spent three years in psychoanalysis, Baudet sprinkles his conversations with esoteric terms in a homegrown mix of Freud and neoconservatism. (Baudet declined to be interviewed for this piece.)

"Thierry is not anti-elite; he's antiestablishment," says historian Geerten Waling, who met Baudet nine years ago and has stayed friendly with him since. "Every society needs a top layer," Baudet said in an online conversation with Waling and his other dissertation adviser, the conservative legal scholar Paul Cliteur. "Our problem is that those [at the top] are suffering from a kind of spiritual disease.... We have to replace the [current] elite with a new one." Waling sees an unresolved tension between Baudet's elitism and his embrace of direct democracy. "I once asked him: 'Are you really in favor of referendums because you believe in democracy, or only because you know you'll agree with their results?'" On the other hand, Waling adds, Baudet "does believe in in-



Baudet's book Break the Party Cartel! attacks the Dutch political class as a cabal of incompetents.

"He's clearly a poseur, and a complacent one at that. He knows how to play the role of the snob."

> —Koen Vossen, political historian

e other hand, Waling adds, Baudet "does believe in increasing democratic participation from below. In *Break the Party Cartel!*, he argues that the Dutch system is outdated. The population is better educated and informed than 200 years ago; it is therefore better equipped to participate in political decision-making. As a historian, I'd say that such a development would be in line with a Dutch tradition of self-government. Mayoral elections, for example, should have been introduced long ago."

Baudet's 19th-century tastes and controversial ideas have not diminished his attractiveness among younger voters. "I suspect they actually like his old-fashioned air," Waling says. "There is something exciting about the fact that he doesn't know who Snoop Dogg is and is not embarrassed to admit it. In the end, people prefer to vote for someone like Fortuyn, who wore a pinstripe suit, had two dogs, and drove a Bentley, than for someone who tries too hard to look like them."

Baudet's distinctive image has a flip side, however. "What surprises me most is the aggressive reactions Baudet incites, especially among progressive academics," says Koen Vossen, a political historian who has studied populism in the Netherlands. "They claim he's more dangerous than Wilders. Some have said his PhD should be revoked. What they still don't seem to understand is that characters like Baudet thrive on those over-the-top responses. It'd be better to ignore him. He's clearly a poseur, and a complacent one at that. He knows how to play the role of the snob."

Charming, provocative, and unpredictable, Baudet has managed to wrap the Dutch media around his little finger. In December, the annual poll of a leading Dutch news show voted him politician of the year. That same month, the progressive newspaper De Volkskrant ran a long interview digging into Baudet's youth, psychology, and personal life, accompanied by a GQ-style photo shoot with a nod to Fifty Shades of Grey. Over a glass of expensive white wine, Baudet proclaimed that modesty was overrated, confessed to finding himself extremely sensitive ("That's why I speak so movingly at party meetings"), and revealed that his current girlfriend is an Iranian refugee. Again, he painted himself as his country's savior. "The completely derailed mob in The Hague that's sending this country to the dogs has to be called to order," he said. "But I see nobody doing anything-so I'll have to do it myself."

Soon after, the online newspaper De Correspondent discovered that, in October, Baudet had had a secret five-hour dinner meeting in Amsterdam with Jared Taylor, the well-known US white supremacist. Taylor, who founded the magazine *American Renaissance*, wants to "rekindle" a defensive "racial consciousness" among whites that would encourage them "to love, first and foremost, the infinite riches created by European man." Asked about the dinner, Baudet once again played coy, invoking privacy and his right to inform himself about all sorts of ideas. "I don't comment on the women I sleep with or the people I eat with," he said. "But generally [I believe that one should] investigate everything in life and hold on to the good." In February, *De Correspondent* followed up with a piece about Baudet's longtime fascination with the ideas of Jean-Marie Le Pen.

"Baudet speaks with a forked tongue," said *Volkskrant* columnist Harriët Duurvoort, who is of Dutch, Surinamese, and African-American descent, when

I talked with her in January. "He clearly flirts with fascism, almost in a romantic way—although he's eager to distance himself from the real racists when held accountable." As a representative and spokesperson for Dutch multiculturalism, Duurvoort has firsthand experience with the coarsening of the public debate, having become the frequent target of right-wing hate campaigns. "At school on the playground in the 1970s, they'd call you 'monkey' and tell you to go back to Africa," she says. "Now the same thing happens again on Twitter."

AUDET'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EXTREME RIGHT is nebulous. While he's popular with Dutch nationalists and white supremacists, he claims to forcefully reject racism and anti-Semitism, and says he will not allow them in his party in any form. At the same time, he dog-whistles through provocative statements that he later retracts, adds nuance to, or claims were intended ironically. One thing is clear: In his crusade against political correctness, he knows what buttons to push to prompt an attention-generating outcry. In the process, he strikes a chord with those who feel most threatened by the demands of minorities for equal treatment, but who balk at the thought that they might be branded as racist or sexist.

Some years ago, Baudet said he agreed with the controversial "pickup artist" Julien Blanc's assertion that women desire "to be overpowered and dominated." Baudet's novel, *Conditional Love*, contains a rant by the narrator—who often sounds very much like the author—claiming that women enjoy rape. In March of last year, Baudet stated that cultural self-hatred has led to attempts to "homeopathically dilute the Dutch population with all the peoples of the world, so that the Dutch will cease to exist." After a media firestorm, Baudet said he wasn't talking about race

but about culture. And yet, this past February, when the party's second national deputy claimed that the connection between race and intelligence has "long been scientifically proven," Baudet remarked: "I don't see what the problem is."

While Baudet has said that he thinks Wilders's stringent anti-Islam policies go "too far," in practice it's hard to distinguish their positions. "When you look at the world today," Baudet said in January 2017, "you have to conclude concocted a fairly coherent amalgam of right-wing ideas that include an authoritarian streak."

—Leo Lucassen, expert on migration

Baudet's novel Conditional Love (top) and, below, US white supremacist Jared Taylor, who met with Baudet last fall.



that the nicest countries are the Christian ones." The columnist Annabel Nanninga, who led the FvD in the Amsterdam City Council elections, said during a televised debate in January, "Islam is a breeding ground of things that are unpleasant...things that are not right, things that make us all unfree."

"I don't believe Thierry is a racist," says Waling, the historian. "He loves to argue, and he thrives on the battle of ideas. He likes to explore taboos—even if they are morally dubious. Of course, that's easier to do as an intellectual than as a politician. He's learned that the hard way—for example, when he met with Jared Taylor. I honestly don't think he'd adopt Taylor's ideas just like that. His meeting with Taylor allows the media to draw that inference, but I don't think that's warranted. True, Thierry is a nationalist. Yet his nationalism is more civic than ethnic. People often forget that, in the conclusion to his dissertation, he called for a multicultural nationalism. In his view, the national narrative can incorporate those who join from elsewhere."

Lucassen, the professor and expert on migration, is less forgiving. "Baudet has concocted a fairly coherent amalgam of right-wing ideas that include an authoritarian streak," he says. "His rejection of modern art, for example, reminds one of the Nazi ban on *entartete Kunst* ['degenerate art'], or Stalin's and Mao's cultural policies. I don't know how much he actually believes what he says. As a scholar, I don't really care. What's important is the way he mobilizes these ideas and how they radicalize public debate. It's been proven that populists don't just voice popular discontent—they also define and fuel it."

Baudet shares some basic notions with the new European right, Lucassen continues: for example, the idea that Europe is prey to a process of *Umvolkung*—a loss of ethnicity driven by demographic change. "Supposedly, the white European is being displaced. Besides all its racist assumptions, that idea is utter nonsense in statistical and demographic terms," Lucassen says. The European alt-right further claims that a large part of Africa seeks to migrate to Europe. "Research has shown that that, too, is baloney," Lucassen says. Finally, there's the blanket demonization of Islam—"a tune Wilders has been playing since 2004."

For his part, Waling sees important differences between the Dutch radical right and its European neighbors. "Marine Le Pen's Front National, for example, is Catholic conservative," he says. "And it has a stronger racist tendency. Right-wing populism in the Netherlands, on the other hand, has fully incorporated progressive ideas around gay rights and gender equality, and real racism is much less pronounced. At Baudet's Forum for Democracy, they don't care about skin color; they are just strongly critical of Islam." Similarly, Alternative für Deutschland, Germany's radical right-wing party, is more prone to racist positions, Waling says. Paradoxically, he argues, that's partly due to Germany's attempts to deal with its Nazi-era past. The demonization of the radical right in Germany makes it easier for the movement to be dominated by its most extreme elements. By comparison, Waling says, the Dutch political game is more mature, allowing for a more open debate. "Fortuyn and Wilders helped detach radical right-wing ideas from the extreme-right fringe," he says, giving them democratic legitimacy. "As a result, no one



Baudet has

WITHOUT ONLINE ACCESS, YOU'RE ONLY GETTING HALF THE STORY.

(SOUND FAMILIAR?)

As a reader of *The Nation*, you're used to getting the whole story not just the watered-down version delivered by the mainstream media. So why settle for anything less than the full story **get the online benefits included with your print subscription.**



Simply go to: TheNation.com/register

To unlock your subscriber-only content on **TheNation.com**, visit the URL shown above, choose a username and password, and enter the account number that appears on your print subscription label (as shown at right). Activate your online subscription today; there is nothing to buy.

Account Number ▼

#BXBDCHX********** CR LOT 009	59D**C-026
#011250 <mark>111111116</mark> # DOMS000Z0	PP0168
հեհեհումեհումեհուհետեհում	
Mr. Sam Sample	JAN18
11 Commerce Blvd.	0168
Palm Coast FL 32137	P000186

calls for an outright prohibition of a party like Baudet's."

"In fact, some have welcomed Baudet's party with relief," says Merijn Oudenampsen, a sociologist who's just finished a dissertation on the rise of Dutch conservatism. "Unlike Wilders, Baudet clearly aspires to occupy power, and can therefore be assumed to play by institutional rules. For one, he's building Forum like a real political party. This has never been the case with Wilders's PVV."

Oudenampsen's thesis explains how the Dutch radical right came to embrace part of the progressive legacy. Unlike the United States or the United Kingdom, the Netherlands-massively secularized in the 1960s and '70s-never had a strong conservative movement. As a result, the conservative backlash of the 1980s passed the country by; it wasn't until the 1990s that Dutch conservatism found its groove. But rather than focus on abortion, sexuality, or gender relations, it embraced the progressive mainstream positions on those issues and identified them with Dutch national culture in order to decry the threat posed by unassimilated immigrants. "The culture wars of the Dutch radical right have championed freedom of expression," Oudenampsen says. "Linking the idea of political correctness to the Dutch culture of consensus, they've called for the need to break taboos." Since the 1990s, that has prominently included addressing the lack of cultural integration among Dutch Muslims. The European right's obsession with Muslim immigrants, in other words, preceded that of American conservatives. Oudenampsen points to a transatlantic feedback loop: It was conservative European thinkers who first inspired the American alt-right-which has now become an inspiration for Europeans like Baudet.

What draws people to parties like Baudet's FvD is, in part, the excitement of the forbidden, Lucassen says. "In the 1960s and '70s, young people looking to buck the mainstream were drawn to the far left. Now, the market for dangerous ideas is on the right. Someone like Baudet is quite aware of that fact. And so far, he's been pretty successful in exploiting that potential."

How great that potential really is remains to be seen, says Koen Vossen, the political historian. For one thing, Baudet will have to build his party. And growth comes with risks. In early February, when Baudet dismissed two prominent FvD members whom he accused of wanting to "hijack" the party, several others wrote in protest, complaining about a lack of internal democracy-and were then expelled. "Undoubtedly, he'll attract people with controversial backgrounds who say controversial things," Vossen says. "More importantly, he hasn't been tested yet. He still has to prove himself as a crisis manager. So far, he's had it easy-not just politically, but in life generally. That's also his weakness. The white working class that supports Wilders won't vote for someone who hasn't suffered." Wilders, Vossen points out, has been politically ostracized and convicted several times, while the death threats have prevented him from living a normal life for years. By comparison, Baudet's career has been a breeze. "So I would not discount Wilders's electoral future yet," Vossen says. "We'll have to see how Baudet deals with his first setbacks."

Oudenampsen doesn't rule out that Baudet's rise may herald a period of increased popularity for the radical right in the Netherlands. Still, even if the FvD surpasses the 15 percent support that the radical right currently enjoys, it will run into other limits, Oudenampsen says. "Dutch political culture is based on coalitions. You simply can't join a coalition and hold on to radical positions. At one point, the FvD will have to adapt to the culture of negotiation and compromise. That's the eternal dilemma of the Dutch protest vote. We don't have a system like the United States, in which someone like Trump can actually come to power."

The Nation.

EDITOR & PUBLISHER: Katrina vanden Heuvel EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Richard Kim; PRESIDENT: Erin O'Mara

MANAGING EDITOR: Roane Carey LITERARY EDITOR: David Marcus SENIOR EDITORS: Emily Douglas, Lizzy Ratner, Christopher Shay CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Robert Best COPY DIRECTOR: Rick Szykowny DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR: Rose D'Amora COPY EDITOR: Mike Laws MULTIMEDIA EDITOR: Francis Reynolds ENGAGEMENT EDITOR: Annie Shields ASSISTANT LITERARY EDITOR: Matthew McKnight ASSISTANT LITERARY EDITORS: Lisa Vandepaer, Haesun Kim WEB COPY EDITORS: Lisa Vandepaer, Haesun Kim WEB COPY EDITOR: PRODUCER: Sandy McCroskey ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR: Ricky D'Ambrose INTERNS: Safiya Charles, Emmalina Glinskis, Madeleine Han, Joseph Hogan, Sophie Kasakove, Andrew Tan–Delli Cicchi, Nurul Hana Anwar (*Design*)

WASHINGTON EDITOR: George Zornick; ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Zoë Carpenter NATIONAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENTS: William Greider, John Nichols, Joan Walsh

INVESTIGATIVE EDITOR AT LARGE: Mark Hertsgaard

EDITORS AT LARGE: D.D. Guttenplan, Chris Hayes, John Palattella

COLUMNISTS: Eric Alterman, Laila Lalami, Katha Pollitt, Patricia J. Williams, Kai Wright, Gary Younge

DEPARTMENTS: Architecture, Michael Sorkin; Art, Barry Schwabsky; Civil Rights, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, Defense, Michael T. Klare; Environment, Mark Hertsgaard; Films, Stuart Klawans; Legal Affairs, David Cole; Music, David Hajdu, Bijan Stephen; Poetry, Steph Burt, Carmen Giménez Smith; Sex, JoAnn Wypijewski; Sports, Dave Zirin; United Nations, Barbara Crossette; Deadline Poet, Calvin Trillin

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Robert L. Borosage, Stephen F. Cohen, Marc Cooper, Mike Davis, Slavenka Drakulic, Bob Dreyfuss, Susan Faludi, Thomas Ferguson, Naomi Klein, Melissa Harris-Perry, Doug Henwood, Max Holland, Richard Lingeman, Michael Moore, Christian Parenti, Eyal Press, Joel Rogers, Karen Rothmyer, Robert Scheer, Herman Schwartz, Bruce Shapiro, Edward Sorel, Jessica Valenti, Jon Wiener, Amy Wilentz, Art Winslow

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: James Carden, Michelle Chen, Bryce Covert, Liza Featherstone, Laura Flanders, Julianne Hing, Joshua Holland, Richard Kreitner, Patrick Lawrence, Dani McClain, Collier Meyerson, Scott Sherman, Mychal Denzel Smith LONDON BUREAU: Maria Margaronis

EDITORIAL BOARD: Deepak Bhargava, Kai Bird, Norman Birnbaum, Barbara Ehrenreich, Richard Falk, Frances FitzGerald, Eric Foner, Greg Grandin, Philip Green, Lani Guinier, Ilyse Hogue, Tony Kushner, Elinor Langer, Malia Lazu, Deborah W. Meier, Toni Morrison, Walter Mosley, Khalil Gibran Muhammad, Victor Navasky, Pedro Antonio Noguera, Richard Parker, Michael Pertschuk, Elizabeth Pochoda, Andrea Batista Schlesinger, Rinku Sen, Dorian T. Warren, David Weir

- ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, SPECIAL PROJECTS: Peter Rothberg
- VICE PRESIDENT, COMMUNICATIONS: Caitlin Graf
- DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER: Sarah Arnold

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, CONSUMER MARKETING: Katelyn Belyus

CIRCULATION FULFILLMENT COORDINATOR: Vivian Gómez

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, DEVELOPMENT: Sarah Burke

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT: Yubei Tang

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, ADVERTISING: Sky Barsch

ADVERTISING ASSISTANTS: Vanessa Dunstan, Kit Gross

DIGITAL PRODUCTS MANAGER: Joshua Leeman TECHNOLOGY MANAGER: Chris Harford

IT/PRODUCTION MANAGER: John Myers

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR: Mel Gray

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE: Denise Heller

ASSISTANT MANAGER, ACCOUNTING: Alexandra Climciuc

HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR: Lana Gilbert

BUSINESS ADVISER: Teresa Stack

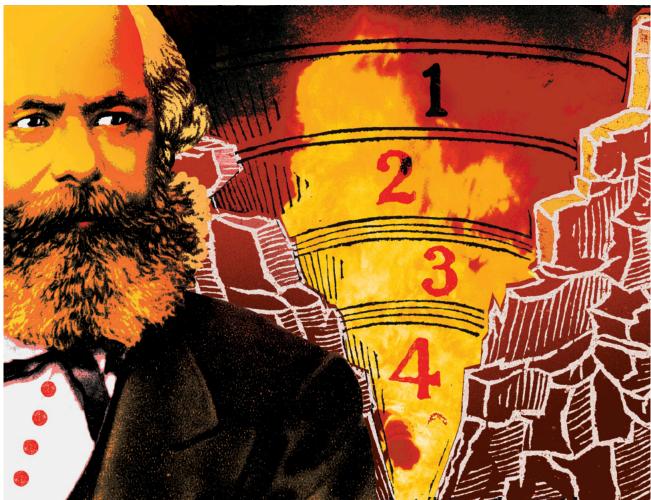
PUBLISHER EMERITUS: Victor Navasky

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: E-mail to letters@thenation.com (300-word limit). Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

 $\label{eq:submission-guidelines} \textbf{SUBMISSIONS:} Go to The Nation.com/submission-guidelines for the query form.$

Each issue is also made available at TheNation.com. Printed on 100% recycled 40% post-consumer acid- and chlorine-free paper, in the USA.

Books & the Arts.



IN MARX'S REPUBLIC

Did Capital offer us visions of freedom as well as domination?

as Karl Marx a political thinker? It might seem like an odd question: What else would he be? Yet over the course of the 20th century, the answer came to seem less clear. Within a few years of the Russian Revolution, Carl Schmitt was already depicting Marxism as generically similar to liberalism, a form of "economic thinking" hostile to all genu-

Daniel Luban is a lecturer in the humanities at Yale.

by DANIEL LUBAN

ine politics. Bolsheviks and American financiers shared the ideal of an "electrified earth," Schmitt asserted, differing "only on the correct method of electrification." At the height of the Cold War, Hannah Arendt would describe Marx's work as marking the "end" of a tradition of political thought that had started with Socrates. And Sheldon Wolin would see in Marx the most powerful expression of the 19th century's "contempt for politics." Marx's thought looked less like a diagnosis of modern society's ills than a

Marx's Inferno

The Political Theory of Capital By William Clare Roberts Princeton University Press. 304 pp. \$35

symptom of them.

This line of thinking drew much of its appeal from developments on the world stage: Even in its less sanguinary moments, actually existing socialism seemed to offer little more than dreary technocracy. Its appeal also owed something to developments within the

ILLUSTRATION BY TIM ROBINSON

academy: As universities expanded and disciplines solidified, political thought found itself pushed to the margins of an increasingly quantitative social-science universe, threatened by ascendant competitors like economics and sociology. A natural line of defense was to stake out some distinct domain called "the political," the autonomy of which must be guarded against any trespass. Opinions differed as to what constituted distinctly political concepts: Friend and enemy, speech and action, power, violence, legitimacy, and authority were all put forward as candidates. But thinkers in this vein could agree that politics itself was threatened by the encroaching forces of economy and society, and that liberalism and Marxism were both complicit in the problem.

The notion that Marxism was hostile to politics wasn't entirely a 20th-century imposition, for the master's own writings offered some warrant for concern. The canonical Marxist statements here actually came from Engels, whose Anti-Dühring prophesied the withering away of the state and the replacement of "the government of persons" by "the administration of things." But Engels was simply drawing out an argument that he and Marx had been making since The Communist Manifesto, where they described "political power" as "merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another." When Marx speaks of politics, he means the state and its coercive machinery, deployed in support of a given class hierarchy. Hence a world without classes would be one without states, and ultimately one without politics. "Public power" will remain under communism, the Manifesto tells us, but it will have lost "its political character."

One plausible response would be to insist on a more expansive understanding of politics. Stop worrying about defending the autonomy of the political from other domains, and the forms of politics that underlie every domain of human life will come into view. Stop defining politics solely in terms of the coercive machinery of the state, and the "public power" that remains under communism will become visible as a form of politics in its own right.

Yet this response, however reasonable, can also be misleading, for it implies that the place to look for Marx's politics is in his vision for a postcapitalist society. For obvious reasons, Marx's notoriously brief and scattered writings on this subject have attracted outsize interest, but that hardly means that they represent the most valuable or most original part of his political thinking. His predictions about the death of the state, for instance, were a commonplace among 19th-century radicals rather than a distinctive feature of his thought. So was his broader hope for a world after politics, in which coercion would no longer be necessary to maintain the hierarchies of a deformed social order—an echo of the much older Christian view that saw political power as a punishment for original sin that would vanish in the world to come.

The most important question, however, is not whether politics will last forever, but rather what it will look like in the meantime. And so the place to look for Marx's politics is not in his vague intimations about the future, but in his analysis of "all hitherto existing society"; not in his sketches of life after capitalism, but in his depiction of life under it.

omething like this intuition is at the center of William Clare Roberts's new book *Marx's Inferno*, the most substantial treatment of Marx's political theory in recent years. Roberts does have some interesting things to say about Marx's vision for a postcapitalist society. But he rightly locates the core of Marx's politics in its diagnosis of capitalism, which he analyzes through an imaginative and carefully argued reading of Marx's 1867 masterpiece, *Capital*.

This choice of focus is more counterintuitive than we might think. After all, the book that appeared in 1867 was billed as the first volume of a projected trilogy (and hence is typically called Capital, Volume I). It was only quite late in the writing process that Marx scrapped his original plans to publish the entire work simultaneously; even as he completed the first volume, he was still promising to finish the final two within a year. That proved to be wildly optimistic: Beset by the financial and health problems that would dog him throughout his life, Marx never completed the rest of the project. The books that would appear as Capital's final two volumes were pieced together by Engels from Marx's notes after his death.

This might suggest that the project of *Capital* was an unfinished one, perhaps even a failed one. Thus, later interpreters have often gravitated to Marx's earlier, long-unpublished writings—ranging from the Paris manuscripts of 1844 to the so-called *Grundrisse* that he abandoned in 1858—hoping to recover core intuitions that were lost when Marx got bogged down in *Capital*.

At the very least, the checkered history of *Capital*'s composition might cut against the notion that *Volume I* forms a coherent whole. Thus, influential interpreters like David Harvey and Michael Heinrich insist on the need to analyze all three volumes as a unit (however fragmentary the latter two might be). Other interpreters, confronted with the patchwork quality of *Volume I*, lop off those pieces that they find extraneous, whether it's the abstract analysis of the commodity form at the beginning or the historical account of "primitive accumulation" at the end.

Roberts, by contrast, treats *Volume I* as the authoritative distillation of Marx's political theory, his "premier act of political speech." He justifies this partly by the very fact of its publication: To prioritize Marx's unpublished manuscripts and discarded drafts over the book that he was willing to present to the world is to reverse Marx's own judgments about what was valuable in his work. But Roberts's larger and more ambitious argument is that Marx's readers have missed the underlying structure and coherence of *Volume I* itself.

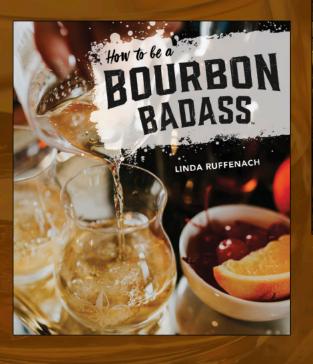
oberts's title refers to the book's most attention-grabbing argument: that Marx modeled the structure of Volume I on Dante's Inferno, which he recast "as a descent into the modern 'social Hell' of the capitalist mode of production," with himself in the role of "a Virgil for the proletariat." Marx unquestionably made allusions to Dante in the work, and he also made use of the "social Hell" trope that was common among the socialists of his day, but Roberts argues that the parallels run much deeper than that. Dante divided his Hell into four regions, each housing a particular set of sinners; so too can Marx's seemingly disjointed discussion be cut into four main parts, replicating Dante's descent through the realms of incontinence, violence, fraud, and treachery. The Hell here is not (or not just) capitalism itself but also its theoretical counterpart, bourgeois political economy. Just as Dante had to pass through Hell on his journey to Paradise, Marx seeks to demonstrate "the necessity of going through political economy in order to get beyond it."

Drawing the parallel between the two books so tightly requires a great deal of fine—and perhaps overfine—argumentation, and some readers (this one included) may ultimately remain unconvinced, but Roberts's deeper interpretive claims do not depend on the *Inferno/Capital* corre-

Embark on a

BOURBON ADVENTURE

FROM TALES OF LEGENDARY MASTER DISTILLERS TO FOOD AND DRINK RECIPES for classics and fresh twists, Linda Ruffenach will redefine your perceptions of bourbon and those who savor it. Your journey to becoming a bourbon badass begins here.



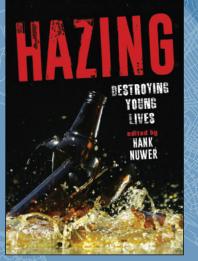
BOURBON DISTILLING THE INDUSTRY'S HERITAGE CAROL PEACHEE

duction by Carolyn Broc

THE STORY OF BOURBON PRODUCTION IS A TALE OF AMERICAN INNOVATION, industry, and craft. Join photographer Carol Peachee on a visual journey from farm to bottle, with stunning images of the people and industries that transform corn into liquid gold.

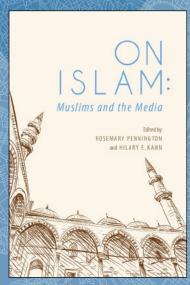
IRAN IN THE STATEMENT OF THE STATEMENT O

In an age of nuclear experimentation, military conflicts, and ISIS, the Middle East is unstable, and the Iranian nuclear deal is shrouded in controversy and mistrust. *Volatile State* is a must read to help understand the implications and future with a nuclear deal with Iran.



Anti-hazing journalist Hank Nuwer assembles an extraordinary cast of experts to investigate the evolution of hazing, explore overlooked impacts to victims' wellbeing, and provide strategies to counter this dangerous practice.

EXPLORE your WORLD



"This book goes a long way in combating Islamophobia and exposing how media representations often exacerbate the ignorant fear of Islam and Muslims."—Publishers Weekly spondence. Some of his most interesting arguments relate to the audience for whom he suggests Capital was intended: fellow socialists and comrades in the workers' movement, whom Marx hoped to wean off rival versions of radicalism associated with figures like Proudhon, Robert Owen, and Saint-Simon. Whether a 1,000-page treatise was the best way to do this is a question that Roberts doesn't raise. (It was the longsuffering Engels who first managed to put Marxist ideas into a form that workers actually wanted to read, for his troubles earning the contempt of posterity as a shallow vulgarizer.) Regardless, Roberts effectively shows how Marx made use of the ambient language of 19th-century radicalism, as

well as how he moved beyond it. This sort of historical contextualization is the most well-trodden part of the book's argument. But treatments of the subject tend to restrict themselves to Marx's many explicit polemics against his rivals; Roberts goes further in making a strong case that such concerns are embedded in surprising ways in Capital itself. And while contextualization is often meant as a deflationary move-for example, in the recent Marx biographies by Gareth Stedman Jones and Jonathan Sperber, both of which cast him as a 19th-century figure with limited relevance for the 21st-Roberts's aims are quite the opposite. By examining Marx's historical reference points, he suggests, we will see that they have "more potent and varied contemporary analogues" than we might otherwise think. In short, understanding Marx in the context of his times shows him to be more rather than less relevant to our own.

The main thrust of Marx's break from other strands of socialism, Roberts argues, is to "de-personalize and de-moralize" their critique of capitalism. Instead of tracing the system's ills to the immorality of individual capitalists, Marx wants to show how capitalism's logic dictates the behavior of all parties within the system, capitalists very much included. Likewise, while other radicals imagined a fundamentally healthy process of exchange that was distorted by the intrusion of some alien element-whether the introduction of money, the persistence of feudal hierarchy, or the prevalence of force and fraud-Marx denies that we can isolate any such discrete factor as the root of all evil. Capitalism is modern, it is coherent, and it is systematic; its opponents must therefore resist the easy moralism that attributes its ills to individual miscreants and individual acts of injustice.

To say that Marx rejects this kind of

moralism, however, is not to say that he lacks moral convictions of his own. His belief that capitalism is unstable is inseparable from his belief that it is unjust. In fact, Roberts argues, we can be more specific about the content of Marx's political morality: At bottom, he is what contemporary political theorists would call a "republican," for whom the primary goal of politics is to prevent the domination of some human beings by others. Yet the systematic nature of capitalist domination demands an equally systematic response, and so Marx rejects separatist fantasies of carving out independent spaces within capitalism. Instead, what he envisions is something that Roberts calls a "republic without independence." Although Roberts does not specify precisely what this would involve, he suggests that it would be something like "a global system of interdependent cooperatives managing all production by nested communal deliberation," a scaling-up for a global age of the cooperatives envisioned by the utopian socialist Robert Owen.

hat does it mean to call Marx a "republican"? Traditionally, the term would refer to critics of monarchy or empire, but what Roberts has in mind is more specific: It means that the primary value in Marx's system is ensuring the absence of domination. "Domination" is itself a tricky word. We often use it loosely to refer to any large imbalance of power (as when we say that the Celtics dominated the Knicks). But as defined by prominent neorepublicans like Philip Pettit and Quentin Skinner, "domination" means being at the mercy of the arbitrary will of another, regardless of whether this will is actually exerted. The canonical example is the slave subject to the whims of a master, a vulnerability that remains constant whether or not the master chooses to exercise his power. (What connects this view historically to republicanism in the more familiar sense is that many saw the power of absolute monarchs as analogous in this way to that of the slave master.)

In Pettit's language, republican freedom is therefore a kind of "social freedom." We are free when other people do not dominate us, and although domination can take place between groups as well as individuals, it remains the case that republican-

> ism is exclusively concerned with relationships between human beings. Someone trapped beneath a boulder is not unfree in the relevant sense; poverty or disability might constrain or thwart our plans, but they only count as unfreedom insofar as they are connected to interpersonal domination.

Thus, the political thrust of republicanism is to

remove the element of arbitrary will from human social life. Human beings will necessarily remain subject to social forces outside their control, but these forces should be rendered as impersonal-as nonarbitrary-as possible. State power can therefore appear unobjectionable if it is constrained by the rule of law; as Friedrich Hayek (in this respect a kind of republican) put it, so long as the laws of the state "are not aimed at me personally but are so framed as to apply equally to all people in similar circumstances, they are no different from any of the natural obstacles that affect my plans." More important for our purposes, market forces are only objectionable to a republican to the extent that they are sources of domination, and they cannot be considered sources of domination if they are genuinely impersonal.

Of course, there are various ways in which economic life does produce domination in this sense, creating new forms of dependence and arbitrary power. We might think of the power exercised by employers within the workplace, a form of arbitrary rule emphasized historically by so-called "labor republicans" and more recently by authors like Elizabeth Anderson. We might equally think of the power exercised within a household by the breadwinner over dependent unwaged workers (typically not a point of emphasis for such labor republicans). And we might think of the broader ways in which the inequalities produced by markets empower entire classes of people over others. Marx was certainly well aware of many of these

forms of domination characteristic of capitalism—and if that, for Marx, was all that capitalism is, then we might describe his critique as republican.

But Marx saw something else in capitalism. It did not just create new masters and confer arbitrary power onto new individuals and classes. It also created new and genuinely lawlike social forces, forces that could be described as neither arbitrary nor willful. Republicans often see market forces as unobjectionable insofar as they come to resemble laws of nature; Marx suggested that this was really coming to pass, as the laws of political economy made themselves felt with the same implacable force as the laws of physics. And although these new laws were ultimately human creations rather than natural facts, they were in their own way impersonal and impartial, imposing themselves on all parties within the system from top to bottom.

Roberts notices this strain in Marx, but sees it as a further extension of the republican conceptual vocabulary: a form of "impersonal domination" in which the capitalist "is as dominated as the wage-laborer." Yet it's not clear that this vocabulary can be stretched as far as Roberts suggests. The republican notion of domination can plausibly be extended beyond the state to domains like the firm and the household, and beyond the rule of masters and kings to encompass wider groups of collective perpetrators. But a truly "impersonal domination," a domination of all human beings alike by lawlike social forces, remains outside the scope of even the most expansive version of republicanism. If Marx believed that capitalism involved a kind of genuinely impersonal unfreedom, this might suggest that he had moved beyond the republican worldview altogether.

There's another aspect of Marx's thought that gets lost by assimilating it into republicanism: its deeply material and historical orientation. As a theory of purely social freedom, republicanism tends to abstract from material circumstances and from the relationship between humans and nature. There are cases in which material possibilities can affect domination-a famine, for instance, will tend to increase the dominance of those who control the food supply-but generally speaking, the question of whether people are dominated is independent of how many of them there are, how long they live, what they eat, what tools they use, and so on. Indeed, much of the appeal of republicanism is that its indifference to such questions allows the theory to "travel" easily across history suggesting that present-day people can hope to be free in the same way that the ancient Romans were, notwithstanding all the other differences separating us from them. Accordingly, Roberts is skeptical of interpretations of Marx that emphasize technological progress and material possibilities, and this skepticism follows from his reading of Marx's politics.

Yet these were some of Marx's central concerns. Economistic versions of Marxism may have overemphasized such themes, but it is equally misleading to write them out of Marx altogether. He shows little interest in framing concepts that would apply uniformly across history, or in analyzing social life in abstraction from the material world. Indeed, he sometimes suggests that freedom itself can only be understood with reference to the particular historical stage in which one lives. A famous passage from Capital, Volume III suggests that the "realm of freedom" only begins at the point where labor is no longer required to supply the necessities of human life, and so the extent of freedom varies according to the current state of material and technological progress. In this sense, Marx's freedom isn't social freedom at all; it's the freedom of material beings who are intimately connected to the nonhuman world.

o was Marx a political theorist? If we simply mean that he is a thinker whose work has deep political implications, then the label is unobjectionable. But there are reasons to resist applying the label to Marx's thinking in anything more than this minimal sense.

Any reader of *Capital* is bound to notice the wide variety of genres and disciplines that Marx moves across. Some parts are philosophical and some are literary; some seem to be history and others sociology. Most obviously, for a work subtitled "A Critique of Political Economy," an awful lot of it looks like economics. This might seem less surprising if we recall what Kant and his heirs meant by the term Kritik: not simply a debunking, but an attempt to grasp the limits within which a form of thinking is valid. The problem with bourgeois political economy, understood in this way, is not that its conclusions are entirely wrong (although they sometimes are), but that it mistakes what's true in specific historical circumstances for what's universal and natural.

Relatively soon after *Capital* was published, cracks in its formidable facade began

to appear. In the 150 years since, the economists and historians and sociologists and philosophers have all had their say, and they have often suggested that Marx was simply wrong on a variety of points. Orthodox Marxists doggedly set to work defending his doctrines as the straightforward tenets of scientific socialism, but such efforts often seemed to make matters worse. And so, for those caught between these positions, it has been tempting to suggest that both sides have gotten it wrong: that Marx was not an economist or philosopher or historian or all of these at once but something else entirely (say, a "critical social theorist"), whose system floats above such bodies of knowledge and is therefore impervious to their quibbles.

Roberts usefully pushes back against some versions of this view—for instance, from those who want to ignore the historical sections of *Capital* as irrelevant to the core features of Marx's core project. At the same time, his version of Marx requires its own set of fire walls: between *Volume I* and all the other writings, between Marx the theorist and Marx the social scientist. Marx is to be taken as a political theorist and decidedly not as an economist, and as a result his relationship to political economy

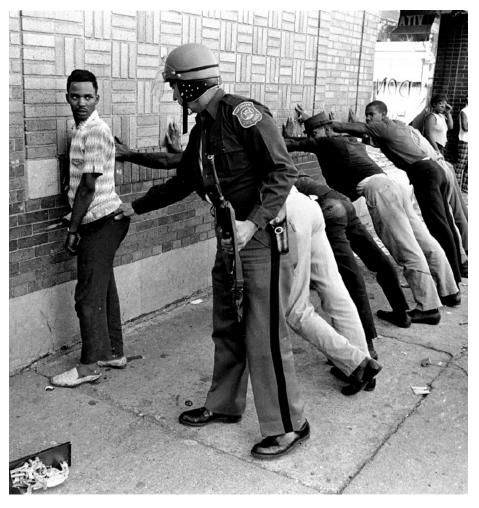


More information at TheNation.com/advertise becomes entirely antagonistic. Marx's final message to workers, Roberts tells us, is that political economy is merely "the science of their subjection," and thus that they "need have nothing more to do with this." A similar injunction seems to hold for us: If Marx is solely critiquing political economy rather than doing it, there's no point in scrutinizing his account of capitalism as if it were a normal social-scientific theory.

However tempting it might be to see Marx as doing something essentially different from the economists and the historians and all the rest, I don't think these fire walls can ultimately hold. Not between Volume I and all the other writings—it is surely relevant that Marx aimed to write the final two volumes, and surely relevant that he never managed to—or between Marx the theorist and the various other versions of him that we might discern. He was doing it all, or trying to. Hence his enterprise is vulnerable to attack on any number of fronts, from the grandly philosophical to the hairsplittingly empirical.

The task for readers of Marx today, then, is not to reconstruct a neater and more pristine version of him that will avoid such vulnerabilities, but to decide which parts of his brilliant, sprawling, and monumentally ambitious project we can accept, on the assumption that it certainly won't be all of it and might not be most of it. Which parts must one accept to be a "Marxist"? That might have been a meaningful question in the days when Marxist parties and regimes bestrode the political landscape, but it seems considerably less meaningful today. Despite the evident nostalgia for old battles between Marxists and anti-Marxists, there is no pressing need at the moment to refight them.

We sometimes ask whether Marx "matters today," whether he's "still relevant." Taking the question at face value, the answer has to be: Yes, he matters, just as everyone else who reorients our ways of thinking matters, above all because the problem of capitalism that he opened up remains central to any attempt to understand the contemporary world. But often the question seems to stand in for another: whether Marx's thought provides all the resources that we need for this task. This is probably not a useful criterion to apply to any thinker, because it sets a bar that neither he nor anyone else could ever meet. We would do better to emulate Marx's own attitude toward his predecessors, taking what we can from him without too much agonizing about what we've left behind.



FREEDOM FOR EVERY CITIZEN

The missed opportunity of the Kerner Report

iven the state of race relations in the United States today, it is not surprising that the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders—popularly known as the Kerner Report—is widely viewed as a missed opportunity. Named for the commission's chair, Illinois Governor Otto Kerner, and released on February 29, 1968, after the urban rebellions that had raged in more than 160 American cities the previous summer, the report sought to address the

William P. Jones is a professor of history at the University of Minnesota and the author of The March on Washington: Jobs, Freedom, and the Forgotten History of Civil Rights.

by WILLIAM P. JONES

Separate and Unequal

The Kerner Commission and the Unraveling of American Liberalism By Steven M. Gillon Basic Books. 400 pp. \$20.99

poverty, discrimination, and police violence that its authors believed were not only the rebellions' root causes but, ultimately, a threat to American democracy. To that end, the report urged President Lyndon Johnson to couple dramatic increases in funding for job creation, housing, education, and other public services with reforms to policing, media coverage, and political power in American cities—nearly all of which was ignored by an administration facing increased pressure from both right and left.

Yet the notion that the Kerner Report was a failed effort overlooks its impact on the debates concerning race and poverty in the 1960s and the efforts to address those issues in the 1970s. The famed black psychologist Dr. Kenneth B. Clark had warned the report's authors not to simply repeat the conclusions that had been reached in the past. ("I must again in candor say to you members of this Commission," Clark noted after reading similar inquiries into unrest in American cities, "it is a kind of Alice in Wonderland-with the same moving picture reshown over and over again, the same analysis, the same recommendations, and the same inaction.") But contrary to Clark's prediction, the Kerner Report marked a striking departure from previous investigations.

As Steven Gillon points out in his new history of the report, Separate and Unequal: The Kerner Commission and the Unraveling of American Liberalism, most earlier efforts blamed the unrest on criminals and "riffraff" and said little about poverty, racism, and other underlying causes. The McCone Commission, which studied the Watts uprising in 1965, relied heavily on testimony from the openly racist chief of the Los Angeles Police Department and attributed the violence to "an insensate rage of destruction" by "the criminal element in Watts." Civil-rights leader Bayard Rustin compared its report to Daniel Patrick Moynihan's notorious The Negro Family: The Case for National Action (also known as the Moynihan Report), stating that both blamed racial inequality on black culture and behavior rather than on its actual causes: racism and discrimination in everyday political and economic life. The Kerner Report, on the other hand, placed the blame squarely on white society. While Johnson didn't implement its recommendations, the implications of this argument were to have a tremendous impact on urban policy in the coming decade.

hroughout the 1960s, cities in the United States found themselves under tremendous strain due to rising levels of unemployment, white flight, deteriorating housing and schools, and elected officials and law-enforcement personnel who viewed their jobs as a matter of policing urban residents rather than addressing their needs and concerns. Yet the rebellions took many liberals by surprise, as they believed the country had made significant progress toward addressing the racial and economic inequalities that plagued American cities. The McCone and Moynihan reports were just two examples of a "liberal consensus" that sought solutions to racial disparity but viewed the problem as cultural rather than structural and thus sought to address it by making changes to attitudes rather than to economic or political power.

Johnson designed the Kerner Commission to sustain this consensus. Hoping to outflank conservatives who blamed the urban unrest of 1967 on the White House, the president stacked the commission with loyal moderates and kept tight control over its budget and staffing. Cochaired by John Lindsay, the Republican mayor of New York, Kerner's bipartisan team included four members of Congress, a corporate CEO and a state commissioner of commerce, a police chief, and leaders of the steelworkers' union and the NAACP. "Johnson assumed that his mainstream commission would produce a mainstream report," Gillon writes. He hoped it "would endorse the broad outlines of his existing domestic agenda and insulate him from attacks both from the right and from the left." What he got was something else altogether.

Despite poor funding, the commission moved quickly to conduct hearings in Washington; to meet with residents, activists, and officials in the affected cities; and to sponsor studies of the history and current conditions of African-American communities across the country. To Johnson's dismay, those activities had a profound impact on the commission's members, who previously "had only a vague intellectual understanding of the deplorable conditions in poor urban areas."

As a result—and in stark contrast to those previous studies—the Kerner Report assigned the blame for the violence not on the rebellions' participants and their communities, but on the broader economic and political order. "What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the Negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto," stated the radical lines of the report's introduction. "White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it."

Critics on the left and right alike mocked this opening statement for invoking a vague conception of "white racism" as the cause of massive urban rebellions, but they overlooked a far more complex analysis contained in the body of the report. Echoing the 1963 March on Washington's demand for "jobs and freedom," the commission argued that future unrest could only be prevented through a combination of economic and political reforms aimed at "improving the quality of life in the ghetto" in order to achieve "freedom for every citizen to live and work according to his capacities and desires, not his color."

Defying a tendency among liberals to, in the words of historian Touré F. Reed, "divorce racial disparities from economic inequality," the Kerner Commission insisted repeatedly that the two needed to be addressed simultaneously. This meant coupling massive new investments in job creation, housing, education, and welfare with strengthened antidiscrimination and desegregation policies. The commission's more moderate members feared that support for a federal law banning discrimination in housing would provoke an unnecessary backlash, but they backed down when NAACP director Roy Wilkins threatened to resign from the commission if they attempted to "gloss over" the issue.

The Kerner Commission also zoomed in on another issue: The conflicts between police and local residents, it noted, had "been a major source of grievance, tension and, ultimately, disorder." Those clashes did not come from nowhere; they were often sparked by instances of police brutality that, the report's authors concluded, reflected a broader pattern in which police were expected to handle the symptoms of an economic and political crisis that was much deeper than they could manage. "The policeman in the ghetto is a symbol not only of law, but of the entire system of law enforcement and criminal justice," the report observed. "As such, he becomes the tangible target for grievances against shortcomings throughout that system."

ne of the most surprising findings was that participants in the rebellions tended to be better educated and more likely to be employed than the average resident of their communities. While conservatives would point to this as evidence that the rioters lacked legitimate grievances, the report's authors clarified that most of these residents, if employed, "worked in intermittent, low status, unskilled jobs-jobs which they regarded as below their level of education and ability." In addition to creating new jobs and eliminating discrimination in higher-paid professions, the commission recommended increasing and expanding coverage for the federal minimum wage and other ways to address low wages and underemployment, which were "as significant for Negroes

as unemployment." Rejecting Moynihan's emphasis on shoring up male breadwinners, the commission called for dramatically expanding welfare relief and extending it to unemployed and underemployed adults regardless of their family status.

The most controversial aspect of these recommendations was their price tag, which the commission estimated would total between \$20 billion and \$30 billion. But it was external politics that prevented the commission and the Johnson administration from realizing any of these policies. Facing mounting criticism over the "stalemate" in Vietnam, Johnson attempted to bury the report. As his challengers in the 1968 Democratic primaries, Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy, gained ground, Johnson momentarily reconsidered, seeing the report as a possible way to win liberal votes. But after McCarthy's strong showing in New Hampshire, Johnson announced that he would not seek reelection, and it was clear that the report's recommendations would be left by the wayside.

Even so, the Kerner Report cast a long shadow on the 1970s. It is true, as Gillon explains, that one of its most visible legacies was to serve as "an obvious foil" for Richard Nixon's "law and order" rhetoric. A few days after its publication, Nixon claimed that the report's "major weakness" was that it "blames everybody for the riots except the perpetrators of the riots." That message was central to the campaigns that gave Nixon a narrow victory in 1968 and a landslide win in 1972, and it has become a central theme in nearly every Republican presidential campaign since then-including Donald Trump's own "law and order" response to the latest protests against police brutality.

But conservative backlash was only one of the Kerner Report's many legacies. It also had a tremendous impact on the liberal consensus and its understanding of racial inequality and urban poverty. Kerner's team, according to Gillon, defied Johnson, leaking the report to the Los Angeles Times and The Washington Post and prearranging for Bantam Books to publish it several days after its official release. Hitting the stores on March 3, 1968, the 700-page volume sold nearly 1 million copies in two weeks and became the fastest-selling book in two years. The actor Marlon Brando reached millions more by reading sections of the report on late-night television. While The Wall Street Journal dismissed it as "grossly simplistic," The New York Times, Washington Post, and Christian Science Monitor praised it for what the Times called its "realistic promise of swifter advance toward a society of equal opportunity." The National Council of Churches hailed the report as "courageous," and the United Presbyterian Church, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, and the Chicago Board of Education each purchased thousands of copies for their clergy, teachers, and schools.

Ironically, by stacking the commission with moderates, Johnson lent legitimacy to positions that had previously been taken only by radicals. Martin Luther King Jr. initially dismissed the commission for not having "enough Negroes on it and no Negro militants," but after reading the report, he telegraphed Wilkins to thank him and the other commissioners for stating clearly "that white racism is the root cause of today's urban disorders." Conversely, Rustin chided the report for its emphasis on "white racism," declaring that he would "rather have a job program for blacks than a psychoanalysis of whites," though he later noted that its "recommendations parallel those urged by civil rights and labor groups over the years." Black Power activist H. Rap Brown, jailed at the time on charges of inciting a rebellion in New Orleans, joked that Kerner and his team should be arrested "because they're saying essentially what I've been saying."

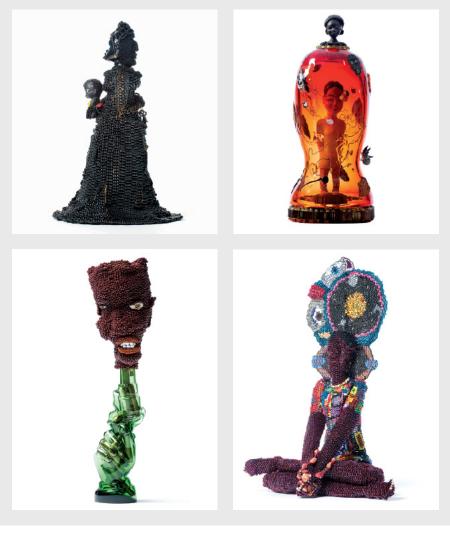
he publicity generated by the Kerner Report reinvigorated King's Poor People's Campaign, which had flagged after its official launch three months earlier. "This report reveals the absolute necessity of our spring campaign in Washington, D.C., for jobs and income and the right to a decent life," King stated. Soon afterward, the campaign gained endorsements from major religious organizations and the NAACP. Echoing the report, King told 1,300 sanitation workers in Memphis that "the problem is not only unemployment" but the fact that they were "making wages so low that they cannot begin to function in the mainstream of the economic life of our nation."

King's assassination in Memphis sparked renewed unrest across the country and plunged the Poor People's Campaign into chaos. But the influence of the Kerner Report persisted. For example, its publication played a key role in the passage of the Fair Housing Act, despite the fears of several commissioners that the subject was too controversial to mention in the report. John B. Anderson, the conservative congressman who cast the deciding vote on the law, later credited the report with convincing him "that we are living in a time of crisis today that threat-

ens the very salvation of our democratic system." Despite Nixon's narrow victory in 1968, Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress continued to implement the report's recommendations throughout the late 1960s and '70s. They indexed Social Security benefits to inflation and expanded food stamps, Medicare, and Medicaid. They created the Supplemental Security Income and Section 8 housing programs and enacted the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, which created over 750,000 jobs in poor communities. Congress also more than doubled the minimum wage, extended it to cover the mostly nonwhite workers in domestic service and the public sector, and narrowed the exemptions for workers in agriculture, retail, and hospitality. The federal government also funded nearly 1.2 million units of new housing between 1970 and 1972-short of the 6 million units recommended by the Kerner Commission, but significant nonetheless.

By the 1980s and '90s, however, the Kerner Report's influence had started to wane. This was due to Ronald Reagan's election in 1980, as well as the Democratic Party's shift from Keynesian to neoliberal approaches to employment, housing, and welfare over the following two decades. Asked to reflect on the legacy of the Kerner Report on the 50th anniversary of the 1967 rebellions last summer, the only living member of the commission offered his assessment. "Well, we've made progress on virtually every aspect of race and poverty for about 10 years, not quite 10 years," said former Oklahoma senator Fred Harris, speaking on NPR, but most of those gains were undermined "and then eventually reversed" in the 1980s and '90s. "So it's a disappointment to see where we are now compared to what we might have been.... But it also should be an inspiration for us to try to do something about that."

With Trump and the GOP firmly in control of Washington, we need that inspiration now more than ever. While solutions to poverty and discrimination are far from the national political agenda, the history of the Kerner Report reminds us that liberals and the left can still influence policy from the margins. Although the Kerner Commission didn't begin with radical ambitions, its members were transformed by their engagement with the people affected by urban poverty and racial inequality and with those who had long been organizing to address those deep-seated problems. Change is never easy or inevitable, but we cannot afford to overlook those rare moments when it occurs.



SUFFUSE WITH LIGHT Joyce J. Scott's withering honesty

by JILLIAN STEINHAUER

ack in the spring of 2016, then-Treasury Secretary Jack Lew announced a plan to replace the image of Andrew Jackson on the \$20 bill with that of Harriet Tubman. The move was widely celebrated: Finally, a woman would appear on the country's modern paper currency, and the face of a black abolitionist hero and suffragette would supplant the visage of a white male president who enslaved people and championed the Indian Removal Act.

Jillian Steinhauer is a writer based in Brooklyn and the former senior editor of Hyperallergic.

Unfortunately, bigoted white male presidents having come back into fashion, President Trump's treasury secretary, Steven Mnuchin, stalled the plan last summer, saying, "We have a lot more important issues to focus on." Once again, a US institution has decided not to honor a black woman.

More than many of its adherents would care to admit, the mainstream US art world reflects the country at large: It tends to venerate straight white men and uphold their politics. That context goes some way toward explaining how the 69-year-old Joyce J. Scott—the winner of a MacArthur "genius" grant in 2016 and an exceptional artist—could spend decades on the edges of the spotlight. It's also part of the reason why the largest survey of her work to date is on view at a lesser-known sculpture park in Hamilton, New Jersey, rather than at a major New York City museum.

The exhibition at Grounds for Sculpture, "Joyce J. Scott: Harriet Tubman and Other Truths," was co-curated by Lowery Stokes Sims and Patterson Sims, both of whom have long championed Scott's art. Featuring 74 works, the exhibition ushers its viewers through the entirety of Scott's artistic trajectory-from her early experiments in sculpture and jewelry to the artistic breakthroughs that came from learning the peyote stitch in 1976, which allowed her to construct free-form sculptures out of beads; from quilts made by and with her mother, Elizabeth Talford Scott, during the 1980s and '90s to her embrace of glassblowing in the 2000s-and includes two new sitespecific sculptures of Tubman.

Throughout this five-decade evolution, Scott's work has remained unabashedly political, broaching subjects like guns, racism, and misogyny. It has also always been gorgeous, rich with tactile materials, color, and an attention to light. In Sex Traffic (2014), for instance, the upright, phallic core of the work-a glass rifle hand-blown by Scott while in residence on the famed Venetian island of Murano-seems suffused with light. The tiny yellow beads that make up the small female figure tied to the gun seem to sparkle and shimmer. This is the core function of Scott's work: its ability to imbue dark subjects with light, to incarnate ugliness and beauty at the same time.

"I try to make something very beautiful, very comely, something alluring that someone wants to come to, and then they realize it's about race or sex or whatever," Scott has said. "I just can't help myself. I am a product of a most wonderful life...I MAKE ART... but there is no release from the day-to-day hints through culture that my blackness is in some way an impediment, my sheer existence an irritant. It all itches me.... Art is my scratch."

Cott was born and raised and has spent most of her life in Baltimore. The city doesn't figure into her work directly—there are no street scenes or portraits of neighbors—but its split personality, of holding extreme poverty within its borders and extreme wealth just outside the city line, may well have contributed to her ability to see good and bad not as opposites, but as forces that coexist. In her work, Scott often elucidates the dangers, both social and physical, that black people can face. Her most direct works about this, made in the late 1980s and early '90s, are grouped on the second floor of "Harriet Tubman and Other Truths." One harrowing piece features a lumpy, black-beaded head on its side with green lips and a small red tongue poking out; strands of red beads on

the crown and chin suggest blood. The work's title makes the inferences explicit: *Rodney King's Head Was Squashed Like a Watermelon* (1991). Nearby, Scott skewers the watermelon stereotype with less horror and more humor: In *Man Eating Watermelon* (1986), a miniature piece of fruit consumes the leg of a darkskinned man who's trying to escape.

Black Madonna (Madonna and Child) (1986) shows a black-leather-clad Madonna-cum-nanny

holding two children, one made of brown beads and the other of pink, up to her breasts; while the pink kid suckles, the brown kid reaches for the woman's

neck and gazes at her face. This longing becomes more pronounced in *No Mommy*, *Me* I (1991), which features a brown boy pinned against the bottom of his mother's dress as she raises up and looks at a translucent white baby instead.

Across the gallery, a display case is devoted to Scott's *Day After Rape* series. In the foreground, small brown women are shown in various states of distress and dismemberment; two are just beaded torsos with pipes and pieces of wood for limbs. Behind them hang menacing faces, which appear to be the attackers, betraying no remorse but haunted by the ghosts of their crimes in the form of smaller figures that crawl or sit on them.

None of these works are subtle, but they're not prescriptive either. They fall somewhere between observation and expression, with a withering honesty that's softened by the materials with which they're made. The beads, especially, are a way for Scott to abstract her subject matter, to cushion the gut punch that so much of her work delivers. As she's noted in recent interviews, the beads function like pixels, both forming the picture and breaking it into smaller units; these units refract light in such a way that viewers don't always know, at first, what they're looking at. They have to linger and let the image resolve.

The Nation.

Scott learned from an early age that all manner of materials and items were valuable, and as part of her process she collects things—beads, African statuettes, buttons, ceramic figurines—and incorporates them precisely what gives Scott's art its charge. Her beadwork, which viewers are drawn to for its intimate, domestic familiarity, creates surprising, overtly political art. It's also part of what gets her shunned by the mainstream art world, which has borrowed from, yet looked down upon, so-called "craft" practices since the dawn of modernism. Scott deserves credit for continuing to

push the possibilities of her chosen materials.

Scott has incorporated glass into her art for a long time, via beads and found objects. And she learned to work with glass decades ago, first at the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts and then at the Pilchuck Glass School. But it wasn't until the early aughts that glassblowing seems to have effected an aesthetic shift in her work, helped along by two residencies at the Berengo Studio on Murano. The first floor of the Grounds for Sculpture show is mostly devoted to these newer pieces. They are decidedly more concerned with gender dynamics, more contemplative,

into her art. As she explains it, her family and members were artists "because they lived in the South and they were sharecroppers. In those circumstances, if you needed a cup, you made it. If you needed a blanket or a quilt, you made it." Scott also learned from

lizabeth Talford Scott, who lived with Joyce until her death in 2011, was a brilliant quilter; the inclusion of a selection of her quilts at Grounds for Sculpture is especially revealing. You can see the roots of her daughter's obsessive handicraft, love of color, and pleasure in going off-script in Talford Scott's kaleidoscopic creations like Tie Quilt #2 (1991), which features strips of cast-off neckties assembled into an asymmetrical psychedelic pattern. The quilts, importantly, are also a major method of storytelling; Scott calls them "diaries for preliterate people." In her own work, Scott has taken up the mantle of telling stories-the central panel of her Three Generation Quilt I (1983) shows her receiving a needle and thread from her mother.

a young age how to sew.

Yet she extends the scope from personal narratives to more public ones, which is

and more abstract.

In *Aloft* (2016–17), for instance, a buxom blue blown-glass woman supports a smaller man, whose glass head is stacked on top of hers and whose beaded limbs are wrapped around her face and neck. There's no indication that the man is a burden, but the social narrative here is clear enough: The woman holds the man aloft. Still, while the figures' genders are implied, they're not pronounced. The work could just as easily depict two playful gods as an earthbound pair, especially since the Buddha has been a motif throughout Scott's career.

Many of these newer works feature two figures, which allows Scott to highlight the interplay between her materials: the smooth, curving forms of blown glass versus the knobby accumulations of beads. The pairs are sometimes connected by a beaded string or chain—in one case, it's a lasso-like penis—suggesting universal interdependence. *Breathe* (2015) features a red blown-glass woman giving birth to a clear blown-glass child. It's a remarkable technical achievement that harks back to Scott's nanny sculptures: Although the mother is red, not the black or brown that Scott



uses more often, her cornrows suggest an African-American woman—perhaps transmuted into some sort of deity—who's giving birth to a white child. The expression on her face is inscrutable.

here is overall-though not alwaysa bit more ambiguity to these later works, a hint that, as she's aged, Scott's concerns have become increasingly spiritual. This is reflected in the most powerful section of the show, the indoor installation Harriet's Closet (2017), made in tandem with the two outdoor sculptures of Tubman. The latter are situated on the grounds nearby: a 15-foot-tall figure of soil, clay, and straw (Graffiti Harriet, 2017) and a shorter, more realistic likeness rendered in painted milled foam (Araminta With Rifle and Vevè, 2017; Tubman's birth name was Araminta Ross). A compelling experiment, Graffiti Harriet grows directly out of the ground and is meant to return to it over the course of the exhibition, deteriorating and leaving behind only patches of beadwork and a gun made of resin. Araminta is a more solid, if slightly hokey, statue whose surroundingsan array of patchwork quilts and ghostly figures strung up in trees-upstage her.

Both are welcome interventions in a sculpture park overflowing with tackiness and, as Scott herself notes, renderings of white people. But neither evokes as much pathos as Harriet's Closet. The installation is what Scott calls a "dream boudoir," the imagined private space of the abolitionist hero (the wall text also refers to Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own). It features items of clothing, found and handmade; quilts by Scott and her mother; a vanity holding a reprint of a letter from Frederick Douglass to Tubman; various sculptures and wall works in glass and beads; and two renderings of Tubman, including one of her as the Buddha that hovers over the space.

The individual components of *Harriet's Closet* show Scott at her finest. *Harriet's Quilt* (2016–17), arguably the centerpiece, is a series of swirling masses of chunky, stitched-together beads; containing yarn and knotted fabric made by Elizabeth Talford Scott, it's the ultimate synthesis of a daughter's art with her mother's. The sculpture *Everywoman's Harriet* (2017) renders Tubman with two faces: the blackface of a racist doll and a more naturalistic, beaded one. The stereotype face looks out onto the world as Tubman holds a baby in one arm; the more private, honest face is turned toward the closet as, with her other arm, Tubman clutches a set of keys. The work is a stunning evocation of the burden of double consciousness.

Everywoman's Harriet is almost entirely black, just like the vintage dress (c. 1900) that stands in a nearby corner, alongside a beaded bonnet made by Scott. These dark elements are counterbalanced by more colorful ones: Elizabeth Talford Scott's exuberant plaid quilt; an all-glass flowering vine in the shape of a rifle; a crocheted shawl that includes pearls, preserved insects, and a portrait of Douglass. The tonal contrast creates a duality reminiscent of Scott's individual works, only now it's spread over a group of objects and feels even more like balance than tension.

Taken together, the items in *Harriet's Closet* conjure a feeling of expectancy: The dress seems to want to be worn, the real rifle picked up; the quilt spills eagerly out of its trunk. Scott has managed to call up, if not a specific inner life, then certainly the hint of one—and with it, the idea that even as we celebrate Harriet Tubman's image, we must recognize the part of her we were robbed of knowing.

London Review OF BOOKS

Unlock the LRB Archive: 30 days for FREE

Enjoy 30 days of access to our entire online archive: every piece we have ever published (more than 16,000 reviews, essays and poems). Search by subject, keyword, author and more.

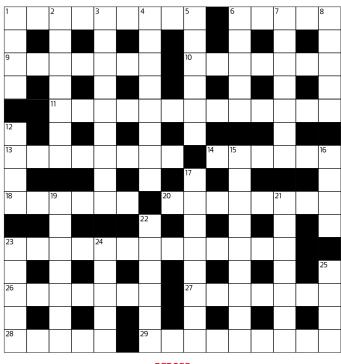
To get your FREE access, visit:

www.lrb.me/nationfree



Puzzle No. 3463

JOSHUA KOSMAN AND HENRI PICCIOTTO



ACROSS

- **1** Objectively, I pester an Indian tribe: It supplies three letters for the wordplay in each remaining Across entry (9)
- **6** Politely refuse medical professional (5)
- **9** Allocates some atoms (7)
- **10** They're liable to run away from poets, losing face (7)
- 11 Military assignment! (6,7)
- 13 Put together most of logo (8)
- 14 Excoriate that woman... (6)
- 18 ... near head of security for European capital (6)
- **20** Animated film failing in front of an entire continent (8)
- 23 Madam's IRA invested in obsolescent technology (7,6)
- 26 Heavy drinkers with drink dispensers (7)
- 27 Finishes off blueprint for Veracruz wine bar that's often swinging (7)
- **28** Mother's doctrine (5)
- **29** Supreme Court ran out of order (9)

DOWN

- 1 Evangelist's target (4)
- **2** Observes broken section (7)
- **3** Space (small and medium) taken up by general participants in a wedding (9)
- 4 Roguish scar disfigured friend (8)
- **5** Prime minister spots upcoming bivouac (6)
- **6** Begins lifting tight bundle on poles (5)
- 7 Red streetcar carrying half a dozen uphill (7)
- 8 Disturbing siren gets you out of bed (5)
- 12 Backing up a little information on the computer, perhaps (4)
- 15 What you'd find in a cell: blasting cap, mostly (9)
- 16 Cheese is manufactured upside down (4)
- 17 One making a keen escape with $\log(8)$
- 19 Start off playing pool or craps and laughing derisively (7)
- **21** Outlandish crackpot as ruler (7)
- 22 Category that includes part of purse! (6)
- 23 Located, like, in bed (5)
- 24 Vietnamese leader: "I get it, a commotion" (3-2)
- **25** Sell the fifth object (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3462

ACROSS 1 CAM (rev.) + BRID(G)E 6 SE[n]DER 9 RE(GAT)TA (*tear* anag.) 10 B(ELI)EVE 11 C + LOVER LEAVES 14 TEN E.T:S 15 DE(SIGN)ER 17 RE(SIGN)ED 19 G + 0LDEN 21 pun 25 "why, key key" 26 COLLI(D)E 27 anag. 28 THOU + SANDS

DOWN 1 C(ARI + CAT)URE 2 MYG (rev.) + OODNESS (anag.) 3 R(ETRE)AT 4 DR + AWL 5 EM + B + RACED 6 SA(LIE)RI 7 rev. 8 rev. 12 IN(AD + DITIO)N (*idia* anag.) 13 "Gran's tress" spoonerism 16 BEN(EDIC)T (*dice* anag.) 18 G + UNFIRE 20 O(RIO)LES 22 WAC + KO 23 T + WIG 24 anag.



The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published 34 times a year (four issues in March, April, and October; three issues in January, February, July, and November; and two issues in May, June, August, September, and December) by The Nation Company, LLC © 2018 in the USA by The Nation Company, LLC, 520 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10018; (212) 209-5400. Washington Bureau: Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002; (202) 546-2239. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and Additional mailing offices. Subscription orders, changes of address, and all subscription inquiries: *The Nation*, PO Box 433308, Palm Coast, FL 32143-0308; or call -800-333-8536. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Bleuchip International, PO Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2. Canada Post: Publications Mail Agreement No. 40612608. When ordering a subscription rpices allow four to six weeks for receipt of first issue and for all subscription transactions. Basic annual subscription price: \$69 for one year. Back issues, \$6 prepaid (\$8 foreign) from: *The Nation*, 520 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10018. If the Post Office alerts us that your magazine is undeliverable, we have no further obligation unless we receive a corrected address within one year. *The Nation*, PO Box 433308, Palm Coast, FL 32143-0308. Pinter obligation unless we receive a corrected address within one year. *The Nation*, NO18. If the Post Office alerts us that your magazine is undeliverable, we have no further obligation unless we receive a corrected address within one year. *The Nation*, PO Box 43308, Palm Coast, FL 32143-0308. Printed in the USA on recycled paper.





oin *The Nation* on a one-of-a-kind adventure curated for open-minded travelers who are eager to experience different cultures in unique ways. We specialize in unusual destinations and itineraries that are designed to promote citizen-to-citizen contact and lead to more productive engagement. We carefully design all *Nation* trips to further this goal.



UPCOMING TOURS

IRAN: CROSSROADS AND COMPLEXITIES

September 5-17, 2018

SOUTH AFRICA: BEYOND APARTHEID September 22-October 3, 2018

CIVIL RIGHTS: ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM

Jackson, Little Rock, Memphis, Selma, Birmingham, and Montgomery

September 30–October 7, 2018 SOLD OUT! October 14–21, 2018 JUST ADDED

JORDAN AND THE POLITICS AND CULTURE OF THE MIDDLE EAST

October 14–24, 2018

VIETNAM: RENAISSANCE AND RECONCILIATION November 2-14, 2018

CUBA: HAVANA TO TRINIDAD November 3-10, 2018

INDIA: EXPLORING THE WORLD'S LARGEST DEMOCRACY

February 16-March 2, 2019

"I thought the trip was spectacular, probably the best travel and educational experience I have had!"

– Jon, *California* (Russia)

For more information on these and other destinations, go to **TheNation.com**/**TRAVELS** or e-mail travels@thenation.com or call 212-209-5401.

Align your money and your values **Divest From Guns**

When is the last time you checked how your mutual funds are invested? You may hold a stake in a major firearm and ammunition manufacturer without knowing it.

The Domini Impact Equity Fund doesn't invest in gun makers. We never have. At Domini, we make all of our investments in direct pursuit of ecological sustainability and universal human dignity.

Invest in the Domini Impact Equity Fund[™]

Domini Investing for Good[™]

domini.com 1-800-762-6814

Carefully consider the Fund's investment objectives, risk factors and charges and expenses before investing. This and other information can be found in the Fund's prospectus, which may be obtained by calling 1-800-762-6814, or at www.domini.com. *Please read the prospectus carefully before investing or sending money.* DSIL Investment Services LLC, Distributor. 3/18